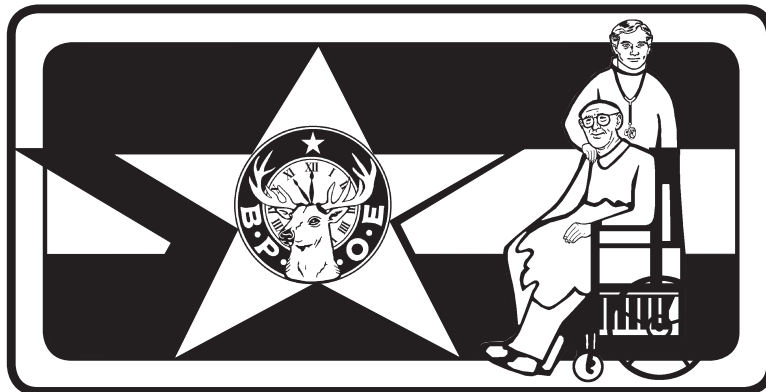


**Elks National
Veterans
Service Commission**

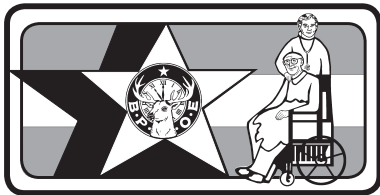


"Serving Our Nation's Veterans"

**BENEVOLENT AND PROTECTIVE ORDER OF ELKS
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**The Elks National Veterans Service Commission
2750 N. Lakeview Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614-1889**

**Elks National
Veterans
Service Commission**



"Serving Our Nation's Veterans"

THE ELKS NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION

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Hon. Louis J. Grillo, PGER — Vice-Chairman
Hon. Roger R. True, PGER — Secretary/Treasurer
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INTRODUCTION

Several of our Grand Exalted Rulers have stated that in their travels they found those associated with the National Veterans Service program to be the most dedicated of the dedicated. Furthermore, many Chiefs of Voluntary Service at VA Medical Centers have told us, “Whenever we want something, we can count on the Elks.”

The purpose of this manual is to answer questions most often asked and spell out the responsibilities of Chairmen on all levels. It lists types of programs veterans enjoy and gifts and services found to be most in demand.

For your convenience, we have included in this manual the names, addresses and phone numbers of Chairmen in charge of special activities. You may direct questions to them relative to their specific program. Questions or suggestions of a general nature should be submitted to the Commission office in Chicago.

Our goal is to make the Elks the most visible force in voluntary service to our veterans. Hopefully, this manual will be useful in that quest.

The contents of this manual can be viewed on the internet at: <http://www.elks.org/vets>.

THE ELKS NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION

Immediately following World War II, the Elks War Commission was dissolved and the Elks National Veterans Service Commission was established by resolution of the Grand Lodge at its session held in New York in 1946. Its purpose was to carry out the post war patriotic efforts of the Order.

The primary project was the veterans program which consisted of rehabilitation, occupational therapy, recreation and entertainment.

The resolution creating the Elks National Veterans Service Commission provided that in addition to veterans programs, the Commission would assume responsibility for all patriotic activities of the Order. It was, therefore, deemed advisable to change the name to Elks National Service Commission. This was accomplished by resolution at the 1949 Grand Lodge Session in Cleveland, Ohio.

Wherever veterans are institutionalized, the monotony of their day-to-day existence is being eased by regular programs of entertainment provided by our State Associations, Districts and Lodges. Personal visits by Elks and their spouses bring cheer and comfort to veterans confined to VA Medical Centers and State operated facilities.

At its inception, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission was financed by funds remaining from the Elks War Commission and Lodge donations. As activities expanded, a more reliable form of revenue was needed. Thus, the Grand Lodge approved a 35¢ per capita tax. Through prudent management, the per capita tax was subsequently reduced to 20¢.

This system of funding proved adequate until 1986 when increased costs and declining revenues necessitated the National Foundation taking over as the primary funder. This allowed the Commission to continue providing “seed money” to local hospital committees in the form of monthly allocations.

In over 250 VA Medical Centers, Outpatient Clinics, State Veteran’s Homes and USOs, there is an Elk committee at work. Literally, thousands of Elks and their spouses give generously of their time, energy and resources so that the lives of our ill and aging veterans will be enhanced. Hundreds of thousands of hours and like numbers of dollars are devoted to wholesome programs which are designed to help those in need as we continue *“Serving Our Nation’s Veterans.”*

During the legislative session of the 1995 Grand Lodge convention held in New Orleans, the delegates voted to again change our name back to the Elks National Veterans Service Commission.

Over the years, we have faithfully taken care of veterans housed in our VA Medical Centers. Unfortunately, in many instances, we allowed ourselves to develop “tunnel vision” and our acts of gratitude were almost exclusively done for these individuals while we ignored other veterans who also needed our help.

At the 2001 Grand Lodge convention in Philadelphia, our members voted to change our pledge and remove the words “in our hospitals” and make our pledge more inclusive. It now reads:

**“SO LONG AS THERE ARE VETERANS, THE BENEVOLENT AND PROTECTIVE
ORDER OF ELKS WILL NEVER FORGET THEM”**

While we continue to honor helping our nation’s hospitalized veterans, we now expand our outreach to all veterans.

In addition to our work with hospitalized veterans, we can now help veterans using outpatient clinics as well as those who live alone and have no family or friends to assist them in time of need. We can also assist the homeless veteran in returning to the society he helped protect as well as reaching out to those veterans residing in assisted care living centers.

NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION POLICY

Occasionally the National Veterans Service Commission is asked to intervene in legislation and matters relating to veteran’s benefits. Our position has always been one of non-involvement because this is beyond the guidelines for which we were established. Furthermore, all veterans organizations have machinery in place to properly attend to these matters and they are vigilant. There is nothing that prohibits you, as a private citizen from writing to your Congressmen or Senators to express your views on matters that may affect you or your loved ones, however.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

As provided in Section 4.290 of the Grand Lodge Statutes, the National Veterans Service Commission is comprised of five members. Each member is a Past Grand Exalted Ruler and is appointed for a term of five years. They elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary/Treasurer. Commission members give liberally of their time and experience without remuneration.

Section 4.290 states:

The Elks National Veterans Service Commission shall be composed of five members whose term of office shall be 5 years, and until their respective successors have been appointed and confirmed. The Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

- a. To promulgate and supervise the Order’s program for the benefit of members of the Armed Forces of the United States and the veterans of such services.
- b. To annually elect its Officers.
- c. To adopt rules for the conduct of its business.
- d. To employ personnel.
- e. To require bonds from its Officers and employees.

- f. To pay expenses of the Commission out of the funds under its control, provided that no Commission member shall receive any compensation for his services.
- g. To keep an accurate account of its receipts and expenditures and make an annual report in writing to the Grand Lodge of its activities and expenditures.
- h. To receive funds appropriated by the Grand Lodge for the conduct of the program. All funds in excess of the year’s operating budget shall revert to the Order and be subject to appropriation annually in accordance with the approved budgeted requirements.
- i. To submit its budget to the Board of Grand Trustees for review and approval.

DIRECTOR

The Director works under the supervision of the members of the National Veterans Service Commission and is responsible for the operation of the home office. He is also the Order’s Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Representative.

The Director maintains detailed records of day-to-day transactions and attends to the daily correspondence. He records and files monthly reports from Elks VAVS Representatives in over 250 VA Medical Centers, State Veterans Hospitals and Outpatient Clinics and USOs. It is also his responsibility to see that reports are current before issuing monthly allocation checks.

Additionally, he must maintain close contact with the Commission Chairman and hold himself in readiness to carry out all directives.

VETERANS AFFAIRS VOLUNTARY SERVICE (VAVS)

Since its inception in 1930, the Department of Veterans Affairs has encouraged and sought citizen volunteer assistance in its Medical Centers and Domiciliaries. By 1946, it became obvious that in order to function effectively and eliminate duplication, a viable organization was needed.

Thus, the VAVS was established to provide members of Veterans, Service and Fraternal Organizations an opportunity to assume important roles in determining the quality of life for hospitalized veterans.

The plan included an Advisory Committee comprised of National Representatives of participating organizations. The Order is represented on this prestigious committee by the Director of the National Veterans Service Commission. Through its involvement with VAVS, the Elks provide effective use of its Lodges, members and State Associations in *“Serving Our Nation’s Veterans”*.

The VAVS is made up of 60 National Organizations and meets annually to conduct business, elect officers and hold workshops for the instruction of its members. Regional organizations also render meaningful support to several of these activities.

ADOPT-A-VETERAN PROGRAM

The Adopt-A-Veteran Program can be applied to patients in hospitals, residents of homes or domiciliaries, outpatients, or veterans living in their own homes. The purpose of the program is to establish close and personal contacts with our veterans, to show that *“So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them.”*

National Adopt-A-Veteran Chairman Stewart Israel of Plymouth, Michigan has created a way for a Lodge to get started in six easy steps.

1. Which Veterans can be adopted?

Any veteran, no matter what age or from which era, can be adopted. Veterans can be adopted by more than one Lodge, and feel free to adopt from afar.

- Individuals or groups by ward or floors in the hospital, long term and hospice care units.
- Veterans in assisted living facilities, nursing homes, convalescent homes, retirement and senior living centers.
- Any Veteran still living at home, with limited or no family contact, who is lonely or shut in.
- Veterans in homeless shelters and Hospital Domiciliary programs.

2. Where do I find Veterans to adopt?

- Most facilities, and especially those which are part of the Veterans Administration, have strict privacy laws. You may have to physically visit the hospital, get permission from the individuals, and make up your own list. This list must never be published in the Lodge bulletin or any public media.
- Nursing homes, assisted living, and some senior living facilities have an Activities Director or Social Services representative who may give you the names of the veterans in their facility.
- Churches, Veteran groups, American Legion or VFW posts may give you names of Veterans who are shut in or lonely.
- In your Lodge! The veteran member who no longer visits the Lodge, who is shut in, who doesn't drive, or who may have physical disabilities or limitations. Ask the secretary or an older member.
- Domiciliary and Homeless shelters; These facilities have a continuous drive for comfort items and clothing. Bring the veterans out or cater a meal at their facility. If they are not all Veterans, count the number or percent as determined by the staff of the facility as being adopted when filling out your Veterans Remembrance Report.
- Have a "Veterans Party" and ask attendees to take the names of veterans.

3. How do I get my Lodge to support an Adopted Veteran?

- Have an Adopt-A-Veteran Chairman. The Exalted Ruler can create and appoint an Adopt-A-Veteran Chairperson and Committee.
- Chairperson can assign names of adoptable veterans to volunteers and committee members.
- "Button Hole" members; ask them to support the program. This can be done at meetings, dinners, or parties.
- Get schools, Churches, and other civic and Veteran groups to Adopt-A-Veteran.
- Speak to the groups in your Lodge, Ladies or PER's about adoption.
- Ask the teenage children of Elks, members of the Antlers, and Scouting groups.

4. Now that I have adopted a Veteran, What do I do?

- Hospital groups: help the Elk Hospital chair put on activities. Sponsor Bingo, Horse races, Ice Cream socials, and meals or in the facility. Holiday meals are especially appreciated.
- If the hospital permits the patients to leave the facility, sponsor Fall Color tours, fishing, boat rides, bowling.
- Send the veterans cards on birthdays and holidays. If the names of individuals cannot be obtained, work with the staff and have them distribute 'generic' greeting cards which the staff can distribute on appropriate occasions.
- Drop notes to them or send vacation post cards. Some may have computer access and e-mail.
- Give them small gifts of comfort items on holidays or birthdays.
- Visit them and just chat about their service, their former job, sports, weather, and current events. Let them do most of the talking.
- Phone them to check on how they are doing.

- If you are adopting Homeless Veterans, have a continuous drive for clothing and comfort items for the local shelter or other facility which supports the homeless.
- Provide transportation for Adoptees who are also members, to lodge meetings and other Lodge events.

5. How much will this cost?

It costs little or nothing to visit a veteran, give them a ride, talk to them, or correspond. Personal contact is the most important aspect of the program, but of course it never hurts to show our appreciation. Sometimes the costs of the program are picked up by the individual doing the adopting, or the Lodge can provide modest financial support. This would include cards, postage or small comfort gifts. Larger gifts can be funded through parties, raffles, 50/50's, donations by individuals or lodge groups such as the PER Association or Ladies Auxiliaries.

6. Where can I get additional help or more information?

1. Adopt-A-Vet Chairman Stew Israel — 734-455-4567; e-mail: stewizzy@yahoo.com
2. Elks National Veterans Service Commission Manual

IMPORTANT

- Do not use the Lodge bulletin to publish the names, addresses, and birthdays, or any other personal information concerning veterans.
- Before donating items to a facility, find out their guidelines for donations. Some may only accept new clothing, some may want used books, others do not. Many facilities have specific needs for patient therapy or recreation.

VETERANS COMFORT CARE KITS

There is something else we, in each of our Lodges across this great free country, can do for our veterans which is relatively inexpensive, and that is to provide amenities and necessities for veterans in veterans hospitals, homes, those we have adopted and the all too many homeless veterans. This is another way to show that they are not forgotten and that Elks do care.

Since 1997, The Elks National Veterans Service Commission and Federated Wholesale Inc. have partnered to create 'Comfort Care Kits.' These kits can be tailored for either men or women, and contain items for personal hygiene as well as other useful products. There are several types of kits available, and they can be customized to fit your budget. All products are guaranteed by the FDA, EPA, and other Federal agencies to be both safe and effective. The plastic bag which contains the kits can be printed with the Elks logo, as well as providing space for the veteran's name if you wish to add it. You can purchase individual items in case lots as well.

Federated Wholesale proudly follows a 'Buy American' policy, and employs Veterans to pack the kits whenever possible.

For your next hospital visit, or your next event honoring Veterans, we urge you to add a little something extra for our nation's heroes.

The Federated Wholesale catalogue can be viewed online at: <http://www.federatedcares.com/>

Federated Wholesale, Inc.
3731 Northcrest Road #16
Atlanta, GA 30340

Telephone: 1-800-346-0859
Fax: 1-770-458-2633
E-mail: t.kiker@federatedcares.com

You can also order their catalogue from our office in Chicago. Call, write or e-mail us at:

Elks National Veterans Service Commission
2750 N. Lakeview Avenue
Chicago, IL 60614

Telephone: 773-755-4736
Fax: 773-755-4737
E-mail: vets@elks.org

ARMY OF HOPE

(How easy it can be to start your program)

In February, 2003, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission announced a program of mobilizing an "Army of Hope" to assist the families of Military Reservists and the National Guard who have been called to active duty during this time of crisis.

The news media has called some of our Lodge and national leaders to obtain a local perspective on our program. The response from our members and non-Elks has been overwhelming. Our elected government officials at the local, state and national levels are greatly impressed, and have responded favorable to our initiative.

The "Army of Hope" has many facets and literally any activity that supports our troops and their family falls under this vital program. Lodges are partnering with local and state organizations to adopt units and families to help them through these trying times.

Here is just how easy it can be to contribute to this vital program:

The first step in setting up your local program is to identify a lodge chairperson. This position may be especially attractive to a veteran; however any volunteer can chair your program. The first priority of that chairperson is to establish a list of volunteer members who are willing to provide their individual expertise. In addition, a subsequent list identifying the specific skills of each volunteer will also be helpful in matching the needs of families with the skills of the volunteers. (for example: Volunteer John Doe-minor automobile repairs, Volunteer Jane Doe-painting and "back up" child support).

After you have established your "Army of Hope" volunteers, you will need to make contact with your local Reserve and/or National Guard units. When contacting them explain what the program is and how your Lodge can help the families. (It is understood that not every Lodge will be able to handle every request). You can provide the list of volunteers along with their expertise directly to the local Reserve or Guard units. The military units may then contact the Lodge or the volunteers directly, depending on how you set up your local program.

You still might be thinking what can my small Lodge or State Association specifically do to help? The following are examples of how easy it can be for your Lodge or State Association to make a difference in the lives of our service men and women and their families.

- Have a "family oriented" dinner at the Lodge in honor of our troops and host the families and Guard or Reserve representatives to the Elk volunteers they will be working with.
- Supply the families with phone cards.
- Provide lawn mowing, landscaping or sprinkler service.
- Perform automobile repairs, or transportation when needed.
- Complete minor home repairs, such as plumbing, painting, etc.
- Provide either full time or "back up" babysitting service.
- Send care packages to our troops. (Check with local military bases for requirements and regulations).
- Send copies of the service person's daily home town newspaper.
- Have a photography buff in your volunteer listing? Take some pictures of the soldier's family and possibly some local sights to send to the troop member.
- Host a welcome home party at your Lodge or for the troops that return home and thank them and their families for their service.
- Hold some fund raising activities at the Lodge to provide monetary support to specific families, if identified.

Now that you have seen what some of the other Lodges are doing in their programs, I know with the initiative and creativity of our members and support organizations you will be able to think of hundreds of more ways to help.

STILL don't think your Lodge is large enough to establish it's own "Army of Hope" program, then team up or volunteer with another local organization (V.F.W., etc.) to help them with a program. Even if your Lodge just does one of the tasks listed above, *you can make a difference!*

The final responsibility of the "Army of Hope" chairperson is to take a few minutes to write up a short report and mail it to the office of the Grand Secretary describing the activities on behalf of these families. This will be of immeasurable help as we continue to tell our story of service to these American patriots.

Please send your letters (pictures) and reports to:

"Army of Hope"

Director

Elks National Veterans Service Commission

Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks

2750 North Lakeview Avenue

Chicago, IL 60614-1889

PLAYING CARDS FOR VETERANS

Playing Cards for Veterans is another program that goes hand in hand with our Adopt-A-Veteran Program. This activity will give a hospitalized veteran something to do rather than just passively sitting and watching television. These cards can also be distributed with your comfort care kits. They also can be a part of any activity for our veterans.

Through the hard work of some of our members who have made arrangements with several riverboats and casinos, we are now able to offer playing cards for our hospitalized veterans to use. Each deck of cards is checked to make sure all cards are in good condition and the deck is complete. After the decks are checked, a "Playing Cards for Veterans" sticker with the logo of the Elks National Veterans Service Commission is placed on each deck of cards.

These cards are free of charge.

You can call our director in Chicago. He can put you in touch with the person who sends out these playing cards, and will answer any questions you have about the program.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

- 1.) **Bugles Across America** was founded by Brother Tom Day to provide the playing of TAPS at funerals for all veterans. Youths who play a horn in their school band can sign up to perform this service. Contact:

Tom Day
Bugles Across America
1824 S. Cuyler Avenue
Berwyn, IL 60402-2052
Telephone: (708) 484-9029
E-mail: tomjdaybugles@aol.com

Brother Day can provide you with all the information for playing TAPS at veteran's funerals as well as signing up youngsters for this activity in the area where they live. People as young as 12 years of age are in this program.

- 2.) **The Veterans History Project** is sponsored by the Library of Congress. It involves our volunteers interviewing veterans about their experiences while serving in the military.

The Library of Congress provides a kit that you can use. It contains a list of questions to ask and a release form to be signed by veterans. These forms must accompany the video or audio tape that is sent to the Library of Congress.

You can order your Project Instruction Kit by contacting:

Veterans History Project
American Folklife Center
Library of Congress
101 Independence Ave., S.E.
Washington D.C. 20540-4615
Telephone: (202) 707-4916
Fax: (202) 252-2046
E-mail: vohp@oc.gov
Website: <http://www.loc.gov/vets/>

The completed tapes can also be sent to the above address.

VETERANS LEATHER PROGRAM

(Hides For Veterans)

The Elks National Veterans Service Commission is the major source of hides and tanned leather used for recreational and occupational therapy throughout the Veterans Affairs health-care system. Elks Leather has become a national by-word among veteran patients everywhere.

Time between visits from friends and families can make hospitalization drudgery for our veterans. Leather provides a form of relief by keeping minds active and providing exercise for injured and unused muscles. Veterans often enter wallets, clothing, belts, moccasins and leather paintings in arts and craft shows sponsored by the Elks.

A program is in place whereby tanned leather is cut and sewn into specially designed fingerless gloves to be furnished to veterans confined to wheelchairs, thereby protecting their hands during movement.

BACKGROUND:

The Elks Leather Program was initiated in 1948 when the Elks of California launched a hide gathering program in their state during hunting season. The raw hides were collected at central points and shipped to a Los Angeles tannery for processing. Finished leather, in brilliant colors, was made available to Veterans Medical facilities throughout the State.

To make this popular program available to all VA Medical Centers (VAMCs), the Elks National Veterans Service Commission arranged funding to pay for tanning and shipping of the hides nationwide. Today, many states donate salted hides to support the program. All states are encourage to donate hides, to make use of the “Gloves for Wheelchair Veterans” program and participate in the tanned leather distribution program.

Since the government does not budget money for providing these items for veterans, it falls upon the Elks to keep the supply line open.

The Elks National Veterans Service Commission has pledged that: “While there is a committee of Elks on the job, therapists will never experience a shortage of leather”.

PURPOSE:

In order to continue “*Serving Our Nation’s Veterans*,” the donation of animal hides (which are abundant and often disposed of in many states) is a much-needed segment of the National Veterans Service Commission Leather Program.

Proper preparation of hides prior to shipment to the designated tannery is extremely important. Rotted hides arriving at the tannery are discarded; making freight charges wasteful expenses.

PROCEDURES:

Listed in detail are the proper procedures for processing and preparing salted hides for shipment to the tanneries. Methods to be used to obtain tanned leather and wheelchair gloves for patients are also explained.

PREPARING THE HIDES FOR SHIPMENT

Donated hides come from a variety of locations and individuals such as hunters, farmers, ranchers, slaughter houses, locker plants, taxidermists and highway departments to name just a few. The hides usually can be obtained for our Veteran Leather Program simply by asking, since many of these sources will just dispose of them.

Hides arrive at individual Lodges in various conditions including salted, unsalted, frozen, dry, dirty and in a variety of containers such as boxes or plastic bags. Sometimes they are simply rolled and tied. If hides have already begun to spoil, they cannot be used. Good hides need to be immediately thawed, spread, cleaned and salted in the following manner:

The equipment and material required to prepare hides for storage and shipment are relatively inexpensive and if not already available, may be obtained from local businesses as donations. Otherwise, they may be purchased for a nominal amount.

Hides can be salted on the ground, a clean surface or you may want to use a locally manufactured table. These can be made of barrels or saw horses and plywood.

A container of fine table salt or livestock salt (rock salt will not work) will be needed. You will also need a sharp knife for removing excess fat, flesh, tails and tags.

"Kitty litter" or sawdust under the loaded pallets will absorb much of the remaining juices and odor. Your thoughtfulness will also be appreciated by the truck driver.

Clean up around the salting area is fairly easy. Surgical rubber gloves and old clothing will keep this process safer and more sanitary.

If only a few hides are being prepared for shipment, plastic or cardboard barrels are acceptable. Palletizing of large quantities is preferred as it helps facilitate the quick loading of commercial trucks with the least amount of manpower. This also results in lower transportation costs.

Before being salted, the hide must be examined carefully to determine if it is still good. Spoiled hides can be identified by a peculiar odor, discoloration and if the hair begins to pull away from the hide easily. This means the hide is worthless and should be discarded.

Be very careful when processing hides. Avoid cutting even the smallest holes with a knife. All holes, bullets, arrows or just careless trimming will increase several times when the hides are processed at the tannery. Most tannery equipment stretches the hides and thereby increases the hole sizes. These holes can often change the quality hide into a barely useable one. A quality piece of leather will have very few holes, blemishes or scratches and can be used by the veterans for almost any type of project.

Before salting the hide, excess fat, flesh and the tail should be removed and discarded. Once this is done, fine table salt should be applied over all of the fleshy surface. A small animal will require four to five pounds of salt. A larger animal, such as a cow or an elk, might require as much as twelve pounds of salt.

REMEMBER! YOU CANNOT USE TOO MUCH SALT!

After putting on rubber gloves, the salt should be thoroughly rubbed into all fleshy areas of the hide. Areas not salted will allow bacteria to develop and spread throughout the hide. The juices of the hide will mix with the salt and create a brine that will prevent bacteria growth.

When salting is completed, the edges of the hide should be folded in four to six inches to keep the moisture inside. This will keep the hides soft and pliable until they reach the tannery.

Processing hides that have been allowed to dry out is not cost-effective. They must be re-constituted in salt water, and then salted again before shipping. This is a labor-intensive time consuming process that should be avoided.

There are a couple of ways that the hides can be stacked on pallets after they have been salted and the edges rolled.

1. In colder climates, the hides, with the edges folded, can just be placed on the pallet, hair side down, one on top of the other.
2. In warmer climates, hides tend to spoil more rapidly. It is strongly recommended that these hides be again folded side to side and then placed on the pallet. This will help keep them in good condition until they reach the tannery.

Be sure to square up the pallet. This will facilitate the loading of the hides onto the commercial trucks with fork-lifts. In this regard, care should be taken to not overload the pallets to the point that the fork lift cannot get under the pallet to lift the hides.

Most commercial truck lines will require that the pallets be wrapped with shrink wrap.

When the hides are prepared, the containers of hides can be stored in a secure area, such as a CONEX container, discarded semi-truck trailer, shed, barn or just a fenced area, if inside storage is not available. Once the hides have been transported to the designated State collection point(s), the Director of the Elks National Veterans Service Commission, the Chairman of the Veterans Leather Program or one of the assigned Vice-Chairmen should then be notified. They will arrange for the most efficient transportation to the tannery. Their phone numbers are listed on the front of this manual, and on other Grand Lodge publications.

The Elks National Veterans Service Commission will pay the expenses for the transporting of salted hides from pre-designated State collection points to the tanneries. It will also cover the expense of tanning these hides.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- No hides should be individually sent to the tanneries.
- They should never be mailed “C.O.D” or by parcel post.
- Deposit hides at locally designated Lodge collection points as determined by your State Veterans Service Chairman or State Hides/Leather Chairman. The tanneries are not equipped to receive, sort, grade and account for small shipments from the Elks. Because tanneries are extending themselves above and beyond normal expectations to assist in our committee’s effort to serve our most deserving veterans, it is in our best interest to meet their requirements.
- The National Leather Program Chairman will coordinate tannery activities.

LEATHER AND GLOVE PROCUREMENT

To procure tanned leather or fingerless gloves for wheelchair veterans, a requisition (as shown on pages 29 and 30 in the National Veterans Service Commission Manual) must be submitted to the National Veterans Service Commission office in Chicago, by the Elks Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) Representative or the Elk Representative at a State Veteran’s Home. The Elk submitting the form must fill in their name and address, as the leather and gloves will be shipped to no other person. Leather cannot be shipped to post office boxes.

The form must be signed by the Chief of Occupational or Recreational Therapy at VA Medical Centers or the person who will supervise the program at State Veteran’s Homes.

Requests that are exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Director in Chicago.

It is the responsibility of the Elks receiving the leather and gloves to see that they are only used for their intended purpose. It is recommended that the gloves be presented to wheelchair bound veterans by Elk members to receive maximum effect for the veterans and our organization.

HELP HOSPITALIZED VETERANS LEATHER CRAFT KITS

Recently, many Veterans Medical Facilities decided that due to the danger involved, they would no longer allow hospitalized veterans to have sharp instruments in their possession. This required the occupational and recreational therapists, which were often in short supply, to cut the tanned leather into workable pieces for the veterans projects. This created a decline in tanned leather being ordered through the Veterans Leather Program.

Because of this, the Elks have formed a partnership with Help Hospitalized Veterans to have leather craft kits manufactured with our tanned leather and shipped to hospitalized veterans nationwide at no cost to our Order. Help Hospitalized Veterans (HHV) is a non-profit organization located in Southern California, which was founded in 1970. They have provided countless numbers of various craft kits to our most deserving veterans. HHV is supported by donations and pledges from citizens across the nation who want to make a difference in hospitalized veterans lives.

The kits that are prepared with our donated leather are embossed with our Elks logo and contain literature about the Elks. Additionally, in each packaged kit is a pre-paid post card that the veteran is encouraged by the therapists to fill out and send to the Elks National Veterans Service Commission. Thousands of these heart-warming cards are on file at our Chicago office and are available for viewing.

The kits are automatically sent to the therapists in the various Veterans Medical Facilities to be distributed to the veterans, thereby saving the Elks VAVS personnel from being involved in the distribution of the craft kits. Should therapists desire more information on the distribution method for these kits, they are encouraged to contact Help Hospitalized Veterans at www.HHV.Org on the internet, or by calling them at 1 (888) 567-8387.

MEDALS OF VALOR

Medals of Valor that can be presented to deserving families of those who have made the supreme sacrifice in the conflicts in Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom) and Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom).

These medals are made in the United States and come in a presentation case. The back of the medal is suitable for engraving the name of the deceased service person. The cost per medal is \$8.00, which covers all shipping charges.

If you know of a family in your community who lost a loved one in Iraq, you may want to honor that person by presenting a Medal of Valor to that family. You could set a time of presentation at the Lodge or some other suitable venue in your area. Just contact us at Elks National Veterans Service Commission, 2750 N. Lakeview Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614 or send an e-mail to vets@elks.org to order your medal(s) and we will promptly ship them to you.

The Medal of Valor comes in two parts. The left two images are of the front of the medal. The right two images are of the back of the medal.



VIDEO AND HISTORY

In July 1995, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission proudly unveiled a video which describes our work with our nation's veterans. It was updated in 2002 by removing the words "*in our hospitals*" to coincide with the change to our pledge voted on by the delegates at the National Convention in Philadelphia on July 11, 2001.

Our story is eloquently told in this seven and one-half minute video. It dramatically recounts our work from assisting the war effort in 1917 right through to our commitment to today's veterans.

We have also developed a **Concise History Of The Elks National Veterans Service Commission**. This history is a perfect companion piece to our video. They both can be used for public display or when addressing civic groups. You may also use them as part of your program to recruit volunteers to work with our veterans.

The video and history will also serve as helpful tools to be used with your Lodge's indoctrination program.

VAVS REPRESENTATIVES

Every organization whose members participate in the VAVS program may certify one Representative and up to three Deputy Representatives to the medical facility's VAVS Advisory Committee. Deputy Representatives are to work closely with the Representative to fulfill our obligation of caring for veteran patients at the VA Medical Center.

When members cross a state line to serve as volunteers, one VAVS Associate Representative and one Associate Deputy Representative may be certified from that neighboring state.

The certification of Representatives to the Director of the VA Medical Center is done by the Director of the Elks National Veterans Service Commission. VAVS Representatives and Associate Representatives must be endorsed by the Past Grand Exalted Ruler of jurisdiction. Deputy Representatives must be endorsed by a State Association official or the Representative.

A VAVS Representative must demonstrate a sincere interest in the welfare of hospitalized veterans and have the ability to work with others. He must have the full support of our organization and be able to promote and coordinate the program among the local Lodges.

He must be able to attend the quarterly meetings of the Medical Center VAVS Advisory Committee. A Deputy Representative should be on hand if the Representative is unable to attend.

The following is taken from the VHA Handbook, 1620.1 (page 7). The paragraph referring to Termination of Membership (on local VAVS Committees) states:

"Organizations will be removed from the VAVS Committee when none of the certified members are in attendance at three consecutive meetings of the VAVS Advisory Committee."

Page 8 (paragraph 9) further states:

"Attendance by any certified representative of the organization will constitute representation of the organization at the meeting."

THE VA BEGAN STRICT ADHERENCE TO THIS DIRECTIVE ON OCTOBER 1, 1994.

Don't jeopardize the good name of the Elks or the work we do with our veterans. MAKE SURE SOMEONE ATTENDS THE QUARTERLY VAVS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

The National Veterans Service Commission provides financial assistance in the form of a monthly allocation. The funds go to a State Association official who in turn distributes allocations to VAVS Representatives within the state. These funds can only be used for the benefit of the veterans of the facility at which you serve.

Each VAVS Representative must file a monthly report with their State National Veterans Service Chairman. The report must be turned in within 15 days of the end of the reporting month. A sample copy of this report is illustrated on page 31 of this manual and is also available online. If reporting becomes delinquent, the Director is required to withhold funding until reporting is brought to a current status.

You should also send a copy of each monthly report to the Past Grand Exalted Ruler of jurisdiction of your State. The form is pretty self-explanatory, but if you have a question, just ask your State NVSC Chairman or call this office. The hospital activity report can also be found on our website Elks.org under the National Veterans Service Commission section.

It should be emphasized that money provided by the Veterans Service Commission is not intended to finance an entire program. Its purpose is to ensure continuity of activity. If meaningful services are to be rendered throughout the year, additional fund raising is essential. The record shows that State Associations, Districts, Lodges and individuals are willing supporters when called upon to assist in the fulfillment of our pledge of eternal remembrance.

There should be no doubt that the person in charge of all Elk programs at VA Medical Centers is the Representative certified by the National Veterans Service Commission. He is responsible for coordinating the activities of our members and spouses. He must enlist the support of Deputy Representatives, State, District and Lodge Chairmen and make the best use possible of the tools available to him.

Finally, the VAVS Representative must maintain an excellent rapport with representatives of other organizations and always keep in mind that what he does and says reflects directly on the Order.

RE-CREATION

Since 1986, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission has been partners with Re-Creation USA in providing entertainment to our nation's veterans who are housed in VA Medical Centers. Re-Creation is a group of young men and women between the ages of 18 and 26, who have given a year of their lives to perform this act of love. They do so with no salary.

Our commitment is to provide these entertainers (approximately 12 of them) with lodging and a meal before they move on to their next destination.

Re-Creation will contact our VAVS Representatives several weeks before their visit to the VA Medical Centers. They will be told of Re-Creation's needs during their visit and will work directly with them.

The VAVS Representative should then contact the State NVSC Chairman, Exalted Rulers and Lodge National Veterans Service Committee Chairmen in the area of the VA Medical Center and ask them to help fulfill our commitment.

To provide a safe, relaxing environment, the Re-Creation group is put up in motels as a group. They require 4 rooms, sleeping 3 to a room. In most instances, lodging in motels can be done for very reasonably.

Many Lodges choose to feed the group after the show and send them off to their next destination well nourished. Again, this is up to the VAVS Representative and the Lodges as to how they want to handle this.

Should the VAVS Representative and the Lodges have trouble raising money to house these people, call the Director at (773) 755-4736. He will be able to give suggestions on how to solve this problem.

If every Lodge does just a little, we can do a lot to assist Re-Creation USA help us keep our pledge to hospitalized veterans.

Please visit our website for more information and scheduling: elks.org/vets/programs

STATE CHAIRMAN

In order to obtain maximum use of our resources, and to continue “*Serving Our Nation’s Veterans*”, it is important that every Lodge participate in the National Veterans Service Commission Program in some manner. In this endeavor, the State Chairman, assisted by the State Vice-Chairman when applicable, plays a vital role.

Accomplishment of the following specific tasks is deemed essential in the development, initiation, and continuation of a quality National Veterans Service Program with the State Associations:

1. Develop an awareness of:
 - a) The National Veterans Service Commission Program.
 - b) The Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) program.
 - c) Location of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers (VAMCs) and Out-Patient Clinics (OPCs) within the state(s).
 - d) Name and phone number of Chief, Voluntary Service at each VA Medical facility.
 - e) Name and phone number of Director of Volunteers at State Veterans Homes.
 - f) Location of Active Service Hospitals within the state(s).
 - g) Names and phone numbers of Service Officers at the Active Service Hospitals.
2. Establish a good working relationship with:
 - a) Past Grand Exalted Ruler(s) of jurisdiction.
 - b) President of the State Association.
 - c) Director, National Veterans Service Commission.
 - d) National Chairman, Adopt-A-Veteran Program.
 - e) National Chairman, Veterans Leather Program.
 - f) National Chairman, Playing Cards for Veterans.
 - g) Director, Re-Creation.
3. Accomplish the following tasks on an on-going basis: (Not in order of importance)
 - a) Reinforce implementation of current National Veterans Service Commission Program within Districts and Lodges to include emphasis on Army of Hope, Veterans Leather, Adopt-A-Veteran, and Playing Cards for Veterans Programs.
 - b) Train, motivate and support assigned National Veterans Service personnel at District and Lodge level. The Elks National Veterans Service Commission video is a very useful tool to assist you in your training program.

- c) Recognize any and all positive actions publicly.
- d) Publicize efforts within every area of program.
- e) Cause all efforts to be documented.
- f) Insure all information is shared between State Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
- g) Write "Elk" article(s), using photographs when possible, for publication in State newspaper and the Elks' magazine. Check the Elks Magazine website for their guide to submitting articles: <http://www.elks.org/elksmag/FraternalGuidelines.pdf>
- h) Submit expense vouchers to State Association in a timely manner with supporting receipts.
- i) Maintain helpful, but firm, relationship with District Chairmen to direct and motivate them in rendering meaningful support to programs designed to raise the quality of life for ailing veterans.
- j) Keep assigned District Deputy Grand Exalted Rulers and State Vice-Presidents informed and enhance their support by providing them with copies of your committee documentation.
- k) Develop future State National Veterans Service Programs based on the changing needs of veterans.
- l) Prepare, announce and present, as needed, National Veterans Service Committee seminars. Gather, review and implement appropriate changes in National Veterans Service Commission Program and its sub-programs: Army of Hope, Adopt-A-Veteran, Veterans Leather, and Playing Cards for Veterans Programs.
- m) Continue to update and disseminate information on programs and procedures, tools, forms, etc.
- n) Develop annual budget and insure its compliance, once approved.
- o) Prepare Annual Performance Evaluations on District National Veterans Service Committee Chairmen and the State Vice-Chairman of National Veterans Service.
- p) Prepare and man lobby display at annual conventions and mid-term conferences (when applicable).
- q) Screen, approve/disapprove and forward to Past Grand Exalted Ruler(s) of jurisdiction for approval, requests for certification of VAVS Representatives. In order to be certified as a VAVS Representative, the nominee must have the approval of the State Sponsor(s).
- r) Screen, approve/disapprove, forward requests to Past Grand Exalted Ruler(s) of jurisdiction, for certification of VAVS Deputy Representatives.
- s) Publish and distribute, as needed, a BPOE VAVS Representative - Deputy Representative directory.
- t) Attend quarterly VAVS meetings at VAMC.
- u) Visit each District annually for assistance, problem solving, training, speaking, and awards presentation.
- v) Working with the State President, select one outstanding Elk and one outstanding spouse volunteer each year for special recognition by National Veterans Service Commission. (This award can only be given once to an individual.)
- w) Visit each VA medical facility not less than annually to maintain working relationship and to stay apprised of effectiveness of BPOE involvement.
- x) Visit State Veterans Home(s) not less than annually to maintain working relationship and to stay apprised of effectiveness of BPOE involvement.
- y) Maintain filing system for pertinent copies of historical data.

One of the most important responsibilities of serving as State Chairman of the National Veterans Service Commission is to keep the lines of communication open. To accomplish this, return phone calls as quickly as possible and answer all correspondence promptly.

The record shows that the measure of success achieved in the State Association is in direct proportion to the quality of leadership of the State Chairman.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECOMMENDING A NEW FACILITY

Recommendations for a new facility can come from a member, Lodge Veterans Chairman, a VAVS Representative or VAVS Deputy Representative, a State Sponsor, or any State Officer. A recommendation may even come from the director or manager of the facility itself who know of the work done by the Elks.

New facilities can only be approved after research is done by local members. It is critical to know in advance the purpose of the facility, its size, and how the Elks can provide service. In addition, a local Elk or Elks need to be willing to serve there as VAVS Representatives and or Deputy Representatives.

The amount of funding usually depends on the size of the facility and how many patients are served. Outpatient clinics and smaller facilities, if approved, generally receive the minimum, currently \$100/month.

After research on the local level, and after approval by the State President and State sponsor, the NVSC State Chairman must agree to the proposal. If in agreement that there is a need for funding, the NVSC State Chairman should then submit the proposal to our headquarters in Chicago. The Elks National Veterans Service Commission has a form specifically created for proposing new facilities.

Researched and approved proposals will be put on the agenda of the next meeting of the Elks National Service Commission Advisory meetings. Advisory meetings occur twice a year, once in February and once in July at the National Convention.

If approved by vote of the Commission, our headquarters will notify the State Chairman and State President. Funding cannot begin until a VAVS Representative is in place at the facility. It is good practice to recommend a VAVS Representative at the same time as the recommendation of the facility. *(Each facility can have one *VAVS Representative and up to three *VAVS Deputy Representatives).*

It is important to remember that funding for a facility cannot begin until an approved VAVS Representative is in place to receive the funds. However, a facility can be approved by the Elks National Veterans Service Commission at an advisory meeting, even without a VAVS Representative in place. Funding would begin as soon as the VAVS Representative is approved by the State Sponsor.

**Although the terms VAVS Representative and VAVS Deputy Representative (Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service) are titles created by the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission uses those titles for volunteers at state run facilities as well.*

DISTRICT CHAIRMAN

The first thing to be done as District Chairman is to compile a District Directory with the names, addresses and phone numbers of every Exalted Ruler, Lodge Secretary and Lodge National Veterans Service Committee Chairman in your district. Make yourself known to each because your relationship with them will determine the measure of your success.

Then get to know your State Chairman and VAVS Representatives and try to secure from them a list of activities that they would like to see carried out during the year. Add to this some thoughts of your own.

The next step is for you to visit each Lodge in your district (if not geographically feasible, use the phone) and arrange a meeting with the Lodge Chairman and the Exalted Ruler. Go over your list of programs and select at least one activity the Lodge would like to handle. Seek out the Exalted Ruler's permission to address the Lodge and explain to him what you are going to say.

Have the basic thought of your speech prepared ahead of time; speak briefly and enthusiastically. Express your confidence in the Lodge Chairman and urge that the Lodge support the Chairman's efforts. Incorporate the Elks National Veterans Service Commission Video into your speech. If the Lodge has a VCR available, show the video. It is only seven and one-half minutes long. The video vividly tells our story and will further accentuate your message.

Some State Associations provide for reimbursement when travel is excessive. Any questions in this regard should be directed to your State Chairman. Please keep in mind that funds provided by the National Veterans Service Commission are to be applied to programs benefiting our nation's veterans only and are not to be used for personal expenses incurred.

You are the link between the State Chairman and the Lodges. In order for you to succeed, the lines of communication must be kept open at all times. You must familiarize yourself with the financial capabilities of all your Lodges. You should use utmost care in getting a Lodge involved only in programs it can handle without putting pressure on their budget.

Occasional district meetings with all the Lodge Chairmen present can be very helpful if conducted properly. If you encourage open discussion, you will more than likely come up with some useful new ideas. Do not place the Lodges in a position of competing against one another, but keep stressing the importance to each Lodge that they are members of a team doing its part to help our veterans.

You will find your District Deputy most cooperative because if the District involves itself 100%, he stands to get special recognition from the National Veterans Service Commission. Use his office, as well as the Vice-President's, to put your program together. They will be happy to pitch in and your task will be made much easier.

LODGE CHAIRMAN

Section 13.130 of the Grand Lodge Statutes outlines the duties of the Lodge National Veterans Service Committee Chairman. This person should be appointed by the Exalted Ruler. Section 13.130 states:

The National Veterans Service Committee shall implement the program of the Elks National Veterans Service Commission within the Lodge as may be requested by the Commission in the furtherance of service to veterans, assist when called upon by the Armed Forces of the United States, respond to any call for aid and cooperation as might be requested by our National Government in any emergency and to be available for cooperation in the event of disaster in any local area of the United States.

The Lodge level is where everything begins. If the Lodge does not lend its support to a program, all efforts by others are futile. As a Lodge Chairman, it is your responsibility to motivate your members to actively participate in our programs. Make sure your Lodge has a copy of the Elks National Veterans Service Commission video and the companion piece, *Concise History Of The Elks National Veterans Service Commission*. Use them. These items will help you motivate your Lodge to become active volunteers in our Army of Hope. Through your District Chairman, you should determine the needs of the VA or State facility you are serving and in what way you can meet these needs.

Strive to set up your program for the year by planning only the activities you feel the Lodge can handle. Do not burden the Lodge with programs it may find difficult to undertake. Keep in mind that when you go into a hospital, you are on public display. Every caution must be taken to see that the image of the Order remains unblemished.

You should attend at least one regular Lodge meeting a month, and report the activities and plans of your committee on the floor. Remember, you are operating under license of the Lodge and it is entitled to know what your committee is doing. Also, by describing what you are trying to accomplish, you will find that the members will be more inclined to your cause and volunteers will become more evident.

Do not hesitate to avail yourself of the assistance of the ladies of your Lodge. They are imaginative and diligent workers who enjoy helping. They can be an invaluable asset to your program.

A good leader encourages those associated with him to express their thoughts, so that he can sift through them and determine for himself which ideas are most innovative and practical.

VETERANS REMEMBRANCE MONTH

Keep in mind that November is Veterans Remembrance Month and all Lodges are asked to run a special event for the benefit of your committee. Clear a date with your Exalted Ruler well in advance, so you will have time to properly plan the evening. Enlist as much help as you can gather, put together a program that your membership will enjoy, and promote it to insure good attendance. Take the proceeds and put them to good use, to make a lot of veterans smile. Do not plan anything without the prior knowledge of your District Chairman and VAVS Representative. In this way, you can direct your efforts where they are needed most. A great number of Lodges use the proceeds for special events in the VA Medical Center during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Some Lodges even bring those veterans who are able to take part in special programs and functions.

VETERAN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

As Elks, we are proud of the work our members, their spouses, families and friends perform with the veterans of our Armed Forces. It is proper for us to recognize the commitment and dedication of the volunteers in our Army of Hope.

The Veteran Volunteer of the Year Award honors those who have dedicated themselves to *"Serving Our Nation's Veterans."*

VETERAN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR CRITERIA

This award program permits State Associations to honor two Elks or an Elk and a spouse of an Elk, who have given extraordinary service to our nation's veterans. **EACH STATE CAN HONOR ONE MALE AND ONE FEMALE.**

The State National Veterans Service Commission Chairman should coordinate this program if a State desires to participate. The Chairman should work closely with the State President and a Committee established for judging nominations.

Nominees for this award must meet one of the following criteria:

- 1) Work with hospitalized veterans;
- 2) Work with veterans at Outpatient Clinics;
- 3) Work with veterans in Nursing Homes;
- 4) Work with homeless veterans;
- 5) Work with veterans and veterans groups within the community;
- 6) Host veterans' functions in the Lodge — Memorial Day, July 4th and Veterans Day observances, Thanksgiving Dinner, Christmas Party, etc.;
- 7) Host veterans' functions outside the Lodge — fishing trips, day at the races, baseball games, etc.;
- 8) Visit veterans confined to their home; or
- 9) Adopt-A-Veteran.

Those eligible for the award are: Elks and their spouses, VAVS Representatives, VAVS Deputy Representatives, members who visit the VA Medical Centers, Nursing Homes, etc. or work at Lodge veteran functions either within or outside the Lodge.

There will be two awards per State Association.

WHEN YOU SUBMIT A NOMINATION FOR AN ELK, LIST THE MEMBER'S NAME PLUS LODGE NAME AND NUMBER IN THE UPPER LEFT HAND CORNER OF THE PAPER.

Nominations for Veteran Volunteer of the Year must be submitted in narrative form, not to exceed 300 words, to the State NVSC Chairman, or the designated judging committee chairman, by January 31st of each year. The Judging Committee, with the assistance of the State NVSC Chairman, will select the winners (one Elk and one spouse of an Elk), and submit their names and other pertinent information to the National Veterans Service Commission office by February 28th of each year, so that inscribed certificates and watches can be sent for presentation at the State Convention.

Award letters postmarked after February 28th will not be considered. Winners will not be eligible for future selection. This will enable other volunteers to receive recognition.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SELECTING A DEDICATED REPRESENTATIVE

Select someone whose schedule will allow them to spend time at the medical center to attend VAVS meetings, meet with the organization's volunteers and participate in other activities such as: regular volunteer assignment, medical center committees (as assigned), holiday events, etc.

Select someone who is able to make contact with Lodges in the service area to recruit volunteers, explain the VAVS program and report on other medical center news as appropriate.

Select someone who has leadership abilities.

Select someone who has thorough knowledge of the Order of Elks.

Select someone who has the ability to interpret the VAVS program.

Select someone who can work with others from a variety of backgrounds...**A TEAM PLAYER!**

Select someone who expresses a sincere interest and enthusiasm in being a representative for the Elks National Veterans Service Commission.

IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT POTENTIAL VAVS REPRESENTATIVES MEET WITH THE CHIEF OF VOLUNTARY SERVICE AT THE LOCAL VAMC TO DISCUSS THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POSITION BEFORE ACCEPTING APPOINTMENT.

SUGGESTED MEDICAL CENTER NEEDS

The lists below are only possibilities. Please contact your local facility to determine their actual needs, standards for materials, and rules for distribution. Your local Elks VAVS representative should be able to assist you.

1. **GENERAL SUPPLIES:**

Lap Robes, Slippers, Bibs, Handkerchiefs, Stationery, Envelopes, Pens, Pencils, Postage Stamps, Deodorants, Shampoos, Razors, Shaving Cream, Nail Files, Sewing Kits.

2. **LIBRARY SUPPLIES:**

Paperbacks (Western-Detective-Historical) books on CD and CD players, Pictorial Magazines (*People, Us, National Geographic, Popular Mechanics, Popular Science, Crossword Puzzle Magazine, Reader's Digest*, etc.) **Magazines should not be over 3 months old.**

3. **GREETING CARDS:**

NEW ONLY — Christmas, Valentine, Birthday, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day and "All Occasion" Assortment.

4. **ART SUPPLIES:**

Water Paints, Poster Paints, Brushes, Crayons, Colored Pencils, Colored Markers, Art Paper.

5. **OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AND MANUAL ARTS SUPPLIES:**
Felt, Yarn, Masonite, Peg Board, Carpet Rags (rolled), Leather, Used Nylon Hose (for rugs and stuffing animals), Plastic Upholstery Materials, Foam Rubber (granulated or pieces), Ceramic Tiles, Plastic Kits.
6. **FISHING SUPPLIES:**
Cane Poles, Rods and Reels, Hooks, Bobbers, Lead Shots, Leaders, Small Individual Tackle Boxes, Bait Boxes.
7. **GREENHOUSE SUPPLIES:**
Flower Vases, Heavy Vases (glass, ceramic or metal), Floral Table Centerpiece Dishes (low, flat pieces).
8. **GOLF EQUIPMENT:**
Balls, Clubs, Bags, Carts, Putters, Tees.
9. **MUSIC SUPPLIES:**
Good Condition — Compact Discs, Phonograph Records (33 and 45 RPM only), Audio Tapes, Guitars, Beginning Method Books.
10. **SMALL APPLIANCES:**
Hot-Air Popcorn Poppers, AM-FM Radios, Tape Players, CD Players, Portable Music Devices, Televisions, Video Players, Computers, and other modern devices.
11. **GAMES:**
Dominoes, Checkers, Playing Cards, Monopoly, Hand-Held electronics, Gaming Consoles and Games
12. **GENERAL:**
Homemade Cookies and Pastries, Flower Arrangements, Canteen Books, Afghans, Wheelchair Cushion Covers (3-4 inches thick), Ditty and Wheelchair Bags.

SUGGESTED WELCOME KIT FOR NEW PATIENTS

- Safety Razor and pack of blades (Check with VA facility first.)
- Shaving Cream
- Comb
- Mirror (4 x 6 or larger)
- Nail Clipper and File
- Toothbrush, Toothpaste, or Denture Cup with Cleaner
- After Shave Lotion or Perfume – Non-alcoholic
- Hair Shampoo, Non-alcoholic Hair Dressing and Hair Spray
- Deodorant – Non-alcoholic
- Toilet Soap with container (Check with VA facility first.)

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Hair Brush
- Pre-Electric Shave Lotion – Non-alcoholic
- Body Talc
- Foot Powder
- Postage Stamps
- Stationery
- Facial Tissues
- Gum or Lifesavers
- Canteen Coupon Book
- Pair of Slippers
- Ball Point Pens
- Pre-Paid Phone Cards

SUGGESTED ON-STATION PROGRAMS

Coffee Social - Bowling - Pool Tournaments - Swimming Events - Choral Groups - Gymnastic Programs - Softball Games - Chess Games - Movies - Ward Socials - Variety Shows - Dances - Wheelchair Bowling - Hobby Shows - Radio Clubs - Physical Fitness Programs - Monte Carlo Nights - Bingo - Jazz Concerts - Magic Shows - Western Music & Square Dances - Arts & Crafts Contests - Stage Plays - Special Holiday Parties - Letter Writing - Card Games - Bingo.

OFF-STATION PROGRAMS

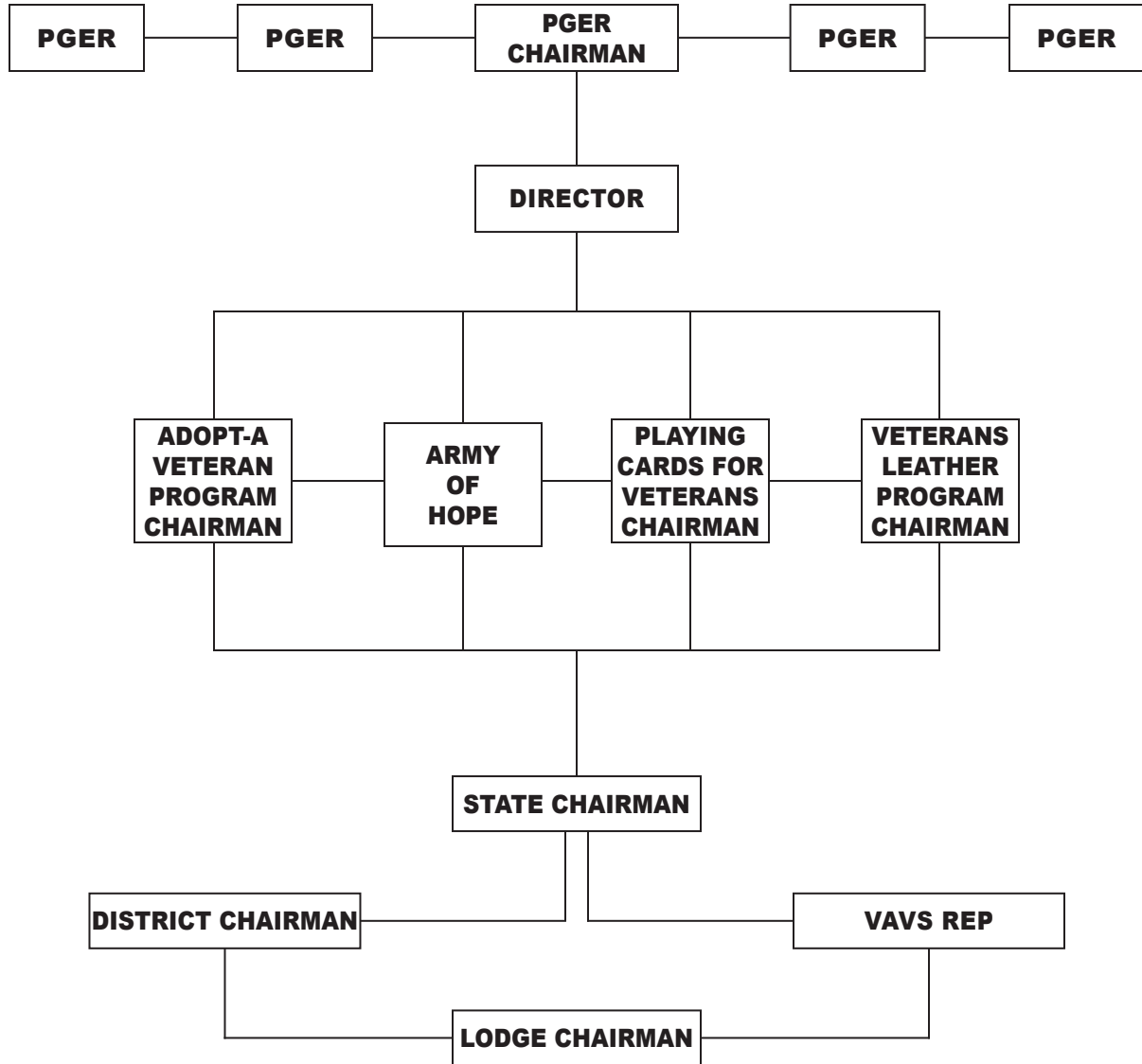
Dinner at the Lodge - Picnic at the Lodge or suitable grounds - Fishing Trips - Golf Matches - Concerts - Sporting Events - Sightseeing Tours - Stage Plays - Movies - Lodge Social- Skiing.

HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

New Years Day - Lincoln's Birthday - Valentines Day - Washington's Birthday - St. Patrick's Day - Good Friday - Easter - Mother's Day - Memorial Day - Father's Day - Independence Day - Anniversary of VA (July 21) - Labor Day - Columbus Day - Veterans Day - Thanksgiving Day - Christmas Eve - Christmas Day.

— ORGANIZATIONAL TABLE —

THE ELKS NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION



Members of the Veterans Service Commission are appointed by the Grand Exalted Ruler.

The Director is engaged by the Veterans Service Commission.

The State Chairman is appointed by the State President.

The VAVS Representative is appointed by the State Chairman with the approval of the State President and the Past Grand Exalted Ruler of Jurisdiction.

The District Chairman is appointed by the District Vice-President.

The Lodge Chairman is appointed by the Exalted Ruler.

**Elks National
Veterans
Service Commission**



"Serving Our Nation's Veterans"

VETERANS LEATHER PROGRAM
Dennis McAleese, Chairman
384 County Road 853,
Elizabeth, AR 72531-9603
Phone: (870) 488-9603
E- Mail: kdmc@mtnhome.com

**VETERANS LEATHER PROGRAM
LEATHER ORDER FORM**

DATE: _____

NAME: _____
(VAVS Representative or VAVS Deputy Representative at VAMCs or State Homes)

ADDRESS: _____
(Mailing Address - NO P.O. BOXES)

(City) (State) (Zip Code)

PHONE: _____

VAMC OR STATE VETERANS HOME

NAME: _____ NO. OF BEDS: _____

ADDRESS: _____
(Mailing Address - NO P.O. BOXES)

(City) (State) (Zip Code)

CONTACT PERSON: _____

PHONE: _____

LEATHER ORDER

	NUMBER OF PIECES	COMMENTS (Type of Animal)
Skin	_____	_____
Hide	_____	_____

Printed Name: _____

Signed: _____
Chief, Occupational Therapy/Recreational Therapy

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Order Number	_____
Date:	_____

"So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them"

Or Manager of State Home or Other Facility

**Elks National
Veterans
Service Commission**



"Serving Our Nation's Veterans"

VETERANS LEATHER PROGRAM
Dennis McAleese, Chairman
384 County Road 853,
Elizabeth, AR 72531-9603
Phone: (870) 488-9603
E- Mail: kdmc@mtnhome.com

FINGERLESS LEATHER GLOVE ORDER FORM

DATE: _____

NAME: _____
(VAVS Representative or VAVS Deputy Representative at VAMCs or State Homes)

ADDRESS: _____
(Mailing Address - NO P.O. BOXES)

(City) (State) (Zip Code)

PHONE: _____

VAMC OR STATE VETERANS HOME

NAME: _____ NO. OF BEDS: _____

ADDRESS: _____
(Mailing Address - NO P.O. BOXES)

(City) (State) (Zip Code)

CONTACT PERSON: _____

PHONE: _____

WHEELCHAIR GLOVE ORDER

(Limit -- 24 per order)

**NUMBER OF
GLOVES REQUESTED**

_____ Small
_____ Medium
_____ Large
_____ Extra Large

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Order Number: _____
Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Signed: _____
Chief, Occupational Therapy/Recreational Therapy
Or Manager of State Home or Other Facility

"So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them"

IMPORTANT

OUR AUDITORS INSIST THIS REPORT *MUST* BE FILED WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER PROGRAM AT HOSPITAL OR ALLOTMENTS WILL BE STOPPED UNTIL IT IS RECEIVED.

Mail, Fax or E-mail the completed form to your State NVSC Chairperson.

ELKS NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION
2750 N. Lakeview Avenue • Chicago, Illinois 60614-1889 • Phone (773) 755-4736

Hospital Entertainment Report for Month of 20.....

Name of Hospital Address

Facility Type: Hospital Outpatient Nursing Home Other # of Beds

Do you need assistance? *N/A* Do other Lodges assist? *N/A* If not, have you asked them? *N/A*

INCOME **FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Name of Bank where allotment checks are deposited.....				
Cash on hand at first of month (beginning balance).....				
Received from Elks National Veterans Service Commission.....				
Received from State Association				
Received from Lodge				
Other Source				
TOTAL RECEIPTS				
DISBURSEMENTS				
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS				

PLEASE ITEMIZE:

.....				
.....				
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS				
Balance at end of month.....				

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM(S).....
(use next page if more space is needed)

.....

Total number of patients Number of Elks volunteers Number of non-Elk volunteers.....

Date of this report.....

WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS
PLEASE USE OTHER SIDE OF REPORT



.....
 Name of VAVS Representative in charge

Home or Office Address.....

City State Zip.....

Phone: ().....

Lodge No.

ITEMS AVAILABLE FROM NVSC

NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

LODGE NAME AND NUMBER: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

(NO P.O. BOXES)

(City)

(State)

(Zip Code)

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

ITEM	QUANTITY
NVSC VIDEO	
NVSC DVD	
“CONCISE HISTORY” PAMPHLETS (100 per Pkg.)	
NVSC LAPEL PIN	
HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED PIN	
MEDAL OF VALOR	
NVSC LAPEL PATCH	
NVSC BASEBALL CAPS*	
BUMPER STICKERS (100 per Pkg.)	
LEATHER – INSTRUCTIONAL DVD (Available to State Chairman Only)	
LEATHER – INSTRUCTIONAL PAMPHLETS (100 per Pkg.)	
Elks Support our Veterans Car Ribbon Magnets	

Call Commission office in Chicago for current prices - (773) 755-4736
MAIL TO: 2750 N. Lakeview Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614-1889

CRITERIA FOR ADOPT-A-VETERAN PROGRAM

I. Which Veterans are adoptable?

1. Veterans in Veterans hospitals.
2. Veterans in Assisted Care Living Centers, Nursing, Convalescent and Retirement homes.
3. Any Veteran with limited, or no family who is lonely.
4. Elks who qualify in numbers 1, 2 or 3.

II. Where do I find Veterans to adopt?

1. Elk Hospital chairmen can obtain lists from the hospital. Veterans can be adopted by more than one Lodge, or one person.
2. Nursing homes usually have an Activities Director or Social Services Representative who can give you names of veterans, especially those who have no family or few visitors.
3. Churches, or other groups, may give you the name of a veteran who is shut in and lonely.

III. How do I get my Lodge to support an adopted veteran?

1. Publish names, birthdays (do not print year of birth), and addresses of adoptees.
2. Assign names to volunteers and committee members.
3. "Button Hole" members; ask them to help support the program. This can be done at Lodge Meetings, fish fries, or other Lodge functions.
4. Have a "Veterans Party" and ask attendees to take a name.
5. Get schools, Churches, or other service groups to Adopt-A-Veteran.
6. Speak to the ladies organization about adoption.
7. Teenage children of Elks have adopted veterans.

IV. Now that I have adopted a Veteran, what do I do?

1. Send them a card on their birthday.
2. Send cards on holidays.
3. Send a letter, note, or postcard at any time.
4. Give them gifts on holidays or birthdays.
5. Take them to dinner at the Lodge.
6. Visit them and just talk.

V. How much will this cost?

The cost of the program is usually the responsibility of the individuals who do the adopting. This would include cards, postage or small holiday gifts. Larger gifts can be offset with 50/50's or special parties.

VI. Where can I get additional help or information?

1. The Elks Veterans Hospital Chairman.
2. The District Veterans Chairman.
3. The State Chairman.

**Elks National
Veterans
Service Commission**



"Serving Our Nation's Veterans"

PROPOSAL TO ADD NEW FACILITY

Today's Date: _____

Name of Facility: _____

Type: VAMC _____ State Nursing Home _____ VA CBOC (outpatient clinic) _____

Other _____ (describe) _____

Number of Beds (if applicable) _____

Contact at Facility (Name & Title) _____

Address of Facility: _____

Phone: _____

Proposed VAVS Representative: (If Applicable)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

Member of _____ Lodge No. _____

Proposed VAVS Deputy Representative: (If Applicable)(List others on reverse side)

Name: _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Telephone: _____

Member of _____ Lodge No. _____

Approval of Facility By:

State Sponsor _____

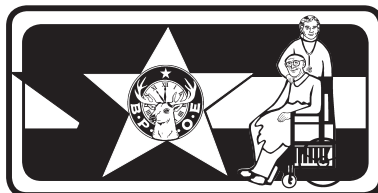
State President _____

State NVSC Chairman _____



“So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them”

**Elks National
Veterans
Service Commission**



CODE NO. 513500
REVISED 6/2011

“Serving Our Nation’s Veterans”