



# Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER



Elks Care – Elks Share

## Finish your year strong by creating momentum

*Creating Momentum for the Future of Elkdom.* This is my motto going into my year, but this can be your thoughts going out of your year. Finish the year strong—don't think to yourself that you only have two more months until you are done. Instead, think that **you have two more months to make a difference.**

Start bringing your Leading Knight or whoever will be your ER to all the events and all the meetings to help train them going into April. Don't forget, April 1 is a Thursday, and for the next week the Lodges throughout the country will be voting in the new leadership. Hopefully that doesn't mean you are stepping away. PERs are essential to the future of the Lodges.



**Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler**

**PAUL R. RYAN**

Have a celebration for the Birthday of the Elks. The date of our origin is February 16th. It may be a Tuesday, but you can make it a profitable day! Celebrate our birthday and create an avenue for a fundraiser.

This is the time of year both current and future leaders of your Lodge need to come together to set the goals for the next

year. Engage Members in this process. Getting them involved can *Create Momentum for the Future of Elkdom*, and this is what we all want.

Contest 'A' — All American Lodge Contest certification forms are due in March, so get prepared to participate in this. Even if you don't think you qualify, it is worth the efforts to work toward it. I know the parameters are different this year, but the efforts are still worth it!

Stacey and I have had minimal travel throughout the country. However, in our travels we are meeting some great people who are Creating Momentum. We feel change is coming and we look forward to meeting even more people and seeing how this Momentum is helping keep Elkdom strong.

## Chairperson report due via CLMS2Web

After the election of Lodge Officers in February and before April 15, the Secretary must complete the 2021-2022 Lodge Committee Chairperson Report in CLMS2Web and confirm acceptance.

**GRAND SECRETARY**  
Bryan R. Klatt

In January, to assist in compiling the needed information, a worksheet was mailed to the Secretary.

**Remember:** This information is to be filed via CLMS2Web. Please, do not mail to Grand Lodge or your District Deputy.

With the pending automatic submission of the Annual Membership Report, all membership activity must be entered in CLMS2Web by 11:59 p.m. March 31.

What does that mean? All membership records (additions, drops, and deaths) must be finalized. If not, the Lodge membership total will be out of balance.

## GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

### How to thank heroes on the home front

By **DUANE D. HELDENBRAND**  
Committee Member

Valor. A word we commonly associate with the heroic acts of men and women on battlefields in distant lands. However, this term can also be applied to those heroes found closer to home.

These individuals may not be answering the call of service by marching into unknown enemy territory, but responding to emergencies within their local communities. You can find them dashing from the back of ambulances, entering homes roaring with flames without a moment's hesitation, or calmly facing apparent danger many others would shirk away from.

As Elks, we have the privilege and opportunity to respect and honor those who have given all to ensure the wellbeing of this nation's citizens, and those who continue to do so on a daily basis. For those unsung acts of service, your Lodge at the local level may award those individuals who persist in their efforts helping their communities with

the Medal of Service. Unfortunately, we are not always able to thank those who have performed their final act of heroism. Therefore, you can honor their ultimate sacrifice by presenting their deserving families with the Medal of Valor.

The medals mentioned can easily be obtained by placing an order through Grand Lodge Supplies by your Lodge Secretary. Please use Code #575100 for the Medal of Valor and Code #575200 to order the Medal of Service. Both medals are \$9.00 each, plus shipping and handling. Personalized certificates pertaining to both awards are also available for download at elks.org to accompany these medals. Just click on the Members section followed by the Activities' Committee webpage to access these certificates.

Please give your Lodge the opportunity to thank those heroes within your own community who represent the truest meanings of service and valor with these humble recognitions.

## GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

# Bet you did more good works than you thought

By WILLIAM J. LINDSEY  
Committee Member

What does team competition, showing your stuff, adversities, and COVID-19 lead to? The Grand Lodge All-American Lodge Contest “A” in the year 2020-21 is the answer.

What a year to try and get through a contest, let alone participate in it. Our Lodges have all been affected by adverse conditions and yet we all carry on. To that end the All-American Lodge Contest “A” deadline is quickly approaching and your Lodge needs to compete by filling out the application with signatures of the Exalted Ruler and Lodge Secretary. It needs to be sent to your District Deputy, postmarked by March 15, 2021.

Once you start filling out the application you quickly find out what Elks do, especially as a team. Get your Officers and Committee Chairs together and start talking about what you have already completed and what can be done by the

end of the year. Checking the items off on the All-American Lodge application will flow. Not many Lodges complete every aspect or have an answer for every component of the application, but that does not stop you from being an All-American Lodge.

Look at what you usually do—such as Veterans and Youth Activities, Americanism, membership, and Flag Day—and then at what you could do, like competing in the Ritual Contest, holding Hoop Shoot, sponsoring a scouting group, etc. I think there will be more done than you originally thought. All-American can be defined as possessing qualities characteristic of established ideals including honesty, industriousness, and health. It also means being selected as one of the best in a particular category, especially as a team composed of outstanding members.

All these points—whether they make you the eventual leader in the contest or

not—make your Lodge an organization that will stand out in your community and the world of Elkdom. Your Lodge can be proud of its accomplishments, achieved by a better functioning set of Officers. You and your Lodge are winners just by reviewing the requirements, and more so by entering. The size of your Lodge will determine which of the six Divisions in which you will compete.

The All-American Lodge Contest “A” application was sent to each Lodge before the end of the calendar year. If it somehow got misplaced, it can be found at <https://www.elks.org/grandlodge/fraternal/files/contestALodgeCertification.pdf>.

First-place Lodges in each Division receive plaques and second- and third-place Lodges earn certificates.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained. See if you can garner the bragging rights for your Lodge and show your members what you are made of. After all *Elks Care, Elks Share*.

## DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

## Incoming ERs: Fill the DAP chair

By WILLIAM J. BRYAN  
Assistant National Director

Now is the time for Lodge ERs to think about committee assignments! Nothing can be more important to your Lodge or your community than to select a hard-working Drug Awareness Chair.

Now is not the time to simply provide a name or fill in a blank. Instead, assign the position to an Elk who is ready to roll up their sleeves. Find someone comfortable with meeting school officials and who believes in our future—our children.

COVID-19 has taken its toll on our Order and within our communities, but the work of the DAP has consistently moved forward over this time. With the introduction of vaccines and continued

vigilance on the part of our membership, we are slowly turning the corner and soon will hopefully be back to “normal.”

During this pandemic, the need to teach our children about the dangers of illicit drugs and drug abuse continued to grow. As we come out of this crisis, we as Elks need to be the voice of reason and the message needs to be clear. That’s why it is essential for you, as the leader of your Lodge, to assign the work of the DAP to a dedicated individual. Not sure of the qualities you should be looking for? Contact your State Drug Awareness Chair and ask!

As we move towards the 2021-2022 Elks year, let’s make this the best ever. Your DAP stands ready to assist.

## GRAND LODGE PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP MARKETING

## Elks PR thrives in difficult year

By RICK GATHEN  
PR and Membership Marketing Manager

**Safer-Smarter-Stronger** is the battle cry for 2021. The wrath of COVID-19 has forever changed us. The vaccine, if successful, will be a tremendous help towards resuming more activity in 2021. Lodges need to be nimble and stay on top of the latest research recommendations.

Yes, the membership numbers are down and yes, Lodges are struggling. These are facts from COVID-19. But they do not tell you everything. Great work is being done and Lodges are supporting their communities.

Moreover, the Elks Public Relations Committee is setting new records! Television, radio, newspapers, websites, and social media drive these robust and record-setting numbers. We continue to grow, connect, educate, and engage people nationwide. We are driving positive messages, expanding the brand, and engaging new audiences every day.

I marvel at Elks’ strength and unyielding spirit, and admire in amazement how we do it. How you react in difficult times shows your strength.

## VETERANS From Page 4

of special importance right now. Because many veterans are isolated in their homes, making their living space comfortable is crucial.

Lodges have found creative ways to serve veterans from a distance, including scheduling online order deliveries or arranging for veterans’ case managers to pick up orders from the store to take to veterans.

Every veteran has their own story as to how they became homeless. Similarly, every veteran has unique hopes and dreams. A stable home provides security and can be the first step for veterans to achieve bright futures. Thanks to the dedication of Elks far and wide, the Welcome Home Kit program recently surpassed 5,000 total veterans served! With your help, the upcoming year can be our biggest yet. Together we can do great things.

## GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

# Charity depends on communication with policymakers

By **CARL R. LEDIG, SR.**  
Committee Member

To inculcate the principles of Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love, and Fidelity; to recognize a belief in God; to promote the welfare and enhance the happiness of its Members; to quicken the spirit of American patriotism; to cultivate good fellowship; to perpetuate itself as a fraternal organization, and to provide for its government, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America will serve the people and communities through philanthropic programs, demonstrating that *Elks Care and Elks Share*.

Today we will focus on the first of our cardinal principles, Charity. Inside the Elks, the Esteemed Leading Knight represents Charity and serves as its Vice President. He or she is second in command and presides in the absence of the Exalted Ruler, so Charity is given an enhanced priority in the command chain.

Prior to COVID-19, many nonprofits, including the BPOE, were already strained to meet public needs. Now with COVID-19 all nonprofits staff, board members, volunteers and donors are especially strained.

What can we do? First, we can use the power of nonprofit networks to accomplish more by working together.

We should be using our massive membership bases to let our lawmakers know that collectively we seek help on policy decision consequences.

Policymakers need to be educated about the valuable support role that groups like the BPOE play in helping local residents and voters in need.

To pursue our mission, we need a reliable and supportive public policy environment. Our mission is vulnerable to policymakers who can take away resources, impose burdens, interfere with decision-making, erect barriers, and change laws in ways that disrupt the work of nonprofits.

Significant threats exist at local, state, and federal levels. Federal law changes can have nationwide consequences, but state law changes can be just as significant for the nonprofits in that state, and the odds of state policy changes are much greater.

Would you be prepared if your state limited or eliminated charitable giving incentives or tax exemptions for nonprofits, levied new taxes or fees on nonprofits, imposed heavy regulatory burdens on nonprofits, or proposed other harmful changes?

Ongoing challenges include federal tax law changes that suppress charitable giving; states undermining nonprofit sustainability by capping or eliminating charitable giving incentives; taxing the expenses nonprofits pay employees and local governments trying to impose fees or demand voluntary payments on exempt nonprofit property; and attempts to politicize nonprofits.

We must stand together to provide a common defense or we risk having our organizations and communities weakened.

We can and must do better to lead the way!

We must protect public trust, which is vital for donations and volunteers, and make sure we have developed and are following our best practices programs.

We must advocate for our mission by sharing our problems and solutions with policymakers so they can make better decisions. We have a constitutional right, statutory authority, and moral obligation to advocate and lobby on behalf of our organizations and the individuals and communities we serve. We should speak up on public policy that affects our mission.

Nonprofits have been sitting silently on the sidelines, but we don't have to spend a lot of money to be effective advocates for our mission. Nonprofits can join together to lobby. On average, fewer than 3% of nonprofits lobby compared to the 100% with the legal right to do so.

Be informed. Make a list of what issues help or hinder your Lodge. Who inside your Lodge or what policy makers in your community can help? Connect with local journalists, civic clubs, the mayor, and/or the governor and let them know the valuable role organizations like the BPOE plays in community charity and community support. Let them know how we aid and complement state and local government programs, which unfortunately are not enough so the private sector is a necessity. Promote your mission by engaging with others!

## Scorecard makes benevolence a friendly challenge

Fall announced itself in a couple ways in the Hoop Shoot office. There was the first changed leaf and brisk morning, and, of course, the kickoff of Lodge Hoop Shoot contests. Fall's tidings also included our new virtual engagement opportunity, the Service Scorecard.

The Service Scorecard, available at [enf.elks.org/ServiceScorecard](http://enf.elks.org/ServiceScorecard), mixes the Elks spirit of volunteerism, grit, and fun, all for the chance to win prizes—like a \$100 donation to the charity of the winner's choice. While this year's Hoop Shoot season looks different, we're offering Hoop Shooters, Elks, and others an opportunity to stay engaged with their communities while remaining socially distant.

When the Scorecard launched in October, we saw participants pick up the month's theme of Off the Court and (safely) run with it. Across the

country, participants took part in active, community-based projects of all sorts. In Texas, Alexis Wong, a 8-9 year old state champ in 2020, left encouraging sidewalk chalk messages to remind her community to stay safe.

For Parker Voight, a high school junior from Missouri, service meant large community projects—like clearing out the community pool—and smaller acts of kindness such as raking leaves and doing yard work for neighbors.

The October Service Scorecard raffle winner, Sheahan Gray, served her community by writing chalk messages to first responders with her family. Her mother, Linda, said “the projects have been a great motivator for us to get more involved in community service, and we're having a nice time working on the scorecard activities as a family.”

With her \$100 donation, Sheahan chose

to support the Bella Vita Foundation, a local nonprofit that raises funds for their cross-country teams and donates to Mothers Against Drunk Driving. In a heartfelt message, Sheahan gave a big thank you to all the Elks who made her donation possible.

Throughout the fall, participants showed how #HoopShootServes. As the seasons change, we look forward to new participants, new experiences, and new opportunities to serve. Whether you've been involved in the Hoop Shoot for years or have never picked up a basketball, join us in service with the Service Scorecard!



# Welcome Home Kits offer a new beginning

By **NADEZH MULHOLLAND**  
Programs Associate

You have probably heard the saying, “It takes a village to raise a child.” Here at the Elks National Veterans Service Commission, we believe it takes a village to keep our veterans safe, housed, and cared for. One tangible way the Elks village cares for veterans in need is through the Welcome Home Kit program.

Welcome Home Kits are designed to help veterans transition to permanent homes after exiting homelessness. We reimburse Elks Lodges for purchasing kits of household supplies for local veterans. Kits contain a range of

essential household supplies, including kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, and cleaning items.

It is a joyous occasion when a veteran finds housing, but it is not the end of the story. Rather, it signifies a new beginning. Many veterans need help getting off to a strong start, and that is where the Elks come in. Veterans frequently enter permanent housing directly from shelters and may have no belongings other than the clothes on their backs. As we all know, a home is more than just four walls and a roof. Through the Welcome Home

Kit program, Elks help veterans around the country feel at home in their new residences.

Many volunteers find fulfillment in continuing to support veterans even after they are settled. Veterans often benefit from help with tasks like budgeting, planning meals, searching for jobs, and communicating with landlords.

While these kinds of in-person connections are wonderful, you don't have to wait until after the pandemic to put together your first kit. In fact, kits are



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**BRYAN R. KLATT**, Grand Secretary  
**Benevolent and Protective  
ORDER OF ELKS**  
2750 N. Lakeview Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60614-1889

**February 2021**

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## Elks Lodges celebrate 100 years of service

The following Elks Lodges have stood the test of time as they celebrate their 100-Year Anniversary this 2020-2021 fraternal year during GER Paul R. Ryan's term. Here's to 100 more years in service to humanity, community, our nation and our Order's noble principles.

<u>Lodge Name &amp; No.</u>	<u>Instituted</u>	<u>Lodge Name &amp; No.</u>	<u>Instituted</u>
Nampa, ID Lodge No. 1389	September 9, 1920	Carlinville, IL No. 1412	May 24, 1921
Mechanicville-Stillwater, NY Lodge No. 1403	December 19, 1920	Huntington Park, CA No. 1415	June 4, 1921
McAllen, TX Lodge No. 1402	December 28, 1920	Peabody-Lynn, MA No. 1409	June 8, 1921
Garden City, KS No. 1404	February 3, 1921	Bicknell, IN No. 1421	June 16, 1921
El Dorado, KS No. 1407	February 7, 1921	St. Maries, ID No. 1418	June 24, 1921
Boonton, NJ No. 1405	February 22, 1921	Brawley, CA No. 1420	June 25, 1921
Corvallis, OR No. 1413	April 26, 1921	Ontario, CA No. 1419	June 29, 1921