



Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care – Elks Share



Planning the new year means taking a look back

This is the time of year that many people look for change. Days are getting longer and, in much of the country, warmer. Signs of spring are beginning to show. It may be the end of an Elks year, but it is also the beginning of a new one. If you are retiring from your leadership role, continuing on in a new one, or beginning your year as the leader, no matter what you are doing, you are the leadership of the organization and your Lodge.

Year end seems like a time of celebration, but we also need to continue to move forward. Lodge Secretaries need to prepare the year-end reports. Budgets for the upcoming year should be solidified and any last-minute



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

PAUL R. RYAN

changes should be made, if need be.

This is also the time to evaluate your Lodge and review what was successful. Continue those programs and work them. But also look to see what didn't work. Don't over analyze it, but rather consider what it was that didn't work. Ask yourself if it is worth having it again or scratching

it and try something new.

Begin now to update your Lodge's calendar and prepare for the future events. If you are prepared, you are Creating Momentum ahead of time.

Be sure also to review your Lodge bylaws. Is there anything that needs attention? At the same time, review your house rules and make sure they are up to date and ready for the next year. It is vitally important to have these rules and bylaws in effect to protect your Lodge from a business perspective to clearly define how the Lodge will handle any and all negative situations that may arise.

Lastly, celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Use this celebration as a chance to meet and greet your new officers.

Deadlines near for Secretaries

Local Lodge Secretaries are reminded that they must have all membership records for 2020-2021 ready for year-end closeout finalized by 11:59 pm on March 31. Failure to update records can, and probably will, cause membership totals out of balance in the Chicago Lodge Membership System (CLMS2Web).

GRAND SECRETARY
Bryan R. Klatt

Also, the Financial Reporting System (FRS) monthly and year-end financials must be filed by April 16, then every third Friday of the month thereafter. A Lodge's failure to comply with the new FRS program can result in fines being assessed.

The input of required data for the yearly charity report must be provided and submitted by, on, or before May 1 via CLMS.



GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

State Associations enjoy net gains

By **ANTHONY J. DARDANO**
Committee Member

Thank you and congratulations to the State Association webmasters who placed entries into the Grand Lodge State Association Website Contest. As the internet continues to evolve as the go-to source of information, it is increasingly essential to have a great website to tell the story of Elkdom.

The good work of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks has been a secret for too long. Websites enable us to tell our stories Lodge by Lodge and State by State. A website can put more information into the hands of a curious person faster and at less cost than most analog sources.

A strong website can **"Create Momentum for the Future of Elkdom."** I encourage you to view the following States' websites and use some of the ideas on your Lodge and State websites. You might learn something about Elkdom that you didn't know. If your State Association did not enter into this year's contest, please consider entering into next year's contest. Elks Care, Elks Share.

Go to <https://www.elks.org/states/> to find links to every State Association's website, plus a map of every Lodge in each state.

5-Star Winners

- Arizona
- Connecticut
- Florida
- MD-DE-DC
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- New Jersey
- Ohio



4-Star Winners

- Arkansas
- Illinois
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Massachusetts
- West Virginia



GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Junior Golf is a gimme for your Lodge

By **WILLIAM M. WISEMAN**
Committee Member

With the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 was a difficult year for Lodge programs. We can take advantage of these slow times to prepare our programs for the coming year.

Our Junior Golf Program is one such program that gives the Lodge an opportunity to reach out to the community and make a difference during these difficult times. Planning should start now for the children who will soon be out of school for the summer. They will need an activity in which to participate.

Does your Lodge have such a program? It could sponsor a golf camp or a golf day for junior golfers at a local course. Your Lodge could arrange for time at a driving range or on the putting green for practice, or provide lessons on a one-time or an ongoing basis for young people.

Your Lodge could even sponsor a Junior Golf tournament or a Junior Golf league. The possibilities are endless. It is up to the individual Lodge to decide which activities they would like to hold, from full golf tournaments to putting

competitions. The goal is that an event will expose our junior golfers to character development exercises and teach honesty, integrity, and sportsmanship. Junior Golf is a natural fit for getting kids outside and engaged in a healthy lifelong activity. Perhaps some of your Lodge's golfers would serve on a committee to establish a Junior Golf Program

If the program is aimed at youth in need, your Lodge can apply for an Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant or an ENF Promise Grant. So don't miss the opportunity to apply for an ENF Grant to fund a Junior Golf Program for youth in need or other youth activity program for your Lodge and community. Start planning today!

Be sure to publicize all your youth and community activities. Such publicity enables Elks to gain community support, and in many cases find individuals who want to participate with us in our youth and community activity programs, and join the Elks as a result.

Information of the BPOE Junior Golf Program can be found on elks.org under the Activities Committee link. You may contact me directly at bill.wiseman@earthlink.net.

GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Let's unite and help those in need

By **GLENN E. FOSTER**
Committee Member

Last year was quite the contentious year. Wouldn't it be great if every American would have to abide by our membership obligation, "I will not permit any political..." If this rule was followed by everyone, imagine how great this country could be. Whatever your thoughts and beliefs are, this author hopes we can all get along for the common good, and that we can continue to live by the US Constitution, as written and approved by our founding fathers long ago.

With the pandemic continuing to wreak havoc on everyone around the world, we as Elks must not forget our goals to help our communities. An increasing number of people need assistance. I am sure many Lodges are struggling but we must not forget why we joined our Order. I hope one reason was to help our communities—not just because the Local Lodge has good food and good prices. Fundraising should be a key activity for

any Lodge, both to keep the doors open and for the good of the community.

This Lodge year is almost over. We must not forget to report all of our charitable giving. I am sure the donation numbers will be lower with many activities having been canceled.

If your state allows functions to be held, why not plan a St. Patrick's Day event at your Lodge, with all proceeds going to your State Association's major project. I am sure the funds raised will be greatly appreciated.

Also, now more than ever, we should count everything every Lodge has done: all volunteer work, miles driven, dollars given, hours worked, from both Members and non-Members. The value of any and all items donated should also be reported.

To the outgoing Lodge Officers, a big thank you for your year of service and dedication. For the incoming Lodge Officers, good luck, and thank you for stepping up. Hopefully the year ahead will be smoother sailing than the previous one. May God Bless America.

ENF benefactor has a will forte

When R.A. and Margy Pickett were married, they dealt with plenty of paperwork needed to start their new life together. One item they were sure to mark off their list was a will.

Since then, the Picketts joined Santa Monica, CA Lodge No. 906 and began donating to the Elks National Foundation. Though the Picketts appreciate all the Foundation's work, two of the programs are particularly dear to their hearts: veterans service and scholarships.

The Picketts' generous hearts led them to include the ENF in their will, and they joined the ENF's John F. Malley Society, a recognition program for donors who have planned a gift to the ENF.

"We joined the Malley Society because we want to leave a legacy behind for future kids to enjoy a healthier America," R.A. said. "We want veterans to remember that they are not forgotten."

A will ensures that your personal wishes will be carried out after you are gone. Without one, the state will decide how your assets are distributed. The Picketts have encouraged many Members of their Lodge to support the ENF, both through regular donations and planned gifts. R.A. said that talking to fellow Members is the best way to ask.

"Find a program that is the most meaningful to you or to the person with whom you are chatting," R.A. said. "Let them see the importance of continuing that program through the ENF with their help after they've gone to that 'Happy Elks Lodge in the Sky.'"

R.A. said he likes knowing there are other Members who have planned gifts to secure the future of the ENF.

"I'm so happy to know that there are more people leaving the Foundation something to help our nation's heroes and children of tomorrow," R.A. said.

Designated gifts to the Foundation make an immediate impact on the communities the ENF serves, and planned gifts help ensure the sustained future of those programs. When drafting your will, please consider including the Elks National Foundation.

"Remember the reason you joined the Elks," R.A. said. "That should be sufficient enough reason to include the ENF in your estate plans."

For additional information about ENF planned giving, please visit ENFPlannedGiving.org. To discuss planning a gift to the Elks National Foundation, contact Kate Keating Edsey at KateE@elks.org or (773) 755-4866.

GRAND LODGE PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP MARKETING

15 business skills that grow membership

By RICK GATHEN

Membership and Marketing Manager

Local Lodges that are strong in promoting membership know that a great Membership Committee is the key to attracting new Members. The committee emphasizes a business approach that improves the condition of their Lodge.

Like any service business, we must not only make the original sale, but also keep the customer sold.

Committee responsibilities include recruitment, orientation of new Members, public relations, and dues collection. Think in business terms – sales, customer relations, public relations, and credit collections.

The three key individuals are the Exalted Ruler, Lodge Secretary, and Membership Committee Chairperson. The Exalted Ruler should provide continuous supervision, and the Lodge Secretary runs the “Collection Department.”

The Membership Chairperson needs committee members with various skills. Those skills include:

- **Sales.** Work recruitment tables, work reinstatements, greet guests, and invite them to join.

- **Public Relations/Marketing.** Promote membership on social media and the Lodge website. Make sure everyone inside and outside is aware of the positive impact the Lodge has contributed toward the community.

- **Orientation.** Educate, involve, and inspire new Members to recruit and be

active. Match their interests and time with a Lodge committee or activity.

- **Collection Department.** Assist the Lodge Secretary with billing, collection letters, phone calls, e-mails, and visits to delinquents. Practice patience and persistence.

- **Set an effective agenda for Lodge Membership Committee meetings.** Set goals to initiate 10% more Members. The goal: No more than 5% of the Members dropped for nonpayment of dues. Must meet regularly (I suggest weekly from April through June, then monthly).

- **Publicize membership classes.** Discuss incentives and contests. Discuss reinstatement opportunities and strategies. Review stray Elks. Review delinquents and discuss collection strategies.

- **Evaluate the Orientation program.** Review membership numbers and compare to goals.

- **Initiation and reinstatement.** Members who initiate or reinstate three Members into the Order will receive the prestigious GER Award Pin. Members who initiate or reinstate 11 or more Members into the Order will receive an attractive Elks watch.

- **Recruiter incentive ideas.** Make posters thanking recruiters by name, or even showing a picture of them in action. Hand out “thank you” tickets each time a recruiter brings in a new Member. Each ticket offers the chance for a monthly drawing for something as simple as a \$25 gift card. List your recruiters in your Lodge newsletter or website and social media page. Create a “Recruiter of the

Month” parking space at your Lodge. Create a special recognition program for great recruiters.

- **Recruit in the community.** Show what we do and how to join. All community events should include a strong public relations and membership presence. Set up a table with handouts.

- **Other precursors for gaining membership.** Earn a good reputation as a premier charitable organization in your community. Provide a family- and Member-friendly environment. Have a good understanding of the Order’s programs and ENF grant opportunities.

- **Invite prospects to become new Members.** Develop a brochure for open house guests. Include contact information, state major projects, community projects, hours and dining menu, the Elks mission, and national programs including scholarship information and grants. Put a positive spin on everything. Be sure to have a sign-in sheet for guests’ names and contact information.

- **Have fun.** Image matters. Portray your Lodge to be friendly, modern, and festive. Incorporate stories from those who have benefited from the Lodge’s charity. The open house is a sales event. Have presentations, stations, tables for display boards, videos, overheads, etc.

- **Expectations.** Outline what we expect and what potential Members can expect from the Elks. Spell out the dues and responsibilities of membership.

- **Ask the question.** Don’t forget to ask them to join!

DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

Useful apps help with issues including stress, vaping

By WILLIAM J. BRYAN

Assistant National Director

Although Elks range in age from 21 to triple digits, many of us who are technically challenged haven’t quite mastered the cell phone. Phones can be a nuisance — such as at family gatherings, where everyone is staring at their phones and not socializing — but also beneficial. Did you know that you can use your phone to stay healthy?

There are apps to help you start and keep up healthy habits, like exercising and eating a balanced diet. Other apps are intended to assist with avoiding or quitting unhealthy habits, like smoking or using other drugs.

Here’s just a sample of the health-oriented apps and online programs out there. All of these are endorsed by the Elks Drug Awareness Program, and they are all free.

Reducing stress

Breathe2Relax—The U.S. military designed this app, which offers breathing exercises that have been shown to reduce stress and help with managing anger and anxiety.

Stopping vaping

This Is Quitting—The Truth Initiative’s text messaging program helps young people (ages 13 to 24) quit vaping. The program is tailored based on age.

Addressing bullying

KnowBullying—This one, from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, has resources for parents and caregivers who want to help build their children’s confidence and discuss effective strategies for facing bullying.

The next time you see someone staring at their cell phone, oblivious to their surroundings, maybe they’re just seeking to reduce the stress in their life... let’s hope so!



Tips for a successful Freedom Grant project

By **HANNAH GRABER**
ENVSC Programs Coordinator

It's almost time to apply for Freedom Grants! Is your Lodge planning to apply on April 1? What kind of project would get your Members excited to participate? How could your Lodge make the biggest impact on veterans' needs in your community?

The number of Freedom Grants is limited, so it's a good idea to prepare your project ideas to give your Lodge the best chance of receiving one.

We asked Lodge Grant Coordinators to share ideas about the successful grant projects they completed last year. Here's what they had to say.

While considering this year's grant project, Janice Klocke of Manasota, FL Lodge No. 2734 hopes to continue working with residents at Veterans Village, where her Lodge served a Thanksgiving meal and provided household supplies in November.

Three years ago, when the Manasota Lodge started working with Veterans Village, many Elks didn't know that this transitional housing service existed in their community. Now, they look forward to enjoying the holiday with some of the same families each time they return.

Homer, NY Lodge No. 2506 hosted a Veterans Service Fair to help veterans connect with available resources and benefits. Matt Barnes reflected on the event, saying "Members were excited to see the results of the event and strengthen the bond between local veterans, active-duty personnel, and their families."

Fort Worth, TX Lodge No. 124 used its Freedom Grant to serve a meal and provide personal supplies for veterans at Patriot House, a transitional housing shelter. Stacy



Continued below

BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary
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VETERANS From above

Lahue described her favorite part of the Lodge's project this way: "This project showed the veterans that someone out there didn't forget about them; that there were people that cared enough to spend the time and the effort to ensure they had a good holiday."

As your Lodge plans ways to support veterans in need during the upcoming year, consider applying for a Freedom Grant! For information about guidelines and how to apply, visit elks.org/vets/freedomgrants.



Support our Foundation by donating online. You *could* give through the Lodge, but the *only* difference when you donate online is how quickly your gift helps others.

Donate to the Elks National Foundation online at
enf.elks.org/MyLodge!

