



# Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care — Elks Share



## See you during the Momentum of the next many years

A year ago, Stacey and I were just beginning this crazy time of representing all of you as the Grand Exalted Ruler. I can honestly say that this was something I would have never envisioned, but I am so glad to have been given this opportunity.

Why did I use *Creating Momentum for the Future of Elkdom* for our year? This organization is over 150 years old. It began with a group of actors who got together and decided to help the spouse of one of their friends who had passed and left her with nothing. That was in a different time, but benevolence is still a main focus of our organization. But our organization is not the only thing that is aging—it is our membership. I



**Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler**

**PAUL R. RYAN**

want the Members to continue to recruit Members of the younger persuasion and get that benevolence into our younger generations.

I would love to continue to tell you what you should be doing during this time of year, but I think instead I want to delve into what this year has meant

to Stacey and me.

I joined this organization because my wife and her entire family were members. If you are 21 or over, believe in God and a part of my wife's family, you are an **Elk!** My in-laws then asked me to get on the board because of my experience in the hospitality industry and because of my business background. I had no idea it would lead to this position. Even a couple of years into my membership, I had no clue what a Grand Exalted Ruler was.

This year I will admit was difficult, the main reason is the COVID situation and the fact that Lodges were closed, Conventions were cancelled and States

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## Net new Members with online invites

Has your Lodge promoted the online Membership application for signing up new Members?

A current paid-up Member of the Order, using the Elks website, can forward a membership invitation to family and friends. Invitees can complete and submit the application online.

**GRAND SECRETARY**  
Bryan R. Klatt

Lodge Secretaries will be notified of these applications via the "Alerts" screen of CLMS2, then can process the electronic version the same as a paper application. All data provided by the applicant will be imported into the Lodge's CLMS2 database with the simple click of a button.

What better way to gain a Member than by using technology to its fullest?

## GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

## Spread the word on dictionaries

By **JOHN H. MORFORD**  
Committee Member

Since 2004, the Elks have partnered with the Dictionary Project to ensure that every student will enjoy the benefits of owning their own dictionary—an essential tool for a quality education.

As of Spring 2021, the Elks have delivered close to 4 million copies of dictionaries to third-graders. However, in recent years some Lodges have received resistance from schools to distribute dictionaries to their students because most curriculums use the internet to look up words and definitions. Most of you will agree that books still play an important role in the education process: Books stimulate the imagination.

Using technology as the primary source of information creates learning limitations and distractions. Research has reported that students who read print versus e-books experience less mental fatigue and significant lower levels of eye fatigue, retain more information, and score better on comprehension tests. If you really want to fight the battle, there are many test results and studies about

reading a book versus an e-book.

Lodges that continue to participate in the Dictionary Project observed that children still appreciate and get excited receiving their own dictionary. If schools are not interested in the program, consider handing out dictionaries at your Lodge, a library, or an after-school facility.

For those who have never participated in the Dictionary Program, visit the website at [dictionaryproject.org](http://dictionaryproject.org). You can look through the variety of dictionaries available and ask to receive a sample kit. Phone numbers are listed for you to ask additional questions about the program.

As Lodges enter the second quarter of the fiscal year, it's not too late to open the discussion of budgeting for the Dictionary Project. Elks across America are fantastic at raising charitable funds to support great programs that have a positive impact on the lives of children in their communities.

Take the time to look into the Dictionary Project. Placing an influential book, like a dictionary, into a child's hands is very powerful—even in today's electronic world.



## DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

# Study finds dangers in pot use during pregnancy

By **WILLIAM J. BRYAN**  
Assistant National Director

Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana, remains in breast milk for up to six weeks and may be harmful to infants, a new study warns.

“Just as we now caution mothers to avoid tobacco and alcohol in pregnancy, we recommend that all clinicians counsel women who are pregnant or considering pregnancy to abstain from marijuana throughout pregnancy and in the postpartum period,” said senior investigator Dr. Maya Bunik. She is the medical director of the Child Health Clinic at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, in Aurora.

Because of marijuana legalization, it is important to recognize that pregnant and breastfeeding women and their babies are a vulnerable population, and that “exercising caution is imperative,”

she explained.

The study included 25 women who had used marijuana during pregnancy and gave birth between Nov. 1, 2016 and June 30, 2019. Of those, seven women stopped using pot for more than five weeks during the study period. The women who used marijuana told researchers they did so to cope with stress, to sleep better or to relieve pain. Most were using marijuana at least three times a week.

Although THC concentrations varied from woman to woman, it was excreted in their breast milk for up to six weeks after they stopped using marijuana. All had detectable levels of THC in their breast milk when the study ended. THC in breast milk may have serious consequences for infants.

The Elks DAP have long held that research from decades ago showed significant concerns related to marijuana use during pregnancy and breastfeeding. Those concerns include effects on

childhood brain development and learning issues, including attention, impulse control, and early signs of anxiety and depression.

“We here at the DAP have been warning for many years now that today’s marijuana products are five to six times more potent than when those studies were initiated,” said DAP National Director Kent Gade, “leading to the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine to abstain from marijuana use during pregnancy and breastfeeding.”

The study was published online March 8 in JAMA Pediatrics.

For more on marijuana and pregnancy, head to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/factsheets/pregnancy.htm>

## GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

# Tough year could bolster bright future

By **MARY R. WILLIAMS**  
Committee Member

Do you see it? It’s getting bigger! It’s the light at the end of the tunnel! Don’t give up, don’t ever give up. We can do this together. There are so many clichés that apply to our situation today. And they are all true.

We are coming out of this pandemic better, stronger, and more compassionate than ever. We’ve seen the worst of times; now we’re ready for the best of times. I am encouraged when I hear so many Lodges initiating not one or two new Members, but ten, fifteen or twenty members at a time. I ask, where are you finding these new Members?

The answer, when everything was closed—restaurants, churches, schools, and many other businesses—the Elks were delivering food and supplies to those who were afraid or unable to go out. The Elks were checking on friends and neighbors, the elderly and those facilities who take care of the most vulnerable population. The Elks were still working to help every community, doing whatever needed to be done, and didn’t ask for anything in return. So now that people are getting vaccinated, and are trying so desperately to get back to some part of normal, our neighbors want to join our organization. They want to

help our communities, and the Elks know how to do this. Wow! Doesn’t that make you proud to be an Elk?

I sincerely hope our Lodges have been keeping track of all they have been doing in our communities. Recording the countless hours, not only Elks hours, but time spent by family and friends who worked alongside the Elks. The miles driven to buy and deliver food and supplies. The money, the clothes, the everyday necessities, the grants that were used to provide for our veterans and families in need.

We must show our Government what we do with our time and money. This is our way to continue to do the great things we do as a charitable organization. Now is the time to go to your legislators and find out what bills are being presented that may affect the Elks. Ask your Lodge Government Relations person how you can track these bills. You will be amazed how some bills are attached to other bills that have nothing to do with charity. If they get passed, we lose. If we lose our charitable status, our money will be used to pay taxes instead of charity work in our communities. We must be diligent, to protect ourselves and those we serve.

We are like The Little Engine That Could: slow and steady, we just keep chugging along. Stay safe, and take care of each other. See you in Tampa!

## GER From Page 1

could not have people in and together. But it also has been very rewarding. However, once we were able to start to travel it was the time away from our family that was difficult. To be able to spend time with other people who love what this organization is all about. The warmth we received and the Elks we have had the chance to meet has been absolutely fulfilling. Nothing replaces our family, but the Elks Family sure helped remind us that we have a huge family. The COVID situation only showed me that it can get us down, but COVID cannot knock us out.

Stacey and I promise to continue to serve you as we move forward in our lives. We absolutely look forward to serving this organization and the people who we love and enjoy. You, the Elks!

We look forward to joining you in Tampa. It will be a fun and exciting convention. Thank you for allowing Stacey and I to represent you this last year and into the future.



**VETERANS** From Page 4

members were exceptionally pleased with the professionalism and concern for veterans shown by Elks volunteers.

While many volunteers are returning to indoor activity, some are still unable due to facility restrictions. But that hasn't stopped Jack Strickland, in Kinston, North Carolina. Strickland has continued to deliver snacks to the facility, plan for future events, and offer his support wherever needed. Residents at the Kinston Home enjoy watching birds, and Strickland made this possible by installing and maintaining bird feeders outside their windows.

Lori Deutsch-Marvin, Representative at the Idaho State Home in Pocatello, and the Blackfoot, ID Lodge No. 1416 have spruced up the Elks Rehab Activity Park at the home, which includes a walking path, putting green, driving range, fire pit, and fishing pond with a fountain for the veterans to enjoy.

Elks volunteers are excited about returning to the veterans they serve. After months of distance, in-person activities are a welcome change of pace.

**Most Valuable Student contest**

The Elks National Foundation is pleased to announce the first-place winners for the 2021 Most Valuable Student contest. The recipients of \$50,000 scholarships are **Jacob Lockman**, sponsored by Mount Adams (White Salmon), WA Lodge No. 1868, and **Gellila Asmamaw**, sponsored Lancaster, PA Lodge No. 134.

**GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE****These Lodges are All American**

By **JAMES E. STEWART**  
Committee Member

The 2020-2021 Lodge year was one of unusual circumstances. Nevertheless, our Lodges continued the great works of Elkdom as exemplified by the high quality applications received for the Contest 'A' — All American Lodge Contest. Complements to the many hundreds of Lodges that entered district contests and congratulations to the Lodges that achieved honors during their subsequent state competitions.

One-hundred and thirty-four (134) applications were forwarded for judging in the national competition. Each Lodge offered examples of fidelity to our Order and extraordinary service to their communities. You are models for us to follow. You make us **proud** to be Elks!

The three (3) top scoring Lodges in each of the six (6) membership divisions are awarded the title of "All American Lodge." Congratulations to the following eighteen (18) incredibly special Elks Lodges!

**Division I (300 Members or fewer)**

**1st Place:** Kearny, NJ No. 1050  
**2nd Place:** Roxboro, NC No. 2005  
**3rd Place:** Santa Monica, CA No. 906

**Division II (301-500 Members)**

**1st Place:** East Stroudsburg, PA No. 319  
**2nd Place:** Gainesville, FL No. 990  
**3rd Place:** Tampa, FL No. 708

**Revision in Divisions for the 2021-2022 Contest**

The 2021-2022 All-American Lodge Contest will have revised divisions that better equalize the number of Lodges in each division. The new division distribution is:

I = 1-150 Members (345 Lodges, 18%)  
II = 151-225 Members (302 Lodges, 16%)  
III = 226-300 Members (345 Lodges, 18%)  
IV = 301-450 Members (318 Lodges, 17%)  
V = 451-700 Members (316 Lodges, 17%)  
VI = 701 Members & up (258 Lodges, 14%)

**Division III (501-700 Members)**

**1st Place:** Casa Grande Valley, AZ No. 1957  
**2nd Place:** St. Louis, MO No. 9  
**3rd Place:** Vestal, NY No. 2508

**Division IV (701-1,100 Members)**

**1st Place:** Phoenix, AZ No. 335  
**2nd Place:** Apache Junction, AZ No. 2349  
**3rd Place:** Fayetteville-Springdale, AR No. 1987

**Division V (1,101-1,500 Members)**

**1st Place:** St. George 'Dixie', UT No. 1743  
**2nd Place:** Manasquan, NJ Lodge No. 2534  
**3rd Place:** Santa Ana, CA No. 794

**Division VI (1,501 Members or more)**

**1st Place:** Sun City, AZ No. 2559  
**2nd Place:** Orange, CA No. 1475  
**3rd Place:** Lake Havasu City, AZ No. 2399

**GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE****Is your Lodge ready to help during the next disaster?**

By **WILLIAM M. WISEMAN**  
Committee Member

Natural disasters continue to occur across our nation. The East Coast endures hurricanes, the middle of the country experiences tornadoes followed by severe rain storms resulting in floods, and the West Coast suffers from earthquakes and wildfires followed by landslides. Both the middle of the country and Northeast receive massive snowstorms.

Should a natural disaster hit your area, is your Lodge ready to assist those in need?

Does your Lodge have an active Disaster Relief Committee in place? In the nation's Midwest, South, Southeast and East Coast, these acts of nature can hit when least expected, and we need to be ready to assist the victims.

Now is an opportune time to get in touch with the first responders in your community to see how the Elks can be of service. A telephone committee could work together to start a collection to obtain items such as clothing, first aid kits, and water.

Let us step up and show the Elks care about what happens in our communities. By getting involved, we can bridge the gap between our Lodges and our communities.

While charitable organizations such as the Red Cross, United Way, and Salvation Army provide immediate assistance to disaster victims, the Elks have to be ready to deal with the after effects. By joining forces with these first responders, the Elks will be better able to perform whatever needs to be done to aid victims.

This is where the Elks can show that "*Elks Care*" about what happens in their community.

The need for assistance continues to grow. We encourage all Elks and Lodges to contribute to the Disaster Relief Fund and extend help wherever the need arises. Please remember the Elks motto, *Elks Care—Elks Share* and make our organization well known in our communities.

To meet our funding and readiness needs for natural disaster, we encourage all Elks to donate to your Local Lodge as well as to the Grand Secretary's office in Chicago marked for the Disaster Relief Fund. Please consider holding a special dinner or other events to meet future needs as they occur. Thank you to all who have made donations in the past.

# Volunteers back in action as society re-opens

By **HANNAH GRABER**  
Programs Coordinator

After a year of adjusting to COVID safety procedures and mostly remote service to veterans, some Elks Voluntary Service Representatives are finally starting to return to their facilities!

Here's what some of our volunteers have been doing as they return to a more active volunteering schedule.

Brian Kinney was the first volunteer to return to regular hours at his facility the VA Cooper Division in Lexington, Kentucky. He has been working on organizing and keeping inventory in the volunteer office storage area. He also provides snacks, recreational therapy

supplies, and materials for a bean bag toss game that the veterans can enjoy outdoors. Having a presence in the facility allows him to offer support and speak with veterans who were there for appointments.

While John Phelan has been delivering supplies to the Hot Springs VAMC in South Dakota throughout the year, he was finally able to host veterans for off-campus outings in March. Veterans were treated to breakfast at the Laughing Water restaurant, and everyone was excited to finally get together again.

Darrell Quinley, Representative at the St. Michael's Vets Center in Kansas City, Missouri, described an exciting first outing for the veterans he serves. "They had a ball: sore arms, sore knees, sore backs, but they loved it!" The day was completed with a trip to Freddy's for burgers and shakes on the way home.

Some Voluntary Service Representatives have been able to assist with COVID vaccination clinics at their facilities, like Bob Wormell in Spokane, Washington. Wormell reports that the volunteer service staff



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BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary  
Benevolent and Protective  
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## GRAND LODGE PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP MARKETING COMMITTEE

# Growing Elkdom: 8 steps to boost membership

By **RICK GATHEN**  
Membership Marketing Manager

Please encourage every Lodge to complete the following activities:

1. Click on our new recruitment website called [join.elks.org](http://join.elks.org) and take our tour. It has produced hundreds of new membership applications.
2. Review the new Elks Social Shareables Campaign. We have more than 70,000 engagements sharing positive messages about membership.
3. Go on [elks.org](http://elks.org) and click on the new virtual Membership and Marketing

4. guides. They are packed with fun tools to grow your Lodge.
4. Adopt and begin implementing the Plus Membership Program.
5. Print an article about the program in the Lodge bulletin.
6. Display the membership progress chart in a prominent place.
7. Submit pin, watch, and clock requests each time a Member qualifies.
8. Initiate a large GER Class during September and October so that participants and top recruiters are recognized and counted in the CLMS2 monthly updates.

Contact your Area Member of the Grand Lodge PR & MM Committee for additional information or assistance as you promote implementation of the Plus Membership Program with our Lodge and State Association partners. **When Elkdom Shines, Elkdom Grows.**

