



Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care – Elks Share



Budgets, year-end reports top Lodges' to-do lists

Time truly flies, especially when we experience the many joys of our charitable work. It's hard to believe the Lodge year is nearly at an end, but here we are ready to start all over again. To all of the Lodge Officers who have served during the past year, thank you! Your dedication and effort have undoubtedly enhanced the image of the Lodge within your community.

Lodge Secretaries, make sure your attention is focused on completing your year-end report. Also focus on filling out your charitable report to show everyone in your Lodge what you accomplished over the past year. Do you have a group eager to contact those who are at risk of



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

MICHAEL T. LUHR

being dropped for nonpayment of dues? Now is your last chance to save them as Members. Make sure that they know how their dues help fund the programs that benefit your community.

Trustees, have you been working on the

coming year's budget? Have Committee Chairs submitted their budget requests? If not, let them know that they won't have any funds available during the coming year unless it's received on time. I guarantee you'll get a rapid response.

Update your calendars for the coming year and make certain all Officers understand their duty to attend both District Deputy Clinics. By *"Working Together to Make a Difference"* we can ensure that 2019-2020 will be another great year for our Order and your Local Lodge. Thank you for your dedication, hard work, and personal sacrifices on behalf of your community.

Just a reminder: Updated records due by March 31

Local Lodge Secretaries are reminded that they must have all membership records for 2018-2019 ready for year-end closeout finalized by 11:59 p.m. on March 31. Failure to have the records current can, and probably will, cause membership totals to be out of balance in the Chicago Lodge Membership System (CLMS2Web).

GRAND SECRETARY

Bryan R. Klatt

March 31. Failure to have the records current can, and probably will, cause

membership totals to be out of balance in the Chicago Lodge Membership System (CLMS2Web). I call your attention to Section 16.010 and in particular the first paragraph:

As of April 1 of each year the membership portion of the Lodge Annual Report shall be filed electronically by the Grand Secretary. Each Lodge Secretary shall ensure that all Lodge Membership information is current through March 31.

Narrow margin decides Pick'Em

By **MIKE CHAMERNIK**
Publications Coordinator

Darlene Olson's prognostication skills earned her bragging rights over more than 1,500 Elks Members — including her husband.

Olson, of Sioux City, IA Lodge No. 112, won Football Pick'Em, a weekly contest where Elks Members picked winners for each NFL game, without the point spread. She finished 177-79 for a winning percentage of 69.14%, narrowly defeating Angelo J. Scanelli of Toms River, NJ Lodge No. 1875, who finished second at 68.93%. Only one game separated Olson and Scanelli.

One result that factored into deciding the contest's top spot was the high-scoring Monday Night showdown in November between the Los Angeles Rams and Olson's beloved Kansas City Chiefs. Though Olson was bummed that the Chiefs lost 54-51, she had actually picked against them. "The Rams were tough both offense and defense," she said. "Their record and playing at home made my decision."

Throughout the season, Olson had NFL news delivered to her e-mail, researched team schedules, and monitored injury

reports throughout the week. On game days she kept an eye on late-breaking roster changes as game times neared. Though she never had a bad week, Olson said she wasn't confident she would win the contest, even during the last few games of Week 17 (Pick'Em has no official prize).

Olson not only spread word of the Pick'Em contest with fellow visitors at her state convention, she also used it to bond with her husband and fellow Member, Dan, who finished 158-98 (61.72%), tied for 593rd. They would discuss games, strategies, and injuries but they wouldn't reveal their picks with each other until the games were underway.

"We laughed about me getting close to first place," Olson said. "He would just say 'Go Dar!' It's just fun!"



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DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

Alcohol deaths rising, especially among women

By JACKI SCARPINO

Special Contributor

While reports of heroin, fentanyl, and opioid overdoses and deaths are frequently in the news, let us not forget about alcohol. An estimated 88,000 Americans die from alcohol-related causes annually, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In those 88,000 deaths are 2.5 million years of potential life lost.

The surge of alcohol-related deaths is new. According to a recent report shared by USA Today, the number of deaths caused by alcohol has increased 35% from 2007 to 2017. The drastic rise in alcohol-related deaths generally has been overshadowed by the opioid epidemic, but 16,000 more U.S. residents die from alcohol than from opioids each year. It's also at least three times more expensive to treat alcohol use disorders than opioid use disorders, according to CDC.

I was surprised to learn that women are most affected by the rising alcohol epidemic. Among women, deaths rose 67%, while for men, the percentage increased only 27%. Women are more susceptible to alcohol-related risks because they typically weigh less than men and can feel the effects of alcohol faster. Complications that affect women



who drink excessively the most are: liver damage, heart disease, a number of different cancers along the digestive tract, breast cancer, and complications with pregnancy. According to a survey in 2015 by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington, 9.3% of women surveyed drank alcohol while pregnant, 51.1% of women drank alcohol in general, and 22% of them engaged in binge drinking.

Part of the reason opioid-related deaths tend to overshadow alcohol-related deaths is because alcohol is more socially acceptable than opioids. Deaths from drugs, alcohol, and suicide have been referred to as “despair deaths,” and despair, along with stress, are major factors behind the increase in alcohol-related deaths—especially among women. Alcohol use disorders present differently in men and women. Men often “crash and burn,” but women often start drinking as a way to de-stress from work. Stefanie Wilder-Taylor, author of the book *Sippy*

Cups Are Not for Chardonnay, said she thinks this difference stems from gender norms surrounding stress.

“Moms just aren’t going to call home and say they’re stopping for a couple drinks after work with friends or going to the gym to unwind,” Wilder-Taylor said. Instead, they often go home and drink wine while making dinner, which can lead to a nightly habit of excessive drinking.

The deaths associated with over-drinking are not necessarily instantaneous. Many of the causes lie in issues developed over time from excessive drinking, like cirrhosis of the liver, pancreatitis, cancer, and suicide. The “direct toxicity” also can damage individuals’ nervous systems, and people who drink alcohol over the course of their lives tend to lose muscle and gain fat, which can lead to increased injuries and illnesses.

While alcohol deaths rise above opioid fatalities, psychologist Benjamin Miller questioned why we still embrace drinking as a culture. “Culturally, we’ve made it acceptable to drink but not to go out and shoot up heroin,” Miller said. “A lot of people will read this and say ‘What’s the problem?’”

For further DAP information go to elks.org/dap or Elks Kids Zone at elkskidszone.org.

GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

New Members swayed by Orientation, involvement

By ROBERT R. HINKLE

Committee Member

We should be excited and encouraged by the most recent GER Membership Class!

During September and October 2018, more than 11,000 new Members were indoctrinated and initiated into over 1,500 communities of our Order. The Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee recognized each of these Lodges with certificates of appreciation. Now, as always, the challenge is to get these Members active and involved.

Our membership journey starts with a structured indoctrination and formal initiation and it is too often followed by an “you’re on your own” approach to membership. We would be well served with a **systematic orientation effort** designed to make new Members welcome in our club and social venues, and to nurture those with leadership potential and identify those with volunteer and charity interests.

The first year is critical and orientation efforts that start immediately after initiation are more likely to result in an active Member. Experience has demonstrated that orientation is most successful when a new Member’s sponsor is actively involved. To that end, it is helpful to have the sponsor or established Member(s) support and serve as a resource for each new Member. Mentoring and encouragement may eventually lead to a committee chair, an ER, a state officer, and even involvement in national programs and offices.

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks has a lot to offer but most fundamentally it offers happiness. We discover new friendships via our many social activities. We can experience the higher and nobler contentment of spirit through our many and varied opportunities for volunteerism and charity. We are an attractive social and service organization that too frequently fails to orient our new

Members accordingly.

When a Member’s journey takes the path of “inactive dues paying only” or “member of the lapsation list,” we have an opportunity to re-orient!

Speak with these Members personally and remind them of why this organization is important to you, to them, and to your community. Help them rediscover that their annual dues are a small price to pay for the benefits of friendship and community improvement offered by the Elks. Ask them to maintain membership and invite them to become more active. Many times, that is all it takes!

Elks share their thoughts

Want to discuss the Elks? Check out the Membership Forum (elks.org/messageboard/forum.cfm). Members use the message board to share constructive information every day.

ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION

Life lessons from Hoop Shoot

By TAYLOR ODISHO
ENF Communications Assistant

Despite finishing sixth in her final Hoop Shoot competition, Faith Sjoberg walked off the court at Loyola University last April with the confidence of a champion.

Through six years of participation in the contest, including three straight Finals appearances and a third-place finish in 2017, she learned what it takes to be successful on and off the court. Her desire to compete deepened and she gained a better understanding of the value of hard work. Consequently, her work ethic grew.

The Faith who competed that day in April possibly wouldn't recognize the one who walked on six years earlier.

"My life wouldn't be the same if I didn't participate in the Elks Hoop Shoot," Sjoberg said. "The lessons, experiences, memories, and friendships will last a lifetime."

She's not alone. Data collected in a recent evaluation of the Hoop Shoot Program says that girls who stick with the program develop higher levels of perseverance. The growth was more dramatic than among their male counterparts.

For example, among the 8- to 9-year-old girls who reached the state level, 17% attributed their defeat to unfairness. Only 42% felt they could have done better. However, none of the 12- to 13-year-old



Sjoberg meets former regional director Randy Gragg at the 2017 Hoop Shoot National Finals

girls felt the contest was unfair, and 68% knew they could shoot better.

Sue Sjoberg, Faith's mom, didn't need to see the evaluation results to believe it. After Faith's defeat at the 2018 Finals, Sue said, "I think the lessons from the loss may take her further in her high school playing career, and life in general."

Faith is now playing for her high school team. She's also the freshman class secretary. The Hoop Shoot changes parents, too: Her mom and dad have joined the Elks and become Members of Presque Isle, ME Lodge No. 1954. All three of them expect to volunteer regularly at local, district, and state Hoop Shoot contests.

The Elks have been developing gritty kids through the Hoop Shoot program since 1972. In 2018-19, the ENF allocated \$1 million to fund the program. For videos, news from the court, and more information, visit elks.org/hoopshoot.

ENF annual report title pays homage to classic speech

By JIM O'KELLEY
ENF Director

The Elks National Foundation released its Annual Report for 2017-18. It is titled "A Mighty Army," a reference to founder John F. Malley's vision for the ENF that he expressed during his GER acceptance speech at the 1927 Convention in Cincinnati.

The report features a letter from ENF Board Chairman Lou Sulsberger that puts the Foundation in the historical context of the Elks, much like his talk in San Antonio did; an honor roll of individual donors who gave at least \$250 last year; the financial highlights from the audit report; and three great videos that capture the impact of the Foundation's programs.

Since video is used to tell the story, the Annual Report is published online. You can find the Annual Report at enf.elks.org/AMightyArmy. A slimmed-down print version is available upon request.



GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Diligent reporting can help set a new Elks record

By STANLEY J. WELSH
Committee Member

It is the end of the 2018-2019 Lodge year, and it is a very busy time for secretaries. Dues are coming in, and notices to delinquent and lapsed Members are being mailed. Secretaries are busy getting information together for the audit, trying to get those last few new Members initiated and finishing up their **Charity Reports**.

Charity Reporting is essential to the wellbeing of our Order. It protects the status of your Lodge, and Grand Lodge, with the IRS. The Charity Report is the only tangible report of what we do, and it can be used to grow your Lodge by letting everyone know how much it contributes to your community.

Now is the time to take a long hard look at those entries. Do you have everything entered? Has all of your Committee

Chairs reported? Did you include Lodge and District Meeting hours and miles? Convention hours and miles? State Projects? Now is the time to get out the Government Relations Manual and check the list of everything you can report and see if you may have missed something.

We hope that 100 percent of our Lodges report this year. Last year we had some that failed to report, many of which listed items but simply failed to hit the submit icon. If you take the time to enter data then why not submit it? If you are an outgoing secretary, go over the reporting with the new incoming secretary.

Last year we reported \$675,985,245. Can we beat that number? I believe we can. The ground work was laid and there is much more we can report. Start now, because the submission date is coming up and we don't know if that date will be extended. Why wait? Finish your report

and get it submitted as soon as possible. If you have any questions, download the Government Relations Manual at elks.org or contact your District or State Government Relations Chairperson.

If you have not been filing a 990T with your 990 to the IRS, please take the time to speak with your accountant regarding Unrelated Business Income Reporting. It is in the best interest of your Lodge to report this income. The information is in the Grand Lodge Government Relations Manual.

Lastly, a big thank you to all those Officers who worked so hard to make 2018-2019 a success in your Lodges, Districts, and State Associations. Your service and hard work is appreciated.

To those newly elected Officers who will soon be taking over the reins of leadership, thank you for stepping up. We wish each of you a successful Elks year.

Elks EAF fund gives single mother a fresh start

By TAYLOR ODISHO
ENF Communications Assistant

The Emergency Assistance Fund, a part of the Elks' Welcome Home program, has helped more than 1,422 veterans exit or avoid homelessness through emergency assistance.

Rose, a single mother to 11-year-old twin daughters from Washington, D.C., is one of those veterans. She has struggled with PTSD since serving in the Marine Corps from 2003 to 2007.

Rose worked every day to keep the rent paid, the lights on, and her children fed, but couldn't make ends meet. When she was forced to choose between feeding her daughters and paying the electricity bill,

Rose turned to the VA.

She was able to apply for the Elks Emergency Assistance Fund through her HUD-VASH Social Worker. The Elks accepted Rose's application and paid her rent. That assistance gave her the stability she needed.

"Your whole mind opens up because you're not stressing out," Rose said. "I was able to be a better mom. I could live again."

Rose recalled having the gas shut off three times in a year. It cost her \$700 in additional fees to have it turned back on. Those days are behind her, thanks to the Elks. She was recently accepted into the

Service to CEO Program through The Rosie Network, a nonprofit dedicated to building a network of military entrepreneurs.

"I'm excited to learn how to be a successful entrepreneur around other vets who are trying to do the same thing," Rose said.

Rose plans to open an empowerment center that will help other single moms navigate the obstacles she has faced—like finding childcare—by giving them the skills to take their jobs anywhere.

She attributes the timely assistance from the Elks for giving her the opportunity to pursue this next step in her life.



BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary
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GRAND LODGE MEMBERSHIP AND MARKETING

Leaders step up for plus in membership

By RICK GATHEN
Membership and Marketing Manager

Grand Lodge is calling on all of our good Exalted Rulers and Lodge Secretaries to seize the initiative to end 2018-19 with our first membership gain in 39 years.

Please display your leadership by scheduling as many initiations of quality Members as you can before the April 1 start of 2019-20. New Member initiations

take time and effort. You are in position to greatly strengthen our opportunity to grow membership, and your leadership can make the difference. Great goals require great effort and strong leadership!

We made significant progress toward a national membership increase in 2017-18, in which we reduced our rate of membership loss to under 0.5%. We are strongly in the fight this year for an outright membership increase.

We are encouraged by the improvement in membership retention. Our new candidate totals have been on the rise, helped by our new recruitment initiatives.

The ever increasing pride and enthusiasm felt throughout Elks Nation is **outstanding!** Members are more optimistic and encouraged by our direction and future.

Let's punctuate that pride with our first membership gain since 1979-80!



March Deadlines

- 3/1: Marvin M. Lewis Scouting Award
- 3/15: Contest "A" — All American Lodge
- 3/31: Citizen/Elk/Officer of the Year
GER Awards
GER Special Citations
Contests "E" & "F" — ENF Per Capita & Chairman Challenge

