



GRAND LODGE *Newsletter*

<http://www.elks.org>

Elks Care — Elks Share

May 2015

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May brings flowers ... and a lot of 'Elktivities'

It is May already and the flowers are here. This is a month packed with "Elktivities". The very first day of the month brings with it the due date for the annual survey of charitable programs and the per capita dues payment to Grand Lodge. For the annual survey, CLMS will help with the task, but in this paperless world there is still paper that needs to be mailed to Chicago so do not delay.

Mother's Day is up next and while it is no longer a mandatory service, it is always a great time to dust off the old Ritual and have a worthy Lodge event that recognizes Mother on Sunday, May 10. It will also be a great day for the Lodge Club to hold a brunch or luncheon. It will be packed with families on this great family occasion.

Armed Services Day falls on Saturday,



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

JOHN D. AMEN

May 16 this year. It is another good opportunity to recognize and honor servicemen and women on active duty, and our Veterans. Just nine days later comes Memorial Day on Monday, May 25. This special day was born to memorialize all American Civil War servicemen who had made the ultimate sacrifice. While it is still appropriate to give special recognition to our Veterans who have passed, the day has been

broadened to remember all who are no longer with us. My Lodge in Denver decorates all those graves in the two Lodge "Elks Rests" with American flags, and my family takes time out to meet up at the family plots in the local cemeteries to renew our friendships.

It is also appropriate to review and adjust Lodge goals for the year ahead. The time to be working on dues collections from delinquent Members is now, not next February and March. The earlier we start the more successful we will be. More than two-thirds of our membership decline is from Members who fail to pay their dues.

Last, one of the most disheartening tasks that I must perform is to sign an Executive Order accepting the surrender of a Lodge Charter. If your Lodge is

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Convention sign up

Pre-registration for the Grand Lodge Session in Indianapolis is available to Members through June 24 at <https://www.elks.org/convention/prereg.cfm>. Pre-registration is \$50 for Members and free for non-Elks spouses and guests. A credit card for PayPal will be needed. At the convention center, go to registration. Make sure you have your e-mail confirmation and current membership card to receive credentials (or voting credentials, if qualified) for you and your spouse/guest.

GRAND SECRETARY

Bryan R. Klatt

All non-Elks guests, including widows and widowers of Elks, *must* register at the Guest Registration Station to obtain registration badges, which are required to enter the exhibit hall and/or attend the Grand Lodge Officers installation on Thursday (or any other functions where guests are permitted).

Grand Lodge registration and its required fee are *not* included in any State Association "package" arrangement. A registration badge will be required to enter the exhibit hall and all business sessions.

GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

Get your Elks elevator speech ready!

By ASHLEY BUCKWELL
Committee Member

Imagine this scenario: You are at the hospital visiting a brother or sister Elk in distress. You are standing in the lobby waiting for the elevator. You get on the elevator along with another gentleman. As you press the button for the 10th floor, you turn and ask the gentleman to what floor he is going? He responds, "ninth floor, please."

He notices the Elks emblem on your shirt and asks, "What's an Elk?" You have the time it takes for the doors to close and the elevator to travel nine floors to answer his question before he leaves and you never see him again.

What do you say? Well-prepared Elks would give their "Elks elevator speech," a one-minute, rehearsed sales pitch to "sell" a product or service.

For example, I could tell my fellow

elevator rider: "The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks is a national fraternal organization dedicated to serving the community through its charitable works. The Elks have been around since 1868. We have more than 800,000 Members and nearly 2,000 Lodges nationwide. Our emphasis is on conducting Youth Programs, serving our veterans, and doing charitable work in the community in which we live and work.

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How can we use government relations in our Lodges?

By **JOANN ALDRIDGE**
Committee Member

I hear it all the time: “What is Government Relations and how does it affect me?” In today’s world, keeping our Order with tax-exempt status is very important to us all. To do this we need to get the information about any legislation that may affect our Order.

Is your State and Local Lodge Government Relations Committeeman reporting on what is happening in your State or local area? Are they getting your charitable information out to the public so everyone knows what you are doing in your Lodges?

We should all be banging our drums and blowing our own horns to make sure we are known and heard. One of our Past Grand Exalted Ruler said, “*Be Loud and Be Proud.*” and that is exactly what your local committeemen should be doing.

**GRAND LODGE
GOVERNMENT
RELATIONS
COMMITTEE**

Every year we turn in our charitable statistics to Grand Lodge, but is anyone else hearing what we do? You can get this information out to your local politicians by inviting them to a function you are having. Remember, no politician is going to pass on a chance to grab a few votes, and once you have them at your function, you can get this information out to them.

Every year the Grand Exalted Ruler will visit your State Association, and we all put on a nice function to show him the good things we do in our State.

Are we doing this for the local media as well? If not then why? I find people are amazed when I get a chance to brag a little on our Association and what we do every year.

It is already May and our new Officers are just getting a good start on their new year. We have a Mother’s Day program and our Law and Order night, two great

We should all bang our drums and blow our horns to make sure we are known and heard

opportunities to get our good deeds out to the public. Remember, these are open to the public and we encourage you to get them involved.

Also your local Government Relations Committeeman needs to be aware of any new laws being proposed that will affect our organization. I know here in Utah there are new liquor laws to be proposed, which is big news for our state.

We need all the information we can get so if you hear of anything at all, please pass it on to your Government Relations committeeman so he or she can get the word out.

GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Antlers program another way to boost membership

By **NORMAN C. BEHNKE**
Committee Member

“All Lodges need to investigate the Elks Antlers Program.”

“Why have an Antlers Program in your Lodge?”

“Why *not* have an Antlers Program in your Lodge?”

These are headlines of past messages used since the Elks Antlers Program was reinstated by Grand Lodge in 2003. The program has been moving slowly despite the Lodges that have started Antlers programs with good results in getting young people involved in their Lodges and communities. They can be an Antler from age 12 to 20, when they become program advisers ahead of becoming Elks at age 21.

Antlers have monthly meetings, possess membership cards and pay dues. Objectives are: To quicken the spirit of American Patriotism, teach respect for parents, love of home, inculcate the fundamentals of good citizenship, aid in a worthy cause, establish foundation of character, promote the welfare and enhance the happiness of its members, to respect the convictions of others in matters of worship and religion. All these are examples of true “Americanism.”

The additional benefit is that as many parents start to help their children, they

Parents of Antlers can be fertile ground for recruiting new Elks members

Reach your community through Junior Golf

By **DAVID B. LAKE**
Committee Member

You can make a difference in your community by having a Junior Golf Program in your Lodge. But planning should start now for children who will soon be out of school for the summer. They will need an activity in which to participate.

You could sponsor a golf day for junior golfers at your local course, arrange practice at a driving range or putting green, or simply provide lessons. The possibilities are endless.

So, Exalted Rulers, please ask your Lodge Members who are golfers to establish a Junior Golf Committee.

If the program is aimed at youth

in need, your Lodge can apply for a \$2,000 Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant or an ENF Promise Grant, which has been increased this year to \$2,500. 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.

soon become Elks themselves, when they see the many wonderful programs the Elks do. We must not forget that Elks Members and Antlers programs can work together on many projects such as parties and fundraisers, and the list goes on.

The Activities Committee has another project, in which every Lodge may participate – the Public

Safety-Medal of Valor. If your community has a police officer or firefighter who has died in the line of duty, the Lodge can purchase the Public Safety-Medal of Valor, Code 575100, from the Elks National Headquarters for \$9. Your Lodge can present the medal to the family of the fallen public servant for display in the community office where the fallen hero worked. This is a very worthwhile program to promote your Lodge and attract community support.

Effective agenda for Lodge Membership Committee meetings

- Must meet regularly (suggest weekly April through June, then monthly).
- Set goals to initiate 10 percent more Members.
- The collection goal: no more than 2 percent of the Members dropped for non-payment of dues.
- Review and study the membership manual.
- Discuss initiatives to publicize membership efforts:
- A. Use bulletins/social media/websites to encourage members to bring potential candidates to Lodge.



- B. Publicize membership classes.
 - C. Discuss incentives and contests.
 - D. Discuss reinstatement opportunities and strategies.
 - E. Review Stray Elks.
 - F. Review delinquents and discuss collection strategies.
 - G. Review and evaluate Orientation program.
 - H. Review membership numbers and compare to goals.
- Rick Gathen, Grand Lodge Membership and Public Relations Manager

GRAND LODGE PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

PR important to building Lodge

By **LOWELL E. HOOTMAN**
Committee Member

Public relations is a skill beyond spinning a message at a press conference. It is essential to promoting a positive image, fostering goodwill, and increasing membership.

Public relations is also essential to:

- Membership recruitment and retention
- Fundraising
- Engaging committee participation

Everyone can play a part. Start today with your e-mail communication. When mailing a letter, your personal address is

on the front in the return area. Now take a look at your Lodge e-mail address. Does it indicated that your Lodge sent it? When an e-mail is sent out from your Lodge, the Lodge name must be part of the address, for example, Salem.elks234@comcast.net.

This verifies the communication is official on behalf of the Lodge, and clarifies which Lodge. A Lodge can have more than one e-mail address, but the Lodge name must part of all electronic address information.

Your Elks Lodge e-mail address is the important final signature in your Elks communication.

New ER's: Build solid foundation

By **KEVIN L. BROUSE**
Committee Member

New Exalted Rulers, it is time to lay the groundwork for a memorable year, for yourself, your Officer corps and your Lodge!

To build anything to greatness, we need to start with a strong foundation. The more solid and sturdy the foundation, the greater the resulting structure can be.

This metaphor applies both to your role as Exalted Ruler, and the Lodge's year under your watch.

Membership is the foundation upon which we build. The last few years this crucial part of our Order has been crumbling slowly as our numbers are shrinking; this year, *let's change that!*

The most important committee you have is your Membership Committee. Get a group of strong Members to staff this critical committee and start immediately.

Download the manual, <http://www.elks.org/grandlodge/manuals/>. Next have the committee members read and discuss the manual, determine the best way to implement the guidelines and suggestions included therein.

Too often we wait until it is late in the year to address lapsation. *Now*, early in your year is the time to address it, which should yield the best results for your efforts. Personal phone calls can give your committee a chance to give your Lodge a real shot in the arm.

Make one of your goals an increase in membership this year!

Your guidance and excitement will lead to a memorable year for everyone. When you meet with any of your committees, ensure that they are aware of your goals for the year, and they understand that with teamwork, the whole Elks experience will be greater for everyone involved.

Additionally as a tool to stimulate current Members and potential recruits, please check out this youtube video, a little less than seven minutes, titled "*Elks: Why We Join*," an upbeat summation of what makes us so great! Log on to <https://www.youtube.com/embed/LVRljEUTVro?autoplay=1>

Make one of your goals an increase in membership this year!

GER From Page 1

among those thinking about holding a surrender vote, be sure to let your State Association and Grand Lodge officials know. These people may be able to help, but only if they have advance knowledge of the situation. I have witnessed situations where the PGER State Sponsor first learned of the situation only after the surrender vote had been taken by the Lodge. That is tragic!

Finally, our warm spring weather has finally arrived. Here in Colorado it is "Springtime in the Rockies" – the most beautiful season of all.

See you on the road.

Elevator From Page 1

"We also provide social opportunities for our Members to enjoy food, drink and camaraderie, while raising funds to perform our good deeds. Here's my card, give me a call. I'll buy you lunch at our Lodge, and we can talk more about how you can become an Elk."

This prepared speech takes only 38 seconds to deliver. Build your own Elks elevator speech, or use this one. Memorize your pitch and practice it in front of a mirror until you have it down pat. So, the next time you are asked, "What's an Elk?" you are prepared to sell Elkdom and help grow our Order and your Lodge.

Remember, membership is the lifeblood of Elkdom.

ELKS LEADERS WHO WORRY about having to "say a few words" at special Lodge events, can breathe a sigh of relief.

A collection of speeches tailor made for those special events is available in "Father Cassidy's Speech-O-Matic," a 91-page booklet of speeches on topics ranging from acknowledgment of awards to welcoming visiting Elks.

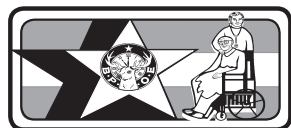
To obtain a copy of "Father Cassidy's Speech-O-Matic," send a check for \$8 and made out to PGER James C. Varenhorst, to PO Box 141096, Grand Rapids, MI 49514-1096.

Catastrophic disabilities worsen plight of homeless vets

By James C. Varenhorst, PGER
Committee Member

The population of homeless veterans is made up of veterans who served in several different conflicts, ranging from World War II to the recent Middle East conflicts. Though research indicates that veterans who served

in the late- and post-Vietnam era are at the greatest risk of homelessness, veterans returning from the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq often have



**ELKS NATIONAL VETERANS
SERVICE COMMISSION**

catastrophic disabilities, including traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which are known to be correlated with homelessness. And as the military evolves, so too do the challenges. Homeless women veterans, for instance, are far more common now than in any other time in the past.

Most homeless people slip in and out of housing, sometimes just one missing paycheck or one bit of bad luck away from sleeping on the street. Just getting out of the military and into a tough job market can be enough to push veterans over the edge, and that often means their families also.

We owe our deserving veterans so

much and we must give them the chance to return to civilian life with dignity. This certainly includes giving them a safe place to live.

There are several ways that your Lodge can provide assistance to our homeless veterans. Our "Adopt-A-Vet" program would be a great way to get started and get involved; or contact your local area veterans support groups.

You may also get in touch with the National Coalition of Homeless Veterans (NCHV) at www.nchv.org.

"So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them."

BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary

Benevolent and Protective
ORDER OF ELKS

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May 2015

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Headed to Indy? Don't miss Sunday's opening ceremony!

If you plan to attend the 2015 Elks National Convention in Indianapolis, don't miss Sunday's opening ceremony! The ENF will deliver its full report during the ceremony, including top scholarship winners, Hoop Shoot winners, videos and maybe even a very special surprise! Don't miss it.



**ELKS
NATIONAL
FOUNDATION**

the beginning of their relationship with the Elks. Today's Elks scholars can be tomorrow's Elks, so be sure to invite these scholars to Lodge activities and volunteer opportunities. Visit www.elks.org/enf/scholars for a complete list of 2015 ENF scholarship recipients, and reach out to the Elks scholars near you!

April? Six finalists emerged as National Champions! Visit www.elks.org/hoopshoot to view the complete results.

Last call for Gratitude Grants –

Did your Lodge meet the GER's 2014-15 per-member-giving goal of \$4.60? If so, apply for a Gratitude Grant of at least \$2,000 to serve your community. Don't wait! Applications are due May 31. Visit www.elks.org/enf/community for complete details.

Welcome Elks scholars – Join us in welcoming the 2015 Most Valuable Student and Legacy Awards scholars into the Elks family! Remember, this is just

Hoop Shoot champions – Wondering what happened during the Elks Hoop Shoot National Finals in

Elks Month of May: A banner with the Elks logo and the text "Elks Month of May".

MEMORIAL DAY USA: A banner showing hands holding a blue heart with the text "MEMORIAL DAY USA".

Elks National Youth Week: A banner showing a group of young people with the text "Elks National Youth Week".

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY! A banner with a woman's face and the text "HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!".

Thank You, Officers! A banner showing two police officers with the text "Thank You, Officers!".

Show some love for local law enforcement with a Gratitude Grant from ENF! A banner with the text "Show some love for local law enforcement with a Gratitude Grant from ENF! elks.org/enf".