



GRAND LODGE Convention News

SUNDAY JULY 3, 2022

New contest, programs introduced for Atlanta

By Mike Chamernik

Convention News Reporter

A mix of familiar routines and new events will highlight the Elks' 157th Grand Lodge Session in Atlanta this week.

Convention will feature the annual business sessions and installation procedures, along with various workshops, seminars, and meet and greets. Members will be able to fraternize with old friends, both at the convention hall and in the many state hospitality rooms.

But, some new programs and events are slated for the next few days as well, along with the reintroduction of a convention mainstay.

Flag Charge Contest

After the debut of the Callicott 11 O'Clock Toast Contest in 2021, the Elks are holding the first Flag Charge Contest this year. Exalted Rulers and Past Exalted Rulers representing states from across the nation will perform the final charge and United States flag presentation during the initiatory ritual. Contestants will be judged on impressiveness, word accuracy, pronunciation, and deportment (movement).

The contest was brought about by the late Eric Mulholland, who among other leadership roles served as Chairman of Ritual Committee and Chairman of the Board of the Grand Trustees. Mulholland, said Ritual Committee Chairman Kenneth Rice, had a deep love and passion for ritual.

"We just thought [the Flag Charge Contest] would be a good idea," Rice said, "a way to remember not only a great Elk, but a great man who absolutely dedicated his life to the ritual."

Around 30 states are expected to



The Elks Convention will be held in Georgia World Congress Center, Building C. Photo: GWCC

compete in the inaugural Flag Charge Contest, but Rice said he expects every state association will participate within a few years.

"You can count any Elk among the flag waivers out there," Rice said. "[The contest] is a tribute to our flag, which stands for our country, represents our country. And it's embodied in the heart of all of us who love the country, love the flag, and love the Elks."

The preliminary round of the Flag Charge contest was held Sunday morning, and the finals are scheduled for Monday morning.

Elks Idea Exchange

New for 2022 is the Elks Idea Exchange, where attendees meet at round tables to talk through best practices and share ideas with their fellow Elks in informal, focused sessions. They rotate tables at 10 minutes per topic, discussing what works in their Lodge. Veterans Service, the Fraternal Committee, and ENF Community Investments Program each have Idea Exchange sessions sched-

uled from Sunday to Tuesday (GWCC Room 301, see site for details).

Elks Idea Exchange "provides the forum for Elks to share their challenges and successes with each other, from across the country," said Kate Keating Edsey, ENF Manager of Development and Events. "We always find the more alike and different we are, we all have the same challenges. The people to best help other Elks are Elks."

Seminars and learning sessions are rich with content, but face-to-face connections might be the most valuable aspect. The sessions allow Members, committee members and chairpersons, Grand Lodge and ENF staffers, and other Elks leaders the chance to meet in person.

"In the CIP office, we process thousands of applications every year, so being able to meet and hear from the volunteers we've seen on paper is a humbling and exciting experience," said Meaghan Morris, ENF Senior Programs Associate.

Please see **CONVENTION** Page 5

Florida State Elks Association Major Projects

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PLEASE, SPEAK UP!

Court Reporter Judy needs to know your **Name, Current Elks Title, and Lodge Name and Number**. If you are recognized for making or seconding a motion, please come forward at the end of the Session to make sure she gets your information correctly into the permanent record which will be used to produce the annual Grand Lodge Proceedings book. We don't want you to be listed as an *"Unidentified Delegate"* in its pages. Thank you for your kind cooperation!

SUNDAY AFTERNOON OPENING CEREMONY

04:00	Welcome	Michael T. Luhr, PGER
	Opening and Intro of PGERs	Michael T. Luhr, PGER
	Welcome from Lt. General Bill Caldwell (US Army Retired)	
	Emergency Responders	Pipes & Drums
	State Flags	State Presidents
	Presentation of USA	Georgia Elks Association Honor Guard
	Elks Charities At Work	James M. McQuillan, PGER
	Veterans Service	John D. Amen, PGER
	Hoop Shoot	Makenna Cannon, Youth Programs Manager
	Grants & Scholarships	Deborah Kahler Doles, Asst. Director
	Drug Awareness Program	Millard C. Pickering, PGER
	GER Speech	T. Keith Mills, GER
	Closing	Michael T. Luhr, PGER



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~ GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE ~

Division finalists named for All-American Lodge Contest

By **WILLIAM J. LINDSEY**

Committee Member

New for this year for the Contest "A" All-American Lodge Contest is the reporting of the Top Ten Lodges in each division and the reclassification of the divisions.

These Lodges are the top ten leaders for each new division, listed alphabetically.

Division I (1-150 Members)

Big Rapids, MI Lodge No. 974
Crestview, FL Lodge No. 2624
Gulfport, MS Lodge No. 978
Los Banos, CA Lodge No. 2510
Marietta, GA Lodge No. 1657
Midwest City, OK Lodge No. 1890
Mid Westchester, NY Lodge No. 535
Norfolk, NE Lodge No. 653
Norfolk, VA Lodge No. 38
Pendleton, SC Lodge No. 2861

Division II (151-225 Members)

Cedar Grove, NJ Lodge No. 2237
Gainesville, FL Lodge No. 990
Golden, CO Lodge No. 2740
Homer, AK Lodge No. 2127
Kearny, NJ Lodge No. 1050
Mena, AR Lodge No. 781
Roxboro, NC Lodge No. 2005
Santa Monica, CA Lodge No. 906
Tri-Cities, WA Lodge No. 2755
Wheeling, WV Lodge No. 28

Division III (226-300 Members)

Bridgeport, PA Lodge No. 714
Forks, WA Lodge No. 2524
Gouverneur, NY Lodge No. 2035
Howell, NJ Lodge No. 2515
Marlton, NJ Lodge No. 2514
Kansas City (Northland), MO Lodge No. 2376
Raceway, AZ Lodge No. 2852
Santa Ynez Valley, CA Lodge No. 2640
St. Marys, WV Lodge No. 1701
Westchester, CA Lodge No. 2050

Division IV (301-450 Members)

Beacon, NY Lodge No. 1493
Eagle River, AK Lodge No. 2682
Florida Keys, FL Lodge No. 1872
Frackville, PA Lodge No. 1533
Kearney, NE Lodge No. 984
Louisville, KY Lodge No. 8
Roseville, CA Lodge No. 2248
San Rafael, CA Lodge No. 1108
Sierra Vista, AZ Lodge No. 2065
Thousand Oaks, CA Lodge No. 2477

Division V (451-700 Members)

Casa Grande Valley, AZ Lodge No. 1957
Catalina Mountain, AZ Lodge No. 2815
Chandler, AZ Lodge No. 2429
Ferndale, MI Lodge No. 1588
Flat Rock, MI Lodge No. 1731
Hickory, NC Lodge No. 1654
Lake Hopatcong, NJ Lodge No. 782
Red Bank, NJ Lodge No. 233
Saratoga-Wilton, NY Lodge No. 161
St. Louis, MO Lodge No. 9

Division VI (701 Members and up)

Apache Junction, AZ Lodge No. 2349
Ballard (Seattle), WA Lodge No. 827
East Stroudsburg, PA Lodge No. 319
Fayetteville/Springdale, AR Lodge No. 1987
Garden Grove, CA Lodge No. 1952
Groton, CT Lodge No. 2163
Manasquan, NJ Lodge No. 2534
Orange, CA Lodge No. 1475
Santa Maria, CA Lodge No. 1538
St. George "Dixie," UT Lodge No. 1743

The first, second, and third place Lodges in each Division will be announced on Tuesday morning during the Business Session.

CONTEST "I" WINNERS

The State Association bulletin is a traditional form of communication that Members have appreciated for decades. The Contest I — State Bulletin Contest recognizes the best State Association bulletins in the country. Judging is based on four categories: Content, Layout & Typography, Pictorial, and General.

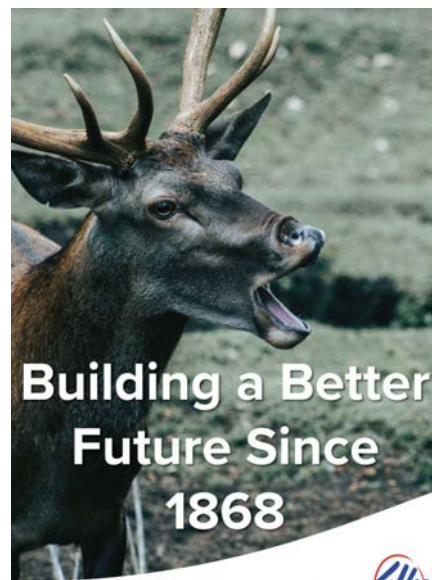
Thank you to the many editors who keep our Members informed. Congratulations to those who entered the contest and earned the coveted 4 Star and 5 Star ratings! *And the winners are:*

5 Star ★★★★★ Awards

State	Editor
Arizona	Shawnee A. Carlile
Florida	Rachael A. King
Georgia	Lynda Lewis
Kansas	Carl Lindsey
Louisiana	Buddy Hartle
MD, DE, DC	Janie Swigert
Missouri	Joy Clarkson
New Jersey	Nancy Rochford
New York	Timothy Welp
North Carolina	Ashley Buckwell

4 Star ★★★★★ Awards

State	Editor
California-Hawaii	Ted Olsen
Connecticut	John P. Simko
Illinois	Elizabeth Conaway
Michigan	Karen J. Cary
Oregon	C. Blake Whitson
Pennsylvania	Glen Klein



join.elks.org



CONVENTION from Page 1**Vendors Return**

The COVID-19 pandemic canceled the Baltimore convention in 2020. Convention returned last July in Tampa, but out of caution for public health, some portions of the session were canceled or curtailed. Aside from a few merchants, the convention did not feature vendors.

Vendors have returned for Atlanta, though. State Major Projects, Grand Lodge committees and departments, and Elks trademark licensees will have their booths again. Attendees felt the absence last summer.

"It was a lot of disappointment over the fact that we weren't able to provide that for them last year," said Tina Haran, Convention and Meetings Director. "There were a lot of them looking for it, and hoping and wanting it."

The booths are a great opportunity not only for Members to purchase pins and collectibles, but to also gather information from Grand Lodge committees and to see how other states are managing their State Projects.

"It's a learning experience," Haran said. "They get to check out what Michigan's state major project is, and ask questions about what they're doing, and how they're raising it. There's a lot of collaboration that goes on with multiple state projects."

ENF will also have a larger presence at convention this year. The foundation will host its booth in the exhibit hall and hold on-site services. ENF also had a full schedule of events, including a donor recognition outing on Saturday night.

"We're just thrilled to be on-site and to be back," Keating Edsey said. "We're so excited about what we're funding this year, and especially how robust the grants program has become. It's very exciting to get to meet one-on-one and to offer education to our hardworking [grant] volunteers."

Business as Usual

The nuts and bolts of the convention will resemble the schedule of past years. Monday is the Opening Grand Lodge Business Sessions. The Annual Report will be given by the Grand Exalted Ruler, T. Keith Mills. Also on the

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Downtown Atlanta. Photo: Greg Keelen | Unsplash

docket are reports from the Elks National Convention Commission, National Memorial & Publications, Veterans Restoration Trust, and the Board of Grand Trustees, plus a preliminary report from the Committee on Judiciary. The session caps off with the nomination and election of Grand Lodge Officers for 2022-2023, with the Celebration and Grand Exalted Ruler-Elect acceptance speech.

Tuesday's Business Session will contain the reports of the Resolutions Committee, Registration (Final), Board of Grand Trustees (Final), and the Grand Forum/Pardon Committee. Afterward will be the Committee on Judiciary Legislative Session; the Disaster Relief Fund Report; and reports from Government Relations, Auditing & Accounting, Activities Committee, and Fraternal Committee, including the "All American Lodge" awards. Following that will be the GER-Elect Program remarks and the Chicago Headquarters 2022-23 Program.

The convention will close with Wednesday's Session, which includes the Memorial Service, Membership & Marketing presentation, Installation of 2022-2023 Grand Lodge Officers, and Installation of 2022-2023 District Deputies.

Outside of Elks business, this is a great week to be in Atlanta. Monday night is the Fourth of July, and fireworks displays will be held throughout the metro area. Centennial Olympic Park in downtown Atlanta will also host a fireworks show on Sunday night.★

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~ ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION ~

ENF Chairs' Challenge Contest Winners

April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022

STATE ASSOCIATION WINNERS

Rank	State	Members	Score
1.	Rhode Island	6,605	567.100
2.	Minnesota	6,860	467.541
3.	Arkansas	4,359	439.076
4.	New Hampshire	7,612	417.071
5.	Arizona	24,861	410.313

LODGE WINNERS

Members Composite Score

Division I — 150 Members or less

1st Place	Tri-Cities, TX Lodge No. 2877	66	856.000
2nd Place	Hackettstown, NJ Lodge No. 2331	114	801.500
3rd Place	St. Charles, MO Lodge No. 690	145	715.000

Division II — 151 to 225 Members

1st Place	Portage, WI Lodge No. 675	194	816.000
2nd Place	Telluride, CO Lodge No. 692	225	743.000
3rd Place	Roxboro, NC Lodge No. 2005	161	742.000

Division III — 226 to 300 Members

1st Place	Mena, AR Lodge No. 781	278	1,000.000
2nd Place	Bridgeport, PA Lodge No. 714	246	948.000
3rd Place	Fairhope, AL Lodge No. 1879	289	914.000

Division IV — 301 to 450 Members

1st Place	Severna Park, MD Lodge No. 2482	310	875.000
2nd Place	Gainesville, FL Lodge No. 990	411	873.000
3rd Place	Oak Harbor, WA Lodge No. 2362	329	840.000

Division V — 451 to 700 Members

1st Place	St. Louis, MO Lodge No. 9	665	984.000
2nd Place	Owatonna, MN Lodge No. 1395	610	980.000
2nd Place	Sheboygan, WI Lodge No. 299	517	980.000

Division VI — More than 700 Members

1st Place	Greater Cape May, NJ Lodge No. 2839	1,345	980.000
1st Place	Reno, NV Lodge No. 597	1,620	980.000
3rd Place	Rochester, NH Lodge No. 1393	920	960.000

Special Recognition Award Best Grand Lodge Area

The generous donations in 2021-22 by the B.P.O. Elks of

Manila, PI Lodge No. 761

are gratefully acknowledged by the
Grand Exalted Ruler and our Board of Trustees



Elks National Foundation



~ DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM ~

DAP awards given out at two-day training session

By WILLIAM J. BRYAN

Assistant National Director

Prior to the opening of the Grand Lodge Session in Atlanta, State DAP Chairs have been involved in an extensive two-day training.

State Associations representing nearly every state have been trained in the latest drug trends by representatives from the DEA; and have learned to navigate a variety of DAP websites; and have been introduced to a new website, specifically designed for State Chairs. New Chairs have learned the basics of the DAP Program.

In addition, the group took time to recognize some standouts.

William R. Koller, the State Chair from Nebraska, was awarded the Chairman of the Year Award, which consisted of a plaque and the Crystal Elk. This award is presented annually to a State Chair who has gone above and beyond expectations and has made a significant contribution to their state in reducing the harm caused by illicit drugs and in educating the children of their state.

Douglas Jordan, the State Chair from Missouri, won the "Rookie of the Year" Award, which is given annually to a new State Chair. Both Jordan and Koller received the congratulations of their peers and

deserve the gratitude of their State Associations for the hard work they have done during the past year.

The group also recognized Donna McEntire, wife of State Chair John McEntire from California/Hawaii, for her tireless work on the teacher lesson plans offered free of charge to schools.

In other news, Kent Gade, the National Director of the Elks DAP, is recovering from recent surgery and is under doctor's order not to travel. As a result, his presence was missed at the training and those in attendance wished him a speedy recovery.



Crystal Elk Award

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Thank You All!

The **Assistant Officers** for the 2022-23 Atlanta Grand Lodge Convention have been announced as follows:

► Clerks of Election

Nita R. Knighton—Marietta, GA #1657
 Bruce Boone—Parsons, KS #527
 Michael L. Kennedy—Tacoma, WA #174
 Geoffrey G. Robinson—Noblesville, IN #576
 Victoria Watson—Millville, NJ #580
 Scott Merrihew—Lebanon, IN #2099
 Richard Bard—Lacey, NJ #2518

► Assistant Clerks of Election

Les C. Thario—Great Falls, MT #214
 James Swearingin—Kodiak, AK #1772
 Marion A. Davidson
 —Westminster, MD #2277
 William J. Mack—Frackville, PA #1533
 Thomas Root—Westminster, CO #2227
 Jerry Hitchcock—Carlsbad, NM #1558
 Brian Thompson—Mena, AR #781

► Inspectors of Election

Rex Tollman—Lusk, WY #1797
 Jane Berggren—Grand Island, NE #604
 Mark F. Thompson—Deland, FL #1463
 Albert A. Ingraham—Wells, ME #2738
 James J. Money—Bridgeport, CT #36
 Michael Marvin—Blackfoot, ID #1416
 Steven R. Green—Jefferson City, MO #513

► Assistant Grand Esquires

Dennis D. Bennett—Huron, SD #444
 Patricia A. Baccus—Bristol County, RI #1860
 Michael F. Canfield—Billerica, MA #2071
 Edward B. Connors—Salem, OH #305
 Bruce Hayden—Valdosta, GA #728
 Rene Pelanne Jr.—New Orleans, LA #30
 C. Rick Thompson—Decatur, AL #655

► Assistant Grand Inner Guards

Steven J. Moser—Devils Lake, ND #1216
 James Kirkwood—Springfield, VT #1560
 Jerry R. Stephens—Corinth, MS #2573
 David Hagen—Janesville, WI #254
 Troy M. Nobles—Hattiesburg, MS #599
 Judi Graff—Estherville, IA #528

► Assistant Grand Tilers

Lester W. Collins—Decatur, AL #655
 Cameron M. Ricci—Herkimer, NY #1439
 Donald W. Lewis
 —Gateway-Gresham, OR #1805
 Kenneth Kormendy—Bluefield, WV #269
 Rory Davidson—Enid, OK #2104
 Todd Lindsay—Herrin, IL #1146
 James H. Stansbury—San Angelo, TX #1880

~ GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE ~

COMMUNITY PROJECT CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

CONGRATULATIONS to all the Winners! Elks Lodges across the country continued to show that “*Elks Care—Elks Share*” by conducting Community Projects. These projects were showcased in the Grand Lodge Activities Committee’s Community Projects Contest. *The winners for 2021-22 are as follows:*

Division 1 • (1 – 150 Members)

1st Place Oakland Park, Florida Lodge No. 2407

Division 2 • (151 – 225 Members)

1st Place Roxboro, North Carolina Lodge No. 2005

Division 3 • (226 – 300 Members)

1st Place Goldsboro, North Carolina Lodge No. 139
2nd Place Seaside, Oregon Lodge No. 1748
3rd Place Toccoa, Georgia Lodge No. 1820

Division 4 • (301 – 450 Members)

1st Place Putnam, Connecticut Lodge No. 574
2nd Place Casas Adobes, Arizona Lodge No. 2663
3rd Place Lyndon, Kentucky Lodge No. 2052

Division 5 • (451 – 700 Members)

1st Place Houlton, Maine Lodge No. 835
2nd Place Hickory, North Carolina Lodge No. 1654
3rd Place Winter Garden, Florida Lodge No. 2165

Division 6 • (701+ Members)

1st Place Middletown, Connecticut Lodge No. 771
2nd Place Augusta, Maine Lodge No. 964
3rd Place Lacey, New Jersey Lodge No. 2518

Every Lodge is encouraged to have a project that it conducts in its community. By doing a project that benefits the people in your community, your Lodge increases its visibility, and offers opportunities for your Members to communicate to the public about who we are and what we do. It also allows the Lodge to show that they are good neighbors, and that we live up to the principle of Charity, which as we all know is the greatest of all the virtues. Information on the process of developing a community project can be found on the ENF Community Investments Program page of Elks.org. If your Lodge conducts a project in the coming year, remember to showcase it in the Community Projects Contest.

Community Investment Grants

elks.org/cip/default.cfm

Community Projects Contest

elks.org/grandlodge/activities/files/communityProjectsContest.pdf



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~ GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE ~

LOCAL LODGE WEBSITE CONTEST WINNERS

FIVE ★★★★★ Awards

Bremerton, WA No. 1181	facebook.com/BremertonElks1181
Fredericksburg, VA No. 875	elkslodge875.org
Lebanon, OH No. 422	lebanon422.com
New London, CT No. 360	elks360.org
Reno, NV No. 597	renoelks.org
Sierra Vista, AZ No. 2065	elks.org/lodges/home.cfm?LodgeNumber=2065

FOUR ★★★★★ Awards

High Point, NC No. 1155	hpelks.com
Oswego, NY No. 271	oswegoelks.com
Provo, UT No. 849	facebook.com/groups/290986561176
Sarasota South, FL No. 2495	sarasotaelks2495.org
Silver City, NM No. 413	silvercityelks.com
St. Louis, MO No. 9	elkslodge9.org

THREE ★★★ Awards

Kent Island, MD No. 2576	kentislandelks.com
Wallace, ID No. 331	wallace.idahoelks.org

STATE ASSOCIATION WEBSITE CONTEST WINNERS

FIVE ★★★★★ Awards

Arizona	arizonaelksassociation.org
Connecticut	ctelks.org
Georgia	gaelks.org
Idaho	idahoelks.org
Louisiana	laelks.org
MD-DE-DC	mdededcelks.org
Mississippi	mselks.com
Minnesota	mnelks.org

FOUR ★★★★★ Awards

Arkansas	arelks.homestead.com
Kansas	kselks.org
New Jersey	njelks.org
New Mexico	nmelks.com
Washington	waelks.org

THREE ★★★ Awards

Utah	elksinutah.org
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~ GRAND LODGE AUDITING AND ACCOUNTING COMMITTEE ~

The Auditing and Accounting Committee will be conducting two seminars on Monday and Tuesday to assist Lodges in their accounting tasks.

Introduction to Lodge Accounting using QuickBooks will address the basics of utilizing the recommended software to perform all the basic accounting tasks that a Lodge needs. The session will be conducted using a live session of QuickBooks. It is recommended for all beginners and intermediate Lodge personnel that handle the bookkeeping at the Lodge level. The seminar is scheduled for 12:30–1:45 p.m. Monday and 2:15–3:30 p.m. Tuesday, both in GWCC Building C, room C110.

The *Advanced Lodge Accounting Topics* session will be addressing six of the most common areas where Lodges have issues with complying with Grand Lodge Statutes or federal and state information return requirements. This session is scheduled for 2–3:15 p.m. Monday and 12:30–1:45 p.m. Tuesday, both in GWCC Building C, room C110.

Each session will also have a question and answers segment. Members are also able to stop by the committee's booth in the exhibits area to meet one on one with a member of the committee to address specific issues. The committee looks forward to meeting you.

Exalted Rulers: Atlanta Reports due in October!

Exalted Rulers (or alternate delegates) should be reminded that they are required to attend the Annual Session and submit a Report to their Lodge no later than the first regular meeting in October. [GLS §12.120]

A good suggestion would be to save each edition of the *Convention News*, along with a copy of the Resolutions. Also, record how you voted on each resolution and submit to the Lodge with a cover letter. That will complete the obligation of your report to your Lodge.

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IdahoElksRehab.org

~ GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE ~

AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS for 2021-2022

By David P. Cioe

Americanism Contest Administrator
Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee

"WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LOVE YOUR COUNTRY?"

Final judging of the Americanism Essay Contest for 2021-22 has been completed. The theme was *"What Does It Mean To Love Your Country?"* Huge rounds of applause and thanks to all the students, parents, guardians, teachers, Lodges, and State Associations who reached the submittal and judging stages of this contest. Great job, everyone!

The submissions were excellent, so judging was quite difficult. We did not have the challenge from last year when the pandemic forced us to judge everything via the internet. With restrictions eased, our team of 20 judges was able to meet in person, which was great for everyone. A total of 84 submissions were received, as compared to 71 from last year. *The results are as follows:*

DIVISION I 5th & 6th Grades (42 submissions)

- 1st Place** ADDISON SMITH, 5th Grade, Tatum Elementary School, Tatum, TX.
Sponsored by Marshall, TX Lodge No. 683.
- 2nd Place** AJ MONDANO, 5th Grade, James A. McDivitt Elementary School, Old Bridge, NJ.
Sponsored by Old Bridge, NJ Lodge No. 2229.
- 3rd Place** MAXIM BYON ROGOFF, 6th Grade, Horizon Middle School, Kearney, NE.
Sponsored by Kearney, NE Lodge No. 984.

DIVISION II 7th & 8th Grades (42 submissions)

- 1st Place** YIORGOS KOZAK, 7th Grade, Township of Ocean Intermediate School, Ocean, NJ.
Sponsored by Asbury Park-Wall, NJ Lodge No. 128.
- 2nd Place** LEON JACOB, 8th Grade, Desert Hills Middle School, Kennewick, WA.
Sponsored by Tri-Cities, WA Lodge No. 2755.
- 3rd Place** SAMIYAH SLAUGHTER, 8th Grade, Merry Acres Middle School, Albany, GA.
Sponsored by Albany, GA Lodge No. 713.

Congratulations to all the winners! Your plaques will be on display at the Americanism Essay Contest Seminars during convention. State Association presidents or their designees may pick up the plaques for presentation. We enjoyed reading all the students' essays on demonstrating patriotism. All of us in Elksdom are extremely proud of every contestant!

The Americanism Essay Contest Theme for 2022-2023 is *"What Is Your American Dream?"* Be on the lookout for new and exciting changes to the contest, implemented by our Fraternal Committee, with more divisions and more awards. It has been an honor and a privilege to chair this great contest over the past four years and I wish my successor all the best!

~ ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION ~

Elks' spirit of service on display in Atlanta

The Elks National Foundation is bringing the Elks' spirit of service to Atlanta, along with a chance for you to bring home a bonus Community Investments Program Grant to your community!

This year, the ENF is asking you to donate new socks for a veteran experiencing homelessness and/or a new or gently used children's book to promote youth literacy. Bring your donations to the ENF booth, and they'll enter your Lodge in a raffle for a bonus \$2,000 CIP Grant. Socks and

books will benefit people in the Atlanta area.

Can't get enough service? Neither can Elks scholars. Several 2022 Most Valuable Student scholars are in Atlanta right now on an Elks Scholar Service trip. This weekend they assembled hygiene kits for veterans in need, and they will be serving at local nonprofits, including the Atlanta Community Food Bank and Truly Live Well Urban Farm. They'll also be spending some time at the ENF booth, so stop by for a chance to say hello!



Donate gently used children books for a chance to win a bonus \$2,000 Community Investments Program Grant for your Lodge.

~ ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION ~



Bree Besonen, top shooter in the girls division at the 2022 National Finals, poses with Bart Powell, Hoop Shoot volunteer and son of Getty Powell, the program's first National Director.



Brendan Smith won the Getty Powell Award for the boys division. He also won the Emile Brady Award for a perfect score.

Veteran, rookie win top honors

By Abbey Knupp

ENF Communications Associate

At the 2022 Hoop Shoot National Finals, the Getty Powell Awards — granted to the overall top girl and boy scorer — were taken home by a seasoned Hoop Shooter and a Hoop Shoot newbie.

Sponsored by Copper Country, MI Lodge No. 404, **Bree Besonen** is now a two-time national champion. She won her first championship trophy in 2019, where she scored 22 out of 25 in the 8-9 girls division.

Besonen returned to the 2022 National Finals to not only take home another Frank Hise National Championship, this time in the 12-13 girls division, but also a Getty Powell Award, sinking 24 out of 25 baskets. She beat Indiana's Emersyn Hess, the 8-9 champ, in a shoot-off for the Getty Powell Award.

"A lot of things came into my head," Besonen said. "I was thinking, 'oh, don't miss this,' and then there were some shots that felt really good."

Even with a national championship to her name, there were some things she was hoping to improve on this year — and she did. "It felt really good to finally get a 10 for 10 [in the first round] this year."

Sponsored by Marietta, GA Lodge No. 1657, **Brendan Smith** was the only competitor to sink all 25 free throws. A first time Hoop Shoot participant, Smith took home the Frank Hise National Championship for the 12-13 boys division, a Getty Powell Award, and an Emile Brady Award for the perfect score.

"I feel so relieved," said Smith, after he won. "I practiced so much. I probably shot over 10,000 free throws with my dad. I came in there confident and ready to go."

Whether it is their first or final year competing in the Hoop Shoot, contestants know that the only way to get to the National Finals is through practice and perseverance.

"Just knowing that I practiced enough and knowing that I got this far in the competition," Besonen said. "It was a great experience."

The Elks have been developing gritty kids through the Hoop Shoot program for 50 years. For 2022-23, the 50th anniversary celebration of the Hoop Shoot as a national program, the Elks National Foundation allocated more than \$1.4 million to fund the program. For videos, news from the court, and more information about the Hoop Shoot, visit elks.org/hoopshoot.



~ GRAND LODGE RITUALISTIC COMMITTEE ~

Schedules set for Ritual Contests

By **KENNETH D. RICE**

Committee Chairman

Saturday morning started the National Ritual contests. In the team contest, the first team from the East and West went on at 8 a.m., with teams at 9, 10 and 11 a.m. In the afternoon, teams went on from 1 to 4 p.m. We will have two teams on Sunday,

both in the West, at 8 and 9 a.m.

Also, on Sunday the 11 O'Clock Toast Contest ran from 10 to 11:30 a.m., and the inaugural Flag Charge Contest started at 12:30 p.m. and finished at about 2:45 p.m. As with the team contest, the top two from the East and the West will compete for the championship in both contests.

The finals will start Monday morning; we will have the finals for the Toast Contest starting at 10 a.m., and

the Flag Charge Contest at 10:30 a.m. The ritual team finals will start at 1 p.m., with the remaining three teams at 2, 3, and 4 p.m.

The ladies and gentlemen of these teams have put a lot of time and effort into practice. I'm sure you will be amazed at their performances. If you've never seen a Final Four contest and like ritual, I am sure you will enjoy watching these officers perform.