

**Who are we? The Lake Taneycomo Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks of the United States of America.**

**Our Lodge was chartered on April 17th 1979 in Rockaway Beach Mo.**

**Why was the Lodge started? To support the principles of our Order which are, Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity, of which Charity is the primary principle.**

**The membership had grown, so in February 1996, site preparation was done for a new Lodge home to be built north of Forsyth, Mo. with mostly volunteer labor. The first Lodge meeting was held on May 7th and the first bingo on July 14th. The grand opening for the public was held August 24<sup>th</sup>. Included in the grand opening was the flight of an emergency helicopter that for the first time made use of the helipad the Lodge built.**

**Shortly after the need for a boys and girls club was realized. At that time the Lodge pledged to donate \$125,000 over the next five years from its bingo profits and other fund raising activity's. The Lake Taneycomo Elks Boys and Girls Club opened on March 5<sup>th</sup> 2000. The final amount pledged was paid in April of 2002, two year ahead of time. Since then the Lodge has continued its support of the community.**

**Last year we started the year with 63 members, affiliated with 75 Lodges in the State of Mo. with over 30,000 members and over 1800 Lodges with about a 800,000 members nationally.**

**Nationally, the roots of the Elks were formed in New York City in 1867 when a group of thespians met as the Jolly Corks. Shortly after Christmas one of their members died, leaving a wife and children destitute.**

**This event gave rise to the notion that, in addition to good fellowship, the Jolly Corks needed a more noble purpose to endure. Two months later, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup> 1868 the new fraternal order was launched.**

**It is a fraternal order, with a charitable foundation started in 1928 that gives millions of dollars in scholarships to our youth, funds and supports youth programs such as drug awareness, hoop shoots, Americanism and dictionary programs. It is second only to US government in scholarships awarded each year. Last year more that 4 million dollars from National was awarded. 500 4 yr. scholarships, ranging from \$1000 to 24,000 per year, for graduating high school seniors, based on financial need, leadership and scholarship. Many local Lodges also donate scholarships.**

**There are also many other youth programs which the Grand Lodge and the local Lodges sponsor such as: Drug Awareness, Hoop Shoot, Scouts and ROTC units.**

**We also support our veteran's motto "So long as there are Veterans we will never forget them". The Elks support both active military forces and retired veterans. Elks furnish food, comfort care items, therapeutic items and gifts, host holiday celebrations and recreational activities at bases and hospitals, and stand ready to fulfill any need when called upon. Last year alone, the total value of Elks' contributions to our nation's Veterans was \$47 million, and our members served more than 677,000 Veterans. The Elks have entered into a partnership with VHA to support efforts for homeless Veterans in their communities. To this end, the Elks have pledged \$4 million dollars to help end Veteran Homelessness.**

**The Elks Community Investment Program will award \$12.4 million towards enriching our communities. The Elks total donations exceeded 675 million last year.**

**Last year in our Lodge over \$15,000, 12,000 volunteer hours and 18,000 miles driven were donated to the community for the many programs we support in the Forsyth community.**

**Some of the programs supported in the past were: Forsyth DARE program, Elk Drug Awareness programs, Drug Drop Box at the Taney County Sheriff's office, Forsyth ROTC, college scholarships, dictionaries for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders at Forsyth, our Annual Taney County Toy Distribution which we do with the Freedom of Road Riders Chapter 15, the Boys and Girls Club Lake Taneycomo unit in Forsyth, Forsyth Police Dept. with body cameras, Forsyth Fire Dept., & Cedar Creek Fire Protection District with funds for new equipment, Annual Kids Fishing Tournament, scholarships and so much more.**

**We would certainly welcome new members wishing to give something back to their community. You may find information about joining at <https://www.elks.org/membership/join.cfm>, calling the Lodge at 417-546-2597 or stopping by the Lodge on a Monday evening to have hamburgers etc. with us.**