



Extra, extra—read all about it! Elks from Laughlin, Nev., Lodge No. 2872 help kids read to succeed!



CAN YOU READ THIS?

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ENF

SUPPORT THE GREAT HEART OF ELKDOM!

Visit enf.elks.org/HBWinter, and your online donation will be put to work immediately in Elks communities!

The strength of a community is partly measured by the basic needs it helps provide its residents, like food, shelter and schooling. One need that's often overlooked is the importance of reading.

Celebrated poet Maya Angelou said, "Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to making reading one of his needs, is good for him."

When Laughlin, Nev., Lodge No. 2872 learned that students were underperforming in reading, they created the *Read to Succeed* project, funded by a \$10,000 Elks National Foundation Impact Grant.

Each month, about 40 Lodge members and volunteers buy books, administer quizzes to measure students' reading scores, and set up a pop-up store at William G. Bennett Elementary School where students can redeem points they earn from reading to "buy" more books.

Since *Read to Succeed* began in 2016, more than 360 students in kindergarten through high school have participated, and teachers have seen an improvement.

"A review of student achievement data shows a positive increase in student fluency, reading comprehension and vocabulary development, and it's my belief this growth

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Courtney Muns snowshoes her way to a silver medal at the 2017 Special Olympics Winter Games in Austria.



THE MUNS ARE THE ONES FOR FIDELITY CLUB

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MARCH 11-17
Spring Elks Scholar Service Trip

MARCH 30
Elks National Foundation Offices
Closed for Good Friday

MARCH 31
Donation Deadline

MARCH 31
Beacon and Anniversary Grant
Application Deadline

APRIL 19-22
Hoop Shoot National Finals

APRIL 26-29
MVS Leadership Weekend

As soon as she turned 21 and graduated from Antlers, the junior Elks program, Courtney Muns asked her father, Robert, “When can I become an Elk?”

The answer was very soon. But first, she was off to the 2017 Special Olympics Winter Games in Austria, where she placed second in the 100-meter and fourth in the 200-meter snowshoe competition.

“I worked very hard to make the team and it was an honor competing for Team USA,” Courtney says. “I was very happy to get a silver medal while my mom, dad and sister cheered me on.”

Courtney looks forward to returning to the Winter Games again in the future. Next time, she will be returning as a member of the Elks.

“When I came back from Austria, they made it happen,” Courtney says.

During Courtney’s initiation, Robert, who has been an Elk for eight years, pinned and welcomed his daughter to her next adventure. In addition to sharing their Elks bond, Courtney and her father support the Elks National Foundation through a recurring gift as members of the Fidelity Club.

As Elks, they’ve enjoyed meeting new people and making a difference in their community. As members of the Fidelity Club, what the Muns appreciate much more than the pins, letters and even the convenience, is how it feels knowing they’re helping their Lodge, community and the Foundation.

“The greatest thing in giving is the feeling in our heart,” Robert says. “We

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A participant in the Read to Succeed project is “beary” excited to learn about polar bears.

Read, continued from page 1

can be attributed to the Elks’ reading program,” shares Dawn Estes, principal of William G. Bennett Elementary School.

At the end of each month, the Lodge hosts a dinner for the families and students who participated. Families in this rural area welcome the opportunity to connect with other parents, spend time with their children, and receive a hearty meal.

Read to Succeed wouldn’t be possible without the

Impact Grant and the volunteers who opened this door for students.

“I have seen what a difference this program makes, and we are so thankful that [the Elks] have chosen to invest in our students,” says Wendi K. Lytle, an Instructional Strategist at Laughlin Junior and Senior High School.

An investment in children is an investment in our future. The ENF is proud to fund Lodge projects that recognize that.

ANNIVERSARY GRANT TACKLES TASKS

When an individual loses a spouse, the grief comes first. What eventually followed for Ann Currie, who has been an Elk for 20 years, was the realization that she didn’t know how to fix small issues like an oil leak in her car. Conversations with her friends proved she wasn’t alone.

Currie had an idea. As a Lodge Grants Coordinator, she helped her Lodge apply for a \$1,500 Anniversary Grant from the Elks National Foundation to fund four “do-it-yourself repair courses.” She told *Green Valley News* that although there are support groups that deal with grief counseling, there isn’t “hands-on education, to learn some of the tasks that [our] husbands used to do.”

Green Valley, Ariz., Lodge No. 2592 will host the classes for recent widows.

What will your Lodge do? Visit enf.elks.org/AnniversaryGrants for more information.

ASK THE ENF...

Q

My Lodge is excited about the new Anniversary Grant. Do we need to meet the per-member-giving goal to apply?

—Excited in Erie

A

Dear Excited:

No! The Lodge **does not** need to meet the GER’s per-member-giving goal to apply for the Anniversary Grant. In fact, the Gratitude Grant is the only grant tied to the per-member-giving goal. As long as the Lodge is in grant compliance, it is automatically eligible for all other CIP grants.

Have a question for the ENF? Email us at enf@elks.org.

Elks scholars brighten up an already sunny California with their service at Safe Place for Youth.



CALIFORNIA, THERE WE WENT!



WELCOME: 2018 MVS FINALISTS

Each year in the fall, tens of thousands of students submit applications for the Most Valuable Student Contest. And every April since 2014, 20 of them have embarked on the MVS Leadership Weekend in Chicago.

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“The week was incredible,” reflected 2017 MVS scholar Marc Rademaker. “I learned about the effects of homelessness and got to serve those experiencing it. I was able to find common ground through conversation with each individual I served, making me more appreciative of opportunities in my own life and more driven to serve others in the future.”

Twenty Elks scholars from 13 states started the new year off strong by serving the City of Santa Monica in the name of the Elks. Elks Scholar Service Trips provide the opportunity for scholars to come together in service with their Elks scholar peers. On the Winter Service Trip, scholars focused on serving individuals experiencing homelessness and veterans.

Service ranged from providing a meal to youth living on the streets, to distributing food and clothing to veterans in need. Scholars engaged in indirect service, such as cleaning a housing site for young mothers experiencing homelessness, as well as direct service, like playing bingo with veterans. Each service site educated the group on causes of homelessness and explained how the scholars can perpetuate change.

“We saw firsthand the extent of problems in the area and directly served populations in need,” shared 2013 MVS scholar Justin



Katie Curran, a Top 20 MVS scholar from 2016, speaks at Santa Monica Lodge No. 906 about what her Elks scholarship means to her.



How do you spell service? Scholars Lauren Isherwood (from left), Sarah Zeni, Brianna Muncy and Keegan O’Ravez spell it E-L-K-S!

Schulberg. “Our group of Elks scholars formed close connections and enduring friendships, all thanks to the ENF and the support of the Elks!”

The local Lodges welcomed the scholars with open arms and provided abundant hospitality. Westchester Lodge No. 2050 treated the scholars to spaghetti and a tour of their beautiful building. Westchester Elks also surprised the scholars with In-N-Out burgers at the hostel where they were staying. Gardena Lodge No. 1919 delivered dinner mid-week and shared about the rich history of the Elks. Santa Monica Lodge No. 906 capped off the trip with a taco dinner and a short tribute to veterans.

“The Elks Scholar Service Trip visit was by far one of the biggest highlights of my Elks career,” shared R.A. Pickett, a member of the Santa Monica Lodge. “I encourage any Lodge in the country to get involved with the service trips and to get scholars into your Lodge with your members.”

The scholars ranged from freshmen to recent graduates, from science majors to artists, and from New Yorkers to Californians, but they left as Elks family.

“These are my people,” reflected 2017 Legacy scholar Keegan O’Ravez.

Many of the scholars have plans to reunite at 150 for 150 this summer in San Antonio, meet up with other scholars on their campus, and to one day join the Order.

Visit facebook.com/ElksScholars and enf.elks.org/flickr to see pictures from the winter trip.

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To welcome the top 20 MVS scholars into the **#ElksFamily**, we visit the Elks Veterans Memorial and serve veterans at the Jesse Brown V.A. Medical Center.

To prepare them for college, we provide activities throughout the weekend to develop their leadership skills and opportunities to learn from Elks scholars currently in college.

To award the top winners, we interview each scholar for 20 minutes about their past accomplishments and ambitions for the future. Each finalist will receive a scholarship of at least \$20,000. Two each will receive scholarships of \$30,000, \$40,000 and \$50,000.

We’ll embark on the fifth annual MVS Leadership Weekend April 26-29, and we can’t wait to welcome, prepare and award our 2018 MVS scholars.

To see photos and videos from past Leadership Weekends, visit enf.elks.org/MVSlead.



HOOP SHOOT NATIONAL FINALS SHINE BRIGHT

The Chicago flag is adorned with four red stars—each signifying a special moment for the city. The 2018 Hoop Shoot National Finals logo, based on the Chicago flag, has some meaning to it as well.

STARS OF THE SHOW

The first star represents the National Finalists. They are the real stars.

CATCHING STARS

The second star is this year's keynote speaker, WNBA great Tamika Catchings, and her non-profit, Catching Stars.

SHOOT FOR THE STARS

The third star stands for the Finalist Fest at the Adler Planetarium on Chicago's museum campus. It's going to be out of this world!

STAR GAZING

The final star is for the best place to see the stars—the contest gym. This year the National Finalists will be competing in Loyola University's Gentile Arena.

The stars will align from April 19-22, 2018, in Chicago.

Muns, continued from page 2

might not give a lot of money, but it feels like millions in our hearts.”

The Muns look forward to continuing to reach new levels in the Fidelity Club, and we look forward to watching them grow within the Elks community.

“The Fidelity Club is the best thing,” Robert says.

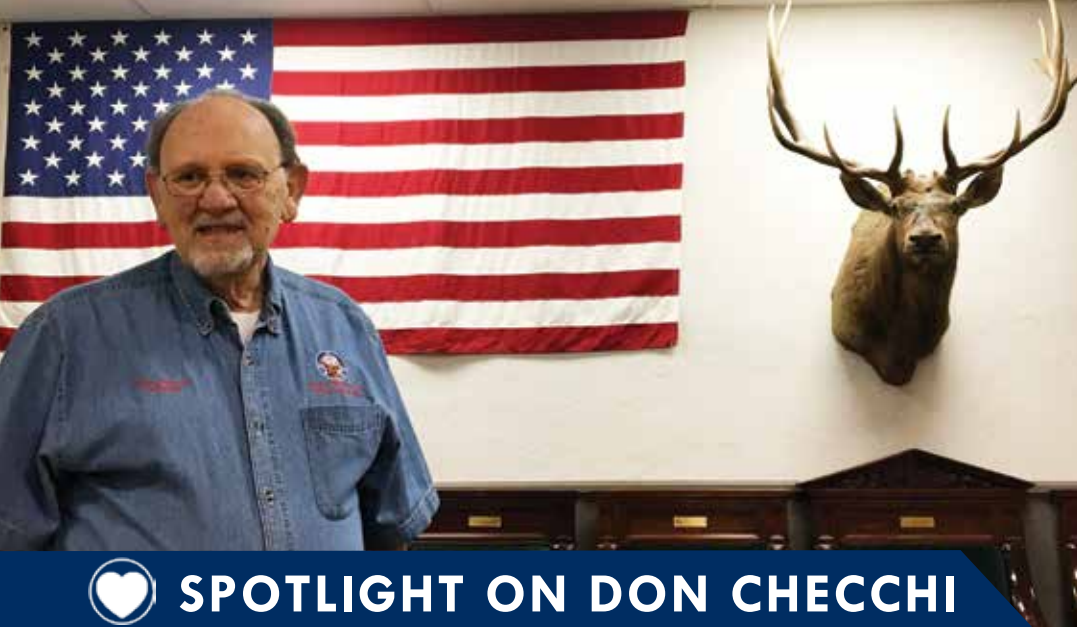
Give to the ENF with ease. Donors who join the ENF Fidelity Club, the ENF's monthly giving program, have their names listed on our website and receive a special pin. To learn more about participating in the Fidelity Club, please visit enf.elks.org/FidelityClub.



Robert (from left), Julie and Alexis Muns pose with Courtney at the Winter Games.



Courtney Muns competes in the 100-meter snowshoeing event at the 2017 Special Olympics Winter Games.



Don Checchi of Santa Monica, Calif., Lodge No. 906 stays active with the Lodge by supporting the Elks National Foundation.

When Don Checchi joined the Elks in 1974, he looked forward to being part of an organization that cherished the youth as much as he did as an educator, and to bowling and golfing with new friends. Although Checchi's participation in these hobbies stopped years ago, his dedication to supporting the Elks and its endeavors never wavered. In fact, it intensified.

Checchi attended meetings, worked on committees and spent time as an officer. Today his support continues with the Most Valuable Student Named Scholarship Program in memory of his brother-in-law.

"What better way to continue all the work he and I both cared about than to give something in his name," Checchi says.

Checchi also supports the Elks National Foundation as a member of the John F. Malley Society, which allows Elks to leave a planned gift like a bequest, gift or appreciated stock, gift of life insurance, or other life-income gifts. To enroll, all he had to do was complete a single-page application online and provide a brief testimonial explaining why he chose to include the Foundation in his plans.

"What better way for us to leave our mark on the world than to support the work done by the Elks and leave something in our will to help the living," Checchi says.

Leave your legacy by joining the John F. Malley Society today. To learn more about planned giving, visit enf.elks.org/MalleySociety.

"We have the opportunity of laying the foundation stones of an Elk temple of philanthropy which, in time, will be the greatest monument to a noble purpose that has ever been built by a fraternal organization." —Then PGER John F. Malley, on the idea of an Elks National Foundation.

JOHN F. MALLEY SOCIETY

The John F. Malley Society honors individuals who plan gifts to the ENF. We sincerely thank all the current members. For more information, visit enf.elks.org/MalleySociety, or contact Kate Keating Edsey at KateE@elks.org or 773/755-4866.

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STAY CONNECTED!



Here's a look at
what's inside this
issue of *Heartbeat*.



California,
There We Went!



Spotlight on Don Checchi

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