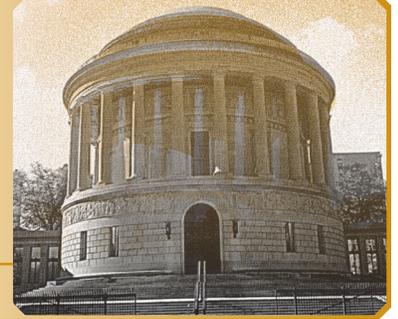




Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care — Elks Share



Staying focused, but bringing enthusiasm

After receiving the distinct honor of being elected as your Grand Exalted Ruler by the convention delegates in Atlanta, my wife Helen and I are extremely humbled and honored to represent our great Order of Elks this year.

Throughout my 42 year journey in the Elks, I have been blessed by the aid and support of many, many great people. Together, Helen and I owe a great debt of gratitude to our family, friends, and to you, our fellow Elks. Each one of you has been there for us in one way or another, and Helen and I thank you very much for everything. To my lovely wife Helen, you are the most superb, supportive, and devoted wife anyone could ask for. Truly, thank you! I am forever grateful!

For the 2022-2023 Elks Year, my



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler **BRUCE A. HIDLEY**

theme is, *“Promoting Elkdom with Enthusiasm!”* This theme represents the commitment that Helen and I have made to travel wherever we can across our great nation, to work as hard as we can to support our Local Lodges, in *promoting* the programs of Elkdom with tremendous and overwhelming *enthusiasm* in their communities.

A fundamental funding source of *“Promoting Elkdom with Enthusiasm”*

is the Elks National Foundation (ENF). Last year, the ENF budget totaled over \$39.8 million. Think of the impact that the \$39.8 million has had on your State Association and Local Lodges in funding the various Elks programs that stress healthy and active lifestyles for our youth, fulfilling the Elks’ pledge to always remember our veterans (past and present) who defended our freedoms that we enjoy, and providing millions of dollars in grants in the communities where we live and work. For the 2022-2023 Elks Year, my goal is that the ENF personal donation will once again be \$4.80 per Member. Elks Members have proved over and over again their commitment to meeting this per-capita goal, and

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Report: Membership, donations trending up

The 2021-2022 Membership Report was filed online via CLMS2. As of March 31, the Order ended the year with a total membership of 755,038, a gain of 25,926 (+3.56%) compared to last year. As we slowly recover from the pandemic, membership remains the principal focus.

Totals from the Annual Charity Reports show the Order donated \$368,368,264 in time, mileage, and in-kind gifts, an increase of nearly \$160 million from 2020-21. As impressive as this is, 109

GRAND SECRETARY
Bryan R. Klatt

Lodges failed to file their charity reports this past year. Again,

with everyone’s help, during the 2022-2023 Lodge year we will strive to reach that elusive 100% reported.

I would like to thank the Atlanta Host Committee, their volunteers, and Past Grand Exalted Ruler Michael F. Smith for all the work they did to ensure a successful convention.

G/L PR AND MEMBERSHIP MARKETING COMMITTEE

A playbook for adding new Members

By **RICK GATHEN**
Membership Marketing Manager

1. Ask every Member to submit three prospects to the membership chair and receive the GER Award Pin.
2. Assign every Chair Officer to a five-person recruitment team, and each team brings in at least five new Members.
3. Pass out M&M candy to remind Members that “Membership Matters” and that we need “More Members.”
4. Distribute extra copies of The Elks Magazine to waiting rooms, etc.
5. Hold wine and cheese receptions for prospective Members.
6. Build a Lodge website and social media page.
7. Create more fun at your Lodge.
8. Lead by example. How many Members have you recruited?
9. Hold recruiting events with the entire district.

10. Place an invitation card in the hand of every Member to remind them to bring a guest.

11. Produce Lodge flyers and have available in the Lodge. Hand to non-members during community events.

12. In your Exalted Ruler message, encourage Members to bring guests every month.

13. Ask your Lodge Secretary to run a list of all former Members dropped for non-payment over the past five years.

14. Give guests Lodge pins and make them feel welcome.

15. Approach corporations and businesses. Some businesses look for community involvement opportunities.

16. Place pamphlets in doctors’ offices, hospitals, cafeterias, libraries, etc.

17. Send letters to people in the news with an invitation to visit the Lodge.

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GER From Page 1

I'm sure that we will all look toward "*Promoting Elkdom with Enthusiasm*" to achieve that \$4.80 per Member goal. Please accept my sincere thank you to the entire membership, in advance, for your ongoing tireless efforts for ENF.

Since Lodge membership is absolutely vital to the success of our great Order of Elks, I strongly encourage you to focus on obtaining a +1 in membership. In addition to seeking new qualified Members, please also work with your Lodge Membership Retention Chairperson to get our stray Elks back into our Order. Membership is the life blood of our organization. By "*Promoting Elkdom with Enthusiasm*" within our communities, we will attract residents who will want to become proud Members.

Perhaps it was best said by the simple words of American automotive pioneer and founder and namesake of the Chrysler Corporation, Walter Chrysler, "The real secret of success is enthusiasm."

Helen and I are excited and proud to travel to each state to see and commend the great work you are doing in your State Associations and Local Lodges. We look forward to meeting as many Elks as we can and making new, lifetime friends as we travel.

ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION**Top MVS winners teach for the stars**

By **ABBEY KNUPP**
ENF Communications Coordinator

Every student who received one of the 504 Elks National Foundation Most Valuable Student Scholarships in 2021-22 is a star, brightening their communities through passion, service, and knowledge. One of last year's top winners, sponsored by Slidell, LA Lodge No. 2321, has truly astronomical aspirations.

"My dreams are fed by celestial wonder," Kaden Oqueli-White said, "compelling me toward astrophysics as a means to serve to make our universe a bit less unexplained and a bit more knowable to all."

Oqueli-White plans on attending Columbia University to study astrophysics and pursue a career in academia. Though he is focused on the vastness of the cosmos, he seeks to have an impact much closer to home by using his education and experiences to engage diverse populations, specifically encouraging Latino students to pursue STEM careers.

Breana Fowler, sponsored by Salisbury, NC Lodge No. 699, also dreams of furthering the education of others, and she has already started by creating a peer mediation program at her high school. The

program allows students, who have been suspended or received other disciplinary action access to a safe space led by trained mediators before or after an altercation occurs.

"The program allows students to come to peace with their past and recognize their feelings, not ignore them," Fowler said. "I am proud to say that more than three dozen students have completed the program so far, and it will be implemented into various schools, district-wide, this year."

Fowler will start at Spelman College this fall, where she will study education. She hopes to open her own boarding school and to influence education policy and curriculum by becoming the secretary of education, but that is a dream for the future.

Fowler and Oqueli-White both earned \$50,000 scholarships toward college by winning the top MVS awards.

For 2022-23, the Elks National Foundation allocated \$2.8 million to fund the Most Valuable Student scholarship program, which includes 500 four-year scholarships ranging from \$4,000 to \$50,000. For more information about the Most Valuable Student scholarship program, including eligibility and deadlines, visit enf.elks.org/MVS.

GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE**Gov. Relations guidelines keep Order in good standing**

By **DANIEL J. CAPELLA**
Committee Member

Today, our fraternal organization finds itself in an alarming position. In simple terms, our ship has been faltering and we have yet to overcome our problems adequately enough to stem the drift.

We encounter difficulties with gaining membership and finding Members to become officers. We also face assaults on our rights as Americans to belong to an organization such as the Elks.

This third difficulty can be traced to 1972, when United States Supreme Court Justice William Douglas, with regards to his interpretation of our United States Constitution stated:

"My view of the First Amendment and the related guarantees of the Bill of Rights is that they create a zone of privacy which precludes government from interfering with private clubs or groups."

Although our status became protected, there are those who continue to disagree with that decision and who work to have it reversed. It is therefore necessary that we remain constantly aware of and obey the laws and regulations that govern us.

Unfortunately, at times our membership engages in conduct that invites scrutiny and legal action by governmental authorities, thus causing damage to our reputation and expensive lawsuits. This is all the more reason to support our Government Relations Committees on the local, district, state, and area levels by becoming active and by following the guidelines that are set forth before us.

Committee members dedicate time and effort to meet the threats that exist, and because the challenge is huge, officers, past and present, and our membership in general must all take responsibility. The Lodge is our first line of defense, and it begins with becoming familiar with our Government Relations Manual.

Grand Lodge has produced a wealth of information regarding the do's and don'ts of being a good Elk, as well as methods of operation that need to be followed to protect our Lodges and our Order. It is our responsibility to pass this information on to our membership and to enforce it. Adding some of the information from our manuals to our monthly newsletters and our websites can increase Member awareness. Posting information on our bulletin board or in other visible spots can also be done.

Our Members must be educated about Elkdom, beyond what they learn during indoctrination and initiation so that they can make good decisions concerning what they say, how they act, and what they post on their internet accounts.

Lodge officers and Members need to heed the teachings of our Government Relations Committee members because the future of Elkdom depends upon it.

GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

Winners named in 2021-22 All American Lodge contest

By **ANTHONY J. DARDANO**
Committee Member

The top three Contest “A” — All American Lodges have been chosen in each division. After listing the top 10 in each division in the July Grand Lodge Newsletter, the judges have chosen the top three in each division and announced them at Grand Lodge in Atlanta on Tuesday morning at the Business Session.

Congratulations to all Lodges that participated in Contest “A.” You are all winners. Your Lodge is better because of your participation.

Here are the top three awards for Lodges in each division.

Division I — [1-150 Members]

- 1st Place Crestview, FL Lodge No. 2624
- 2nd Place Norfolk, VA Lodge No. 38
- 3rd Place Norfolk, NE Lodge No. 653

Division II — [151 to 225 Members]

- 1st Place Santa Monica, CA Lodge No. 906
- 2nd Place Kearny, NJ Lodge No. 1050
- 3rd Place Roxboro, NC Lodge No. 2005

Division III — [226 to 300 Members]

- 1st Place Forks, WA Lodge No. 2524
- 2nd Place Bridgeport, PA Lodge No. 714
- 3rd Place Howell, NJ Lodge No. 2515

Division IV — [301 to 450 Members]

- 1st Place Roseville, CA Lodge No. 2248
- 2nd Place Sierra Vista, AZ Lodge No. 2065
- 3rd Place Louisville, KY Lodge No. 8

Division V — [451 to 700 Members]

- 1st Place Casa Grande Valley, AZ Lodge No. 1957
- 2nd Place St. Louis, MO Lodge No. 9
- 3rd Place Lake Hopatcong, NJ Lodge No. 782

Division VI — [701 Members and up]

- 1st Place Orange, CA Lodge No. 1475
- 2nd Place Fayetteville-Springdale, AR Lodge No. 1987
- 3rd Place Ballard (Seattle), WA Lodge No. 827

MEMBERSHIP From Page 1

18. Have a special guest day. Free food always works!

19. Write letters to the newspaper about the campaigns your Lodge is working on.

20. Honor outstanding community members with awards.

21. Wear your Lodge’s pin in public, and people will ask you questions.

22. Send your Lodge newsletter to guests.

23. Contact your chamber of commerce to help you advertise your events.

24. Rent out your Lodge to civic, benevolent and fraternal groups such as Rotary International, Lions Club, and Knights of Columbus.

25. Open your Lodge to community organizations that need a place to meet.

26. Encourage your Members to “just ask” friends, family, neighbors, business associates, etc. to join the Order.

27. Sponsor a community work day.

28. Ask to be invited into a local school. Parents and teachers are the prospects. Sponsor a presentation.

29. Arrange to speak at homeowners association meetings and give a presentation about the Elks.

30. Use the reinstatement letter from the Membership Manual.

ELKS *Do!*

DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM**Early prep begins for Red Ribbon Week**

By **WILLIAM J. BRYAN**
Assistant National Director

It’s never too early to plan your Lodge’s Red Ribbon Celebration for the month of October. There are many ways to celebrate Red Ribbon Week (October 23-31) and every part of your community can get involved.

Here’s 10 easy tips for your Lodge to have a successful program.

1. Contact your elected officials about issuing a proclamation declaring Red Ribbon Week in your community. You can obtain PDF copies of proclamations from your State Chair.

2. Invite elected and government officials to participate in Red Ribbon Week activities.

3. Display a basket of red ribbons in the reception area of your Lodge for visitors and Members to take, along with copies of the Red Ribbon Week fact card, which are available from your State Chair.

4. Display red ribbons on the interior and exterior surfaces of your Lodge’s building.

5. Sponsor a special drug abuse prevention seminar for the community. Invite a speaker who is an expert on drug prevention and invite the community to attend.

6. Submit a public service announcement about Red Ribbon Week activities to your local radio station. These can be found in the DAP section of the Elks webpage.

7. Sponsor an in-service educational program for your Members and community leaders.

8. Organize a drug prevention awareness fair. Invite local nonprofit organizations to participate by staffing exhibit booths, distributing educational materials, offering free health screenings, and much more. The Elks are leaders in this area and your Lodge will stand out!

9. Set up and staff an exhibit table at a local hospital, doctor’s office, community center, or shopping center to promote Red Ribbon Week and to distribute drug prevention information and materials.

10. Post fact sheets and Red Ribbon Week event notices and other materials on community webpages, and on bulletin boards in libraries, hospitals, local churches, synagogues, gymnasiums, grocery stores, parks and recreation departments, health clinics, universities, and other public places.

Some of these ideas take little effort, while others take more of a commitment. What are you waiting for?

Rural veterans face housing, travel, connection issues

By **HANNAH GRABER**

ENVSC Programs Coordinator

For Elks in rural areas, identifying and connecting with veterans can be a challenge. Before starting a project, learn more about the obstacles and conditions that veterans in the community face.

VA reports show that almost a quarter of United States veterans live in rural communities where there are higher levels of poverty, more elderly residents, and fewer healthcare resources. More than half of rural veterans are over the age of 65 and have at least one service-connected condition.

While these veterans may be farther

away from VA resources, they are enrolled in the VA healthcare system at higher rates than veterans living in urban communities. Transportation is a major challenge for these veterans who must travel to receive services.

Veterans in rural communities who experience housing insecurity may not be homeless. Instead, their homes may be in poor or dangerous condition, or they may be staying temporarily at a series of places with friends and family. These veterans can have difficulty accessing housing assistance that is available for veterans

living outdoors or in shelters. Often, information about serving veterans is focused on those living in urban settings. Identifying veterans in rural areas is not easy when there are not as many organized resources or settings for veterans to seek assistance.

How can Elks identify veterans in need in rural areas?

In addition to VA clinics or hospitals, you may be able to identify veterans through other community groups you're a part of like churches,

Continued below



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schools, or local nonprofit organizations. Focus your outreach efforts on both public places (like post offices, libraries, town halls), and private businesses (grocery stores, laundromats). Clearly communicate the type of service or resource you're offering to reach veterans who will benefit most.

Here are a few ways to get started serving veterans in rural areas:

- Create long term support through networking with other organizations for job and housing searches.
- Use ENVSC's Welcome Home Kit reimbursement program to support veterans who are exiting homelessness.
- Volunteer to drive veterans to a hospital, clinic, or shopping center

on a regular basis. One way to do this is by working with the DAV.

- Distribute gas cards or other transportation assistance to veterans in need.
- Offer tech support by providing phone charging stations at local clinics. If you're internet savvy, offer your assistance with setting up computers and logging in for veterans to access healthcare providers remotely.
- Find local Veterans Service Officers to build partnerships and refer veterans.

Wherever veterans are, they can count on the Elks. Visit elks.org/vets for more information about supporting veterans in rural areas.

