

SMITHFIELD, RI LODGE OF ELKS #2359



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E.R. MESSAGE FOR SEPTEMBER 2017

I have been asked by our Exalted Ruler to send his regards this month and thank everyone for their thoughts and prayers while he goes through his treatments.

The lodge continues to do well and we appreciate the new members jumping in and volunteering from the start.

Thanks to all the members that came to the special needs picnic this year. I know you had as much fun as our over 1500 guests.

The veteran's cemetery Elks monument pasta dinner was quite successful and our lodge is close to fulfilling Smithfield's commitment.

We now have Karaoke on all Fridays, join us for dinner and stay to sing the night away.

Dennis Bonollo is looking for help at the door on Saturday nights. A couple more volunteers will lighten his load.

We will have an initiation of new member on September 14, join us to welcome our new members at this special meeting.

Tim Chilinski, PSP for
Exalted Ruler
Ted Cooke

From the Secretary's

Desk...

Dear Members:

OMG! It is almost fall! This summer just flew right by.

We have several new applications for membership:

Carol Horibin, proposed by Maria Palmieri
Suzanne Prall, proposed by Maria Palmieri
Americo Renzi, proposed by Maria Palmieri
Richard L. Perron, proposed by Winifred Rezendes

Lucien Marcoux, proposed by Winifred Rezendes
Paul S. Zompa, proposed by Cheryl Pimental
Dian Rekrut, proposed by Dawn Matteo
William Rekrut, Proposed by Dawn Matteo

Pending their investigation, we will vote on these new applications on September 21st.

Please Note: We will be bringing in a class on Thursday, September 14th at 7:30 p.m.

I will be sending out dues notices to those members who have paid one-half year dues and I will send out dues notices for the "third time" to those delinquent members. If you are delinquent, please consider paying your dues so I won't have to drop you in March.

Thank You

Bob Murphy

Elk of the Month

Renovations Loan, Good Idea?

A few months back a motion was passed to allow the Board of Directors to obtain a loan for \$200,000 to be used for renovations to the Lodge. During the meeting, a member asked the question "how are we going to pay back this money" the answer he received from the Exalted Ruler was "don't worry we'll be able to pay it back". It passed overwhelmingly.

The truth is that there is a significant possibility that we will not be able to pay back this loan without returning to the days when it was normal for the House Committee to have cash on hand in their checking account of less than \$3,000 and payables due to vendors of twenty to thirty thousand dollars at any given moment during the year.

I have heard the reasoning from members of the Board of Directors that ever since we paid off our last loan we have been setting aside the loan payments which proves we can handle the new loan payments. The last time these funds were set aside was in 2014 and not a single member of the Board of Directors appeared to be aware of this. To me the only thing proven by this is that the Board of Directors is recklessly unaware of the operations they are charged with administering.

Because we now have approximately \$90,000 in cash and investments I get the feeling that the Board of Directors think we are now on easy street. Our recent modest success is due almost entirely to House Committee members Keith and Rick as well as a few other members who have allowed us to cut our kitchen payroll to almost nothing. In addition, Carole Styles, our event coordinator, does not charge us for her services. It cannot be stressed enough how much our Lodge relies on this very small group of members and how unlikely it is that they could be replaced. Unless these members intend to break their backs for the next ten years we will at some point need to once again pay to have this work done, and once again we will be lucky to break even each year.

Our Board of Directors does not know and apparently are not concerned about whether their dream projects can be paid for. If the Board of Directors ever brings their renovations proposal to the floor I encourage each member reading this article to attend the Lodge meeting to hold the Board of Directors accountable and reject the proposal if they cannot present a responsible plan for repayment of this loan.

Kenneth White, Treasurer/Former Treasurer

Elks Special Needs Outing



An Elks Story

I joined the Elks a few years ago for many of the same reasons most of us do. I was very excited to be part of an organization with a long-standing tradition of community and good will. In that time, I have met many great likeminded people that have the same values and sense of community as myself. I was eager to become part of the management of our lodge and ran for office.

As a trustee, I was proud to be part of the decisions that were made to make our lodge prosper. After our chairperson left, I was voted by my peers to serve in his place. As chairman, we were able to do many good things. For example, we were able to facilitate credit card acceptance. This was a huge step forward for us all. We worked very closely with the house committee on many issues. When the members' room was flooded, we worked tirelessly to create a beautiful new space that we all enjoy today. We were also able to get our roof repaired by working closely with the insurance company as well as the contractors. Needless to say no one person could do this alone. It took all of us, the trustees, officers and the house committee worked very well together to accomplish all that we did.

Unfortunately, after a year of service I was diagnosed with stage 3 lung cancer. Because of the time my treatment would take, I decided to step aside to allow my position to be filled by someone that would be able to dedicate the time needed to be effective. During my time in the hospital and during chemo and radiation, I received many visits and well wishes from my Elk family. I was committed to getting well and coming back to the Elks to serve again.

When I was well again, I did come back and ran for office and was voted in as a trustee. This time around things were different. It seemed that our leadership was no longer a group process. There were some things happening that seemed not to be in the spirit of Elkdom.

Sadly, our Exalted Ruler has been very ill. This unfortunately has allowed the Chairman of the Board of Directors and one other Board member to bring their own leadership style to the Smithfield Elks. The first time I saw this leadership style in action was during the BOD meeting discussing drafting the proposal to obtain a loan, the discussion was based upon how to draft the proposal in such a manner as to allow them to get a sizeable loan and spend the money without ever having to go back to the Floor for approval. Luckily common sense prevailed and this motion was not attempted. Some of the Chairman's other actions/accomplishments include making unilateral decisions without the consent of fellow Board members and, holding special "closed meetings" of the Board of Directors.

The most recent incident created by the Chairman resulted in two officers turning in their badges and keys after the last regular meeting of the Lodge. For years our financial records have been in a state of disarray. We have routinely been fined by Grand Lodge and the IRS for late filings. Because of the many hours of work by our treasurer Ken White on previous years accounting, we were not fined this year.

The Chairman of the BOD signed a contract to fix years of additional accounting issues based on the BOD recommendation. The chairman and 2 other members however did not to agree with the rest of the board's decision and decided not to honor the signed contract after the work had already been completed. After repeated attempts to work with the minority opinion it was clear this contract would not be honored. The unfortunate thing in this is that the decision not to honor the signed contract was largely based on personal bias and has put the lodge in a potential precarious legal and reputational position. The Chairman signed a contract as a representative of the lodge and now we are refusing to honor it. This is clearly wrong and not in the spirit of what we should be.



The chairman of the BOD does not seem to realize that as Chairman he presides over the Board's meetings and that he has no more authority than any other Board member. He in fact has overstepped his authority and in our leaders absence has taken on the role as sole decision maker for all of us. This is clearly not how we were designed to operate.

I am heartbroken that this has happened to our Lodge and challenge all members to attend regular meetings and question what is happening. "Closed" meetings should not be tolerated. We all have an equal stake in our Lodge and we should not allow anyone to push their own agenda without question.

John LaPorte CFI,CFE

SEPTEMBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Friday Night Dinner Karaoke 8 pm	2 Calamari Bros 7:30 pm
3	4 Hi Low Jack Starts @ 7pm	5 House Committee Meeting CANCELLED	6 Wednesday Menu	7 BOD Meeting <u>6:30 pm</u> Lodge Meeting 7:30pm	8 Friday Night Dinner Karaoke 8 pm	9 Jaded 7:30 pm
10	11 Hi Low Jack Starts @ 7pm	12 House Committee Meeting Starts @ 6:30 pm	13 Wednesday Menu	14 New Member Initiation	15 Friday Night Dinner Karaoke 8 pm	16 Jaded 7:30 pm
17	18 Hi Low Jack Starts @ 7pm	19 House Committee Meeting Starts @ 6:30 pm	20 Wednesday Menu	21 BOD Meeting <u>6:30 pm</u> Lodge Meeting 7:30pm	22 Friday Night Dinner Karaoke 8 pm	23 Calamari Bros 7:30 pm
24	25 Hi Low Jack Starts @ 7pm	26 House Committee Meeting Starts @ 6:30 pm	27 Wednesday Menu	28	29 Friday Night Dinner Karaoke 8 pm	30 Vini Ames Duo 7:30 pm

 **RESERVE THIS DATE** 


Our Elks National President Grand Exalted Ruler
MALCOLM J. MCPHERSON, JR.
will be visiting our State

DATE: Monday, September 25th, 2017
TIME: Cocktails 6:00pm—Dinner 7:00pm
PLACE: Coventry-W. Greenwich Lodge #2285
 42 Nooseneck Hill Rd., W. Greenwich, RI
TICKETS: \$20.00 pp

Officers and Members: Save this date and plan on being at this event. There is plenty of time to put this in your calendars. Tickets will be available from your ER's and others very soon and more information on this event will follow. You will enjoy a GREAT dinner and be representing our wonderful State!!! We are looking for a LARGE turnout of Officers and Members!!! Come meet and greet our Grand Exalted Ruler!!! He will sign Membership Cards so make sure you bring yours! Please email blast this to your Membership and post it in your Lodges.

Thank you, David P. Cioe, SVP, GLC

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