



# Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care — Elks Share



## A few creative ways Lodges can spread holiday cheer

The holiday season is in mid-swing. Right out of the gate is our annual Memorial Service. Although this is a somber and humble event, it is one I never miss. Some Lodges invite families of our departed Members to the service and offer lunch or snacks afterward. I try to meet with every family member to share memories and express what their loved one meant to me, the Lodge, and the Order. I always thank them for sharing their loved one with us through their journey of Elkdom, and talk about how the departed Member was always committed to the Elks.

If your Lodge has a Christmas basket program, fantastic. If not, consider starting one this year. One of my first



**Message from  
the Grand  
Exalted Ruler**

**T. KEITH  
MILLS**

Elks memories was riding with my father and delivering Christmas baskets from the Lodge. Just seeing the help and kindness given to families that need a little extra assistance to make their holiday more joyful is something I will always cherish. If you are starting this activity, just choose a handful of families that you can help.

Another event could be Shop with an Elk. Gather up some kids and spend the day shopping with them and purchase some gifts that they need or want to give to others. I have also participated in this event as well—the great times I experienced with those children is another memory I will never forget.

Contact your local veterans facilities. They always have a list of items that the patients or residents need. My Lodge takes the requested list and puts them in an envelope on a Christmas tree in our Lodge. Then Members can take the envelopes, purchase the item and return it to the Lodge for distribution to the facility. If we do not have time

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## Per capita and fees set for 2022-2023

For the 2022-2023 fraternal year, on April 1, 2022, the following per capita and fees will be due from each Member: Grand Lodge per capita—\$6.50; Insurance assessment—\$12.00\*; and the Elks Magazine assessment—\$5.50, for a total of \$24.00.

*\*This amount represents a \$5.00 per Member increase from last year.*

Attention must continue to be given to retaining our delinquent Members as well as attracting new or reinstated Members. Involvement in Lodge activities should be encouraged to help keep Members interested.

**GRAND SECRETARY**  
Bryan R. Klatt

If you, or someone you know, plan to visit Chicago over the winter, call the Grand Secretary's office to set-up a time, and staff can give you your own personal tour of the National Headquarters.

Season's Greetings and Happy Holidays from your Grand Lodge staff.

Elks Care — Elks Share

## GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

### Award honors those who fly Old Glory

By ANTHONY J. DARDANO  
Committee Member

The Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee is charged with promoting Americanism within the Order. There is nothing that shows patriotism more than the symbol of our crowning virtue, the flag of the United States of America. There is no flag on earth that is more recognizable than Old Glory.

The flag has been our symbol as a democratic society since 1777. It has flown over our ships at sea and over our troops in battle to keep America free of the influences of Marxism, communism and socialism. The men and women who have gone to war to protect everything that she stands for are testament to how glorious our free society is. The number of those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice protecting our freedoms is staggering. The flag flies in remembrance of each of them.

Old Glory stands in every courtroom in our country as they carry out justice. It flies majestically above every government building in our land, including schools, which teach students everything that has

allowed us to remain a sovereign nation. All of the above is reason to keep her flying day and night. Respect for the symbol of democracy is paramount when we have so many in today's society trying to bring her down.

The Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee makes it possible to honor those businesses who fly the flag properly. There is a certificate available to print on the elks.org website and award to businesses that qualify for this award. This award makes it easy for Lodges to interact with and honor local businesses who display the flag properly.

There is no cost for this program other than some nice paper and printing on your in-house desktop printer. You can award as many of these certificates as there are businesses in your community who fly the flag properly.

The certificate is easily filled out and printed from the Elks website by going to <https://www.elks.org/GrandLodge/fraternal/files/FlyTheFlagCertificate.pdf>.

Alternatively, it can also be found in

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to shop, we can donate money to the tree project and have other Members that do the shopping for us. Finally, we set a date to gather together and caravan to the veterans facility. One Member dresses up as “Old St. Nick” and we then distribute the items to the veterans. What an experience.

The State Bulletin Contest deadline is coming up mid-January. Take some time to investigate this contest in the Grand Lodge Activities Manual and submit the forms to get your state bulletin recognized.

December is not only a busy month for Elksdom, but our personal life as well. Christmas is a time for family. We all get caught up in our Elks duties, but do not forget to take some family time and enjoy everyone in your life. When I was younger, I never thought Christmas could get any better. But, as life moved forward and my children came along, the joy just kept increasing. Now that Amy and I have been blessed with grandchildren, I find myself even more overjoyed watching their faces light up, and them thinking this is the best experience they have had.

So, from my entire family, we would like to wish you all the most blessed holiday season and a happy “and healthy” new year.

**FRATERNAL** From Page 1

the Members Only section of elks.org. Click on “Officers & Committees, then “Grand Lodge Committees” and select the Fraternal Committee. Under the “Currently Featured Contests/Awards” header there will be a link to the Fly the Flag Program & Certificate. The first page contains a letter from the current Fraternal Committee Chairman with instructions on filling out and printing the certificate, which is on the second page of the document.

Once you have printed the certificates, have your Exalted Ruler or Americanism Chairperson sign them. You can award these certificates at a formal ceremony or you can go to the businesses and present them. In any case, don't forget to notify the media. This is a great public relations opportunity for your Lodge and the Order. If no local media is available, take a picture with the business representatives receiving the certificate and submit it to your Lodge bulletin, State newsletter, and the Elks Magazine.

The presentation of these certificates will increase community awareness of the Elks and help get our message out to the community. There is no better way to show your Lodge is *“Meeting the Challenge.”*

**GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE****We must remember the Jolly Corks**

By **DANIEL J. CAPELLA**  
Committee Member

All too often, most of us fail to show gratitude towards those who came before us. We simply don't appreciate their effect upon our present life. Oh, we might remember family, at least a couple of generation's worth, but we do not pay proper respect to our predecessors who date back many decades.

For example, we neglect the ones who made it possible for us to live in the greatest country in the world. This includes our colonial leaders who guided our colonies towards independence and who wrote the Constitution of the United States. Other than the Fourth of July, we rarely even think of them. We also tend to take our military men and women for granted. These are the Americans who defended our country during numerous wars and conflicts throughout our existence. They are veterans who left their homes in full knowledge that they might never return to their family. Or if they did return, they knew they might carry with them mental and physical injuries that would last for the rest of their life.

Additionally, most of us forget the “Jolly Corks,” the founders of our Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. At one time they may have been fun loving pranksters, but following the funeral of Teddy Quinn, one of their own, it was suggested that they become a “protective and benevolent organization.” Hence, our BPOE came into being, and today we can proudly proclaim the wonderful work we do in our communities throughout the United States of America. When we do so, we should thank the Jolly Corks and recognize them for their vision, efforts, and accomplishments.

One group of Elks that strives to honor the legacy we inherited is the

Government Relations Committee on the local, district, state and national level. In 1997, Grand Lodge recognized that the BPOE was in danger of losing its identity. As a result, it established this committee, the mission of which was and continues to be to protect and preserve our right to exist as a private organization. Yes, our Order has undergone significant changes along the way, but these changes have made us a stronger and better organization. Therefore, paying tribute to our founders' foresight should be ever on our minds.

For example, the Government Relations Committee at each level works to guard our Lodges against unfair taxation. We are private nonprofits, yet there are those who do not appreciate our value to our communities and seek ways to treat us as a source of income to balance governmental budgets. There are those who question the sincerity of our dedication to veterans, youth, the less fortunate, and other groups we support. Those individuals look upon us as con artists who do not deserve our private designation, and they attempt to strip it from us.

There are also those who believe Elksdom is too private or exclusive and that it should be open to anyone at any time. Sorry folks, but Elks, despite being of differing religions, political parties, ages, and other opposing views, share the basic beliefs that are consistent with our United States Constitution, including our deep sense of patriotism.

It is necessary that all Elks learn about and support the work of the Government Relations Committee. Doing so will not only assist us in protecting our BPOE, it will also demonstrate our gratitude and admiration for the Jolly Corks, our founding fathers, who need to be regularly acknowledged for creating the great organization we inherited.

## DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

# Drug-free messaging begins with good communication

By WILLIAM J. BRYAN  
Assistant National Director

First and foremost, the directors of the Elks Drug Awareness Program, their families, the State Chairpersons and their families wish a very happy holiday season to all Elks and their families. COVID-19 prevented many of us from being with you personally, but it did not prevent us from communicating with many of you. We look forward to a time when we can safely gather to thank you all for making your communities better and safer.

Here are a few things to remind you that COVID-19 did not stop the work of the DAP or the need to continually remind our youth of the dangers of illicit drugs:

- In an age when the speed of information can often outpace the speed of verification, the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that it is crucial to cut through the noise and focus on facts, a lesson that we must heed in order to protect our communities from the impact of drugs. We do this through



a variety of Elks websites to include: [elkskidszone.org](http://elkskidszone.org), [elksteenzone.org](http://elksteenzone.org) and our new [elksdap.org](http://elksdap.org). Our national spokesperson, Ray Lozano, has been conducting webinars all over the country. National speaker Heather DiBlasi is available for Elementary Schools.

- Drug traffickers have quickly recovered from the initial setback caused by lockdown restrictions and are operating at pre-pandemic levels once again. Access to drugs has also become simpler than ever with online sales, and major drug markets on the dark web are now worth some \$315 million annually. Contactless drug transactions, such as through the mail, are also on the rise, a trend possibly accelerated by the pandemic. We encourage all Elks who

are concerned about this to visit [dea.gov](http://dea.gov) for more information.

- Communicating facts about drugs and promoting science-based interventions are an absolute necessity if we are to reduce demand and supply of drugs, while also facilitating access to controlled medicines for those in need. It is also the surest path to eliminating stigmatization and discrimination and providing adequate treatment, as seven in eight people who suffer from drug use disorders remain without appropriate care. While the Elks DAP is committed to informing youth of the dangers of illicit drugs and the abuse of other substances, we support communities that provide treatment and offer hope to those afflicted.

Entering the new year, the Elks DAP is committed to providing Exalted Rulers with an opportunity to lead their communities towards a drug-free society. We wish you all the blessings of the season and a very happy and prosperous 2022.

## VETERANS From Page 4

humanity," said a Miami veteran whom we assisted with rental arrears. "Sometimes it's not easy to reach out for help. No one likes to be turned down. On behalf of all the veterans and service men and women you have given so many reasons to look forward to the future, I am eternally grateful."

When a military member's service to our country ends, we say they are "coming home." But the truth is, far too many veterans have no place to call home. We dream of a future when that number is zero, but until then, we soldier on.

### Chat about the Elks

Want to discuss the Elks with fellow Members? Visit the Membership Forum. Members use the message board to share constructive information every day.

[elks.org/messageboard/forum.cfm](http://elks.org/messageboard/forum.cfm)

## ENVSC combats veteran homelessness

By CATHLEEN DRAPER  
ENF Communications Coordinator

Many veterans face challenges after returning from service, and the Elks step up year-round to meet their needs.

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, 37,252 veterans experienced homelessness on a single night in January 2020. The Elks National Veterans Service Commission is dedicated to alleviating veterans' homelessness.

Through August 3 this fiscal year, the ENVSC's Emergency Assistance Fund helped 151 veterans exit or avoid homelessness, awarding \$262,931 in vital, timely aid. Of that total, 35 percent has gone toward paying rent, 31 percent to utilities, and 15 percent to other housing-related expenses.

However, getting veterans housing does not make the house a home, so the ENVSC's work is far from done. Welcome Home Kits provide veterans with small furniture, kitchenware, and cleaning supplies. This year alone, more than 70 Elks Lodges in 30 states have used \$170,185 to provide 623 kits to veterans.

Another way the ENVSC seeks to end veterans' homelessness is through Freedom Grants, which are competitive

grants awarded to Lodges to help Elks serve veterans and active-duty military members in their community.

Naval (Port Angeles), WA Lodge No. 353 is located on the Olympic Peninsula, which, according to the Veterans Administration, is home to 15,000 veterans—the highest per-capita percentage of veterans in the country.

"It is impossible to know for sure how many of those veterans are facing homelessness, but we know they are in our community," says Paul Collins, the Naval (Port Angeles) Lodge Grants Coordinator. "We want to be a central place that can be counted on year-round to provide necessary items to veterans."

To build this haven of resources, the Naval (Port Angeles) Lodge used a Freedom Grant to create a Veteran's Basic Needs Closet. The dedicated space at the Lodge stocks necessities like coats, gloves, hats, sleeping bags, backpacks, sleeping mats, hygiene items, and snacks for veterans in need.

Head over to the ENVSC's website to see everything they have planned this month and throughout the year.

To learn more about the Elks National Veterans Service Commission and see how they are celebrating veterans this month, visit [elks.org/vets/about.cfm](http://elks.org/vets/about.cfm).



ELKS HOOP SHOOT  
NATIONAL FINALS  
50TH ANNIVERSARY

APRIL 30, 2022  CHICAGO, IL

# Emergency Assistance helps hundreds of veterans

By **NADEZH MULHOLLAND**  
Programs Assistant

A father with a heart condition is anxious to move his family to a safe, smoke-free home. A man worries he will be evicted from his apartment while receiving inpatient mental health treatment. After learning that her abuser is scheduled to be released from prison, a mom moves her children out of state on short notice.

If you're wondering what these people have in common, the answer is simple. All three are veterans, and all three turned to the Elks in their time of need.

The ENVSC's Emergency Assistance Fund was created to help veterans

prevent and exit homelessness. In 2015, in partnership with the VA, we pledged to help eradicate veteran homelessness.

The Emergency Assistance Fund is one way we are making good on that promise.

Last year, the Emergency Assistance Fund helped more than 400 veterans with essential housing expenses such as security deposits, rent, and utilities. For most of those veterans, Elks assistance was the only thing standing between them and homelessness.

Many people, including veterans, are one emergency away from the threat of

eviction: a job loss, an illness, a death in the family. Working at the ENVSC, I have witnessed firsthand the pivotal role of timely financial support in shaping a veteran's future. Even a seemingly small amount of money can help to keep a veteran safely housed.

Our Emergency Assistance Fund gives veterans the support they need and deserve to rebuild after homelessness or a financial emergency. The fund does something else, too: it shows veterans that they are not alone. "You have given me a renewed hope for



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

**December 2021**

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## G/L PR AND MEMBERSHIP MARKETING COMMITTEE

# Efficient new billing system dates saves Lodges money

By **RICK GATHEN**  
Membership Marketing Manager

Lodges in the new billing system are doing better in terms of retention than Lodges not in the system. The stats are also clear that the new billing system has made a major difference with only an 8% delinquency nationwide.

Further, the cost savings are even better now that USPS has increased its postal rates by 28% for the new year. The new billing system will remain at \$0.32 per mailing, thus saving our Lodges an average of \$0.80 per Members' dues invoice mailing.

We have also resolved all the issues that were identified by the Lodge Secretaries in 2020-2021. The new billing system is more effective, more efficient, and will save the Lodges more money in 2022.

To sign up or to learn more about the billing system, go to

<https://www.elks.org/grandlodge/membership/billing.cfm>. The webpage can also be found in the Member Center of [elks.org](https://www.elks.org)—click on the Membership Billing Renewal System image on the right side of the page.

December 22 is the deadline to sign up for January 2022 billing.

**Membership Billing  
Renewal System**

**Get More Info!**