

GRAND EXALTED RULER'S MESSAGE

Are Elks in your Lodge ready to promote local activities and nationwide programs associated with the Order? **READY ELKS – LET'S GO!** The passion our Members show for our youth, veterans, and communities is outstanding.

Elks can make a life-saving difference by registering to be an organ and tissue donor. In this pamphlet, we promote this vital program by using Lodge bulletins and websites to inspire Members and citizens to have a life-changing effect on waiting recipients by participating in the program.

Elks are patriots who proudly embrace the American Flag with sincerity, dignity, and reverence. It is close to our hearts as loyal Americans, and close to our Altar as loyal Elks. Promote the Fly the Flag Program to recognize and thank our local businesses and merchants for honoring the red, white, and blue by properly flying the United States Flag, day and night.

READY ELKS – LET'S GO! Promote the Contest "A" All-American Lodge contest, the most prestigious Grand Lodge award designation. It's a tremendous way to show what your Lodge's values are with using Contest "A" as an activity road map to a rewarding and successful Elks year. Participation leads to significant community involvement and helps Lodges become more visible and viable.

Use this pamphlet to share information about the array of awards, contests, and certificates that are available. Strive to involve and encourage new Members to become active in Lodge activities and social functions.

If you are **READY ELKS – LET'S GO!** By promoting our programs, you can prove to our communities that the Elks are a proud and active organization worth joining. **LET'S GO!**

Timothy F. Jaeger
Grand Exalted Ruler
2026-2027



GER Award Pin
for Outstanding
Recruitment Members

The **Elk, Officer, and Citizen of the Year** awards will only be accepted through the online portal on elks.org/Members area/Grand Lodge Awards; hard copy forms will no longer be available or accepted. Only the Exalted Ruler or Lodge Secretary will have access to fill out and file the electronic form through their elks.org account. The earlier you submit your order, the better off you will be; don't wait until the last minute.

The portal will only be available January 1, 2027 at 12:01 a.m. through March 31, 2027, at 11:59 p.m. Late orders will not be accepted. Orders must be submitted before March 31 at 11:59 p.m. Central Time.

Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee

2026-2027 PROGRAM FOR FRATERNAL CONTESTS AND GRAND EXALTED RULER AWARDS



Elks Care – Elks Share

★ FRATERNAL COMMITTEE ★ ★★★ OF GRAND LODGE ★★★ ★★★★★ 2026-2027 ★★★★★

THOMAS W. FRAKER, Chairman H 719-853-6323
P. O. Box 71 C 719-469-0220
Cheraw, CO 81030-0071 frakertw@gmail.com

► **Area 6:** Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas.

MARK E. EATON H 401-738-8133
1 Orms Street C 401-529-9213
Warwick, RI 02889-9318 meeaton1@verizon.net

► **Area 1:** Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont. ★SA Major Project Booth Display Co-Administrator

BRIAN RAWDING C 260-450-6425
5216 Cedar Cove
Fort Wayne, IN 46845-8622 enbfromct@hotmail.com

► **Area 4:** Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Virginia, West Virginia. ★SA Website Star Awards Administrator

MICHAEL L. KENNEDY C 253-255-8090
2440 S. Steele Street, Unit 207
Tacoma, WA 98405-2809 mkenney@net-venture.com

► **Area 8:** Alaska, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington, Wyoming. ★All American Lodge Contest "A" Administrator

HERMAN G. WISNESKI C 218-839-8503
3057 Meyer Road
Fort Ripley, MN 56449-1384 herbar@brainerd.net

► **Area 5:** Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Wisconsin.
★LL Website Star Awards Administrator

JARED WANLASS C 801-509-8766
2095 N. Dapple Drive
Tooele, UT 84074-4406 jared.wanlass74@gmail.com

► **Area 7:** Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Philippines, Utah.
★SA Major Project Booth Display Co-Administrator

VICTORIA WATSON C 856-265-5559
P. O. Box 246
Millville, NJ 08332-0246 njpsvw22@gmail.com

► **Area 2:** Maryland-Delaware-DC, New Jersey, Pennsylvania.
★Americanism Essay Contest Administrator

ROBERT I. DANIEL C 330-328-9985
12133 Creole Way
Gulfport, MS 39503-5760 rid1147@gmail.com

► **Area 3:** Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Panama, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee. ★SA Bulletin Contest "I" Administrator

2026

“Elks Care – Elks Share”

2027

Presented by the Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee

THOMAS W. FRAKER, *Chairman*

READ AND USE GRAND LODGE PROGRAM MANUAL

ORGAN & TISSUE DONATION PROGRAM

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the USA is a proud partner of **DONATE LIFE AMERICA [DLA]**. We are committed to increasing the number of donated organs, eyes and tissue available to save and heal lives.

The Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee is asking Elks Lodges nationwide to promote the Organ Donor Program in their Lodge Bulletins and Lodge Websites to help inspire Members and citizens in their communities to make these life-saving donations.

The need is paramount. More than 100,000 patients are currently waiting for organ transplants as of April 2026, according to the Donate Life America website.

Elks Members can help close that gap! The effort of Lodges to promote the program through their Bulletins and Websites can gain them five points in their quests to be named an All American Lodge.

Also, DLA presents Pinnacle Awards annually, which recognize programs, like ours, successful in inspiring more people to register as organ donors.

For more information, log onto: donatelife.net.

FLY THE FLAG PROGRAM

This program allows you to present a Recognition Certificate for flying the United States Flag ... 24/7.

Local Lodges present a Grand Lodge recognition “CERTIFICATE of HONOR For Properly Flying THE UNITED STATES FLAG” to local businesses and merchants that properly display our United States Flag during the day and at night, with proper illumination.

The certificate can be accessed at the elks.org Website in the GL Fraternal Committee section or by searching: <https://www.elks.org/grandlodge/fraternal/default.cfm>.

This Americanism Program activity will provide Local Lodges another key tool to increase good effective public relations and patriotism in the community by promoting outside-the-Lodge relationships.

CONTESTS & PROGRAMS

Awards are presented by the Grand Lodge for recognition of excellence in various categories.

For Contests “A, E & F,” first-, second- and third-place awards are given in six divisions, based on the Annual Membership Report of March 31, 2026.

DIVISION 1: Lodges with 1-150 Members.

DIVISION 2: Lodges with 151-225 Members.

DIVISION 3: Lodges with 226-300 Members.

DIVISION 4: Lodges with 301-450 Members.

DIVISION 5: Lodges with 451-700 Members.

DIVISION 6: Lodges with 701+ Members.

Entries for Contests A, E & F must be received by the designated Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee Member and ENF at the specified place, postmarked by the deadline indicated in the contest rules. All program/contest entries must be accompanied by a letter from the Lodge Secretary certifying the Lodge membership as of March 31, 2026.

FRATERNAL COMMITTEE AWARD PIN

Must enter one or more of these contests to qualify. Request form is available at: <https://www.elks.org/grandlodge/fraternal/downloads.cfm>.

■ All American Lodge Contest “A”

State Lodge Activities Chairman • DDGER
• ER of Lodge Submitting Application

■ State Association Bulletin Contest “I”

State Association Editor

■ State Association Website Awards

Member of State Association Submitting Application

■ Local Lodge Website Awards

Web Master of Lodge Website or Facebook Page

■ Americanism Essay Contest

State Americanism Chairman • District Americanism
Chairman • Lodge Americanism Chairman



STATE ASSOCIATIONS STAR AWARDS



SA MAJOR PROJECT BOOTH DISPLAY AWARD

Awards are presented to State Associations that exhibit their Major Projects in the exhibit area at the Grand Lodge Session each year. State Associations can earn up to “Five Stars” for their displays. Exhibits are judged on content, graphics, pictorial, overall appearance and special effects.



STATE ASSOCIATION WEBSITE AWARD

This award is presented to State Associations for their efforts in keeping Members informed and active in state and local projects through a State Association website. Websites are judged on content, layout, design and effectiveness in telling the Elks story. Websites can earn from *three to five star awards*. **Registration must be before October 1, 2027** to participate. (**NOTE: State Association contest due date may differ.**) Mail inquiries or registrations to: **BRIAN RAWDING**, 5216 Cedar Cove, Fort Wayne, IN 46845-8622; enbfromct@hotmail.com.



LOCAL LODGE WEBSITE AWARD

This award is presented to a Local Lodge that has won its State’s Local Lodge Website contest, based on keeping their Members informed in local projects. Websites and Facebook pages are judged on content, design, news, virtual home page and Lodge promotion, and can earn from *three to five star awards*. State Associations must register their winners with the Grand Lodge **before October 1, 2027**, to participate. (**NOTE: State Association contest due date may differ.**) Mail inquiries or registrations to: **HERMAN G. WISNESKI**, 3057 Meyer Road, Fort Ripley, MN 56449-1384; herbar@brainerd.net.

NOTE: State Association and Local Lodge websites will be accessed and judged up to three times a year.

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Lodges are encouraged to select a citizen, not necessarily an Elk, who has contributed to improving the community. This individual should have shown leadership, volunteered in the community, and been recognized as an all-around good citizen. After the selection, honor him or her by presenting the award at a Lodge-sponsored dinner, or in conjunction with a community-night program sponsored by a local civic organization.

The full name (*no nicknames*) of the person selected should be used when filling out the request form on the online portal so that an inscribed citation may be issued to the **“Citizen of the Year.”**

ELK OF THE YEAR

The **“Elk of the Year”** Award enables a Lodge to recognize a Member who is always willing to get things done. Qualifications should be stringent as it would be far better not to designate an **“Elk of the Year”** than to select a less-than-worthy Member. Nominees should be weighed carefully. Every involvement should exemplify **“Elks Care—Elks Share.”**

An anonymous committee should be appointed by the Exalted Ruler in time to evaluate candidates. The committee should remain anonymous throughout the selection process. And, preferably in February, the award should be announced at a dinner or other special event. If properly promoted, this can be an outstanding annual event. Strive to make it so!

Keep in mind these rules for selecting **“Elk of the Year”**:

— **CANNOT** be a Lodge Officer or an Associate Member.

— **Only ONE ELK** can be chosen.

The full name (*no nicknames*) of the individual selected should be used when filling out the request form on the online portal so that an inscribed citation may be issued to the honoree.

OFFICER OF THE YEAR

This award enables a Lodge to recognize a current Officer who has shown leadership, volunteered for committees, and is considered an outstanding Elk among Members.

This award will reward an Officer who is always willing to be relied upon to help get things done. Qualifications should be stringent; it would be far better not to designate an **“Officer of the Year”** than to select a less than worthy Officer.

The Exalted Ruler shall direct the Lodge’s Past Exalted Rulers’ Association to select the **“Officer of the Year.”** The award should be announced, preferably in February, at a dinner or other special event. In making their selection, Past Exalted Rulers should keep in mind:

— **Recipient must be a Lodge Officer.**

— **Only One Officer** can be chosen.

The Officer’s full name (*no nicknames*) and title should be used when filling out the request form on the online portal so that an inscribed citation may be issued to the honoree.

DEADLINE

NOTE: (None of these awards are issued before January 1, 2027. **Deadline for all three awards is between January 1 and March 31, 2027.**) The order form & instructions may be downloaded at: <https://www.elks.org/grandlodge/fraternal/downloads.cfm>.

★ ★ ★ AWARDS ★ ★ ★

★★ GRAND EXALTED RULER’S ★★

★★★ AWARDS ★★★

FOR OUTSTANDING MEMBERS

Each Exalted Ruler is authorized to issue TWO Grand Exalted Ruler’s “Outstanding Service Commendation” certificates to Members performing outstanding Lodge service.

NOTE: An order form and instructions may be downloaded at <https://www.elks.org/grandlodge/ger/files/GERAwardCertificationForms.pdf>; **or**, from the **“ER Quick Links”** section at [elks.org](https://www.elks.org). Click the “Keys to 2026-27 Program Year” dropdown and then “GER Award Certification forms (ERs, LLs, Members)”. **(Requests should be postmarked by March 31, 2027.)**

FOR EXALTED RULERS

“Making A Difference” Special Citations will be awarded to Exalted Rulers who participate in SIX (6) of the following programs during the year:

1. Elks Hoop Shoot Program
2. Youth Scholarship Program
3. Achieve \$5.25 Elks National Foundation per Member giving goal plus participating membership by all Lodge Officers.
4. Entry into the All-American Lodge Contest
5. Drug Awareness Program
6. Elks National Youth Week
7. Initiatory Ritual Contest
8. Student/Teenager of the Month/Year Program
9. Veterans Service and/or Adopt-A-Veteran Program

Special Citations are available from your Area Member of the Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee upon receipt of a formal written request from the Exalted Ruler, supported with dated copies of cover letters, programs, news releases, bulletin notices, etc. attesting to participation by the Lodge family in the appropriate activities. **(This request should be postmarked no later than March 31, 2027.)**



FOR LOCAL LODGES

A. A “Making A Difference” Special Citation will be awarded to each Lodge that participates in at least SIX (6) of the following programs. These certificates should be ordered in writing from the Area Member of the Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee. **(This request should be postmarked no later than March 31, 2027.)**

1. Elks Hoop Shoot Program
2. Initiatory Ritual Contest
3. Youth Scholarship Program
4. Veterans Service and/or Adopt-A-Veteran Program
5. Drug Awareness Program
6. Every Officer a current donor to the Elks National Foundation
7. Mother’s Day Program
8. Raises \$5.25 per Member in donations to the Elks National Foundation.
9. Achieves a net membership gain of at least one.
10. Achieves a level at or below two percent lapsation
11. Every Officer, elected and appointed (15), sponsors a New/Reinstated Member.

B. A Grand Exalted Ruler’s Citation will be awarded to each Lodge which has, as of September 1, 2026, a full complement of elected and appointed Officers who are **not Past Exalted Rulers (EXCLUDE Secretary, Treasurer, Trustee, and Organist positions).**

This Award encourages recruitment of new Officer talent, and builds continuity by progression through the chairs. **The request should include the list of current Lodge Officers, notated as verified and approved by the District Deputy.** Send entry to the Grand Secretary **postmarked no later than October 31, 2026.**

GRAND SECRETARY

Office of the Grand Secretary
Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks
2750 N. Lakeview Avenue
Chicago, IL 60614-1889
Attn: Grand Secretary

CONTEST “A” — ALL AMERICAN LODGE

Elkdom’s All American Lodge Award – the most coveted of Grand Lodge awards – demonstrates membership involvement. Competition is based on District, State and Grand Lodge levels. Points are earned by competing Lodges, based upon participation in more than 40 categories, including sponsoring a new Lodge, posting a gain in membership and participation in Grand Lodge contests and programs, such as the Elks National Foundation, Hoop Shoot, Grand Exalted Ruler Awards and Youth Scholarship programs. Final entries are judged by the Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee.

All Lodges can download and print out the online form at: <https://www.elks.org/grandlodge/fraternal/files/contestALodgeCertification.pdf>. Also available in the “ER Quick Links” section at [elks.org](https://www.elks.org). Lodge Secretaries and Exalted Rulers must **complete their sections of the form and send to the District Deputy by April 1, 2027. (NOTE: State Association contest due date may differ.)** Look for a reminder in the February issue of the Grand Lodge Newsletter.

The District Deputy will select winners by membership division for the district. These are then submitted to the State Lodge Activities (or Fraternal) Chairman by April 15, 2027. ***(The designated State Chairman will review entries, sign and submit them to the Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee Member for the All American Lodge Contest by April 30, 2027.)***

Address inquiries to: **MICHAEL L. KENNEDY**, 2440 S. Steele Street, Unit 207, Tacoma, WA 98405-2809; mkenney@net-venture.com.

CONTEST “E” — PER MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION

This award is granted for the largest per-Member contributions made by the Lodges to the Elks National Foundation and is based upon Elks National Foundation records. ***(Deadline for contributions: Received no later than March 31, 2027.)***

Direct inquiries to: **ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION**, at: enf@elks.org or 773-755-4762.

★ ★ CONTESTS ★ ★

CONTEST “F” — ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION LODGE CHAIR CHALLENGE

The Chairman Challenge contest rewards Lodges for having a broad-based ENF fundraising program, including recruiting new donors, retaining recent donors and reactivating lapsed donors. Participation points may be earned for meeting additional goals such as reporting on an ENF month fundraiser and earning an ENF Fundraising Chairman Certificate. The Elks National Foundation determines scores.

Direct inquiries to the **ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION** at: enf@elks.org or 773-755-4762.

CONTEST “G” — STATE ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION PER MEMBER DONATIONS

This award is for the largest per-Member contributions made by State Associations to the Elks National Foundation, based upon Foundation records. ***(Deadline for contributions: Received no later than March 31, 2027.)***

Direct inquiries to: **ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION**, at: enf@elks.org or 773-755-4762.

CONTEST “H” — ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION STATE CHAIR CHALLENGE

Rewards start with Lodges that have a broad-based fundraising program. Each Lodge receives a score in the Lodge Chairman Challenge Contest F. The State Association’s [SA] score is based on the total of the SA’s Lodge scores, divided by the number of its Lodges. The Elks National Foundation determines scores.

Direct inquiries to the **ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION** at: enf@elks.org or 773-755-4762.

CONTEST “I” — STATE ASSOCIATION BULLETIN CONTEST

Just as Lodge Bulletins communicate to Members, State Publications can communicate what other Lodges are doing and provide ideas for activities.

Contest rules are:

1. Enclose three copies of any two issues of your state bulletin, newspaper or newsletter published in the calendar year 2026. (January 1 to December 31.)
2. Judging will be based on:

Content:	0 - 100 points
Layout & typography:	0 - 50 points
Pictorial:	0 - 25 points
General:	0 - 25 points
3. Please do not submit your entries in bulky notebooks or binders.

Awards will be Five, Four and Three Stars, mailed to the State President for presentation at a State meeting or function. ***(Submissions must be postmarked by January 15, 2027. NOTE: State Association contest due date may differ.)***

Mail entries to: **ROBERT I. DANIEL**, 12133 Creole Way, Gulfport, MS 39503-5760; rid1147@gmail.com.

CONTEST “J” — SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS FOR ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION

Awards recognize specific groups for outstanding contributions to the Elks National Foundation based on Elks National Foundation records. Categories include:

1. Top Grand Lodge Area.
2. Best New Lodge.

(Deadline for contributions: Received no later than March 31, 2027.) Mail inquiries to: **ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION**, 2750 N. Lakeview Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614-2256; enf@elks.org or 773-755-4762.