



# Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

*Elks Care — Elks Share*



## Next chapter for your Lodge starts this month

First, **congratulations** to all newly installed Exalted Rulers and Lodge officers. Thank you for making the commitment and accepting the duties and responsibilities of the office for which you have been chosen. You are about to take part in—I hope—one of the greatest experiences in your Lodge career, becoming a Lodge officer. Do not take this experience and responsibility lightly. By accepting your office, you will guide the direction your Lodge will pursue for the next Lodge year and continue *“Meeting the Challenge.”*

Newly elected Exalted Rulers need to reach out to committee appointees to ensure they are prepared to perform



**Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler**  
**T. KEITH MILLS**

their assignments. Show them how to get the information for their committee on [elks.org](http://elks.org). It is your job to help remove obstacles they may encounter along the way to better perform their duties. Make sure they report all charitable hours and mileage to the Lodge Secretary so they may be entered into CLMS.

One suggestion is to assign important committees to different chair officers to oversee and ensure committees are working to the best of their ability. Then, during your monthly officer meeting or Lodge meeting, have committee chairs or chair officers give updates on that committee.

In relation to finances, the budget(s) for your Lodge should be ready to be presented to the membership for approval before the last regular Lodge meeting in April. The Annual Report for the previous year is also due May 1. Make sure that your Financial Reporting System (FRS) is up to date and be sure to submit your end of year

Please see GER, Page 2

## Pre-registration for Convention opens in April

Online pre-registration for this year’s Convention opens April 1 and will be available at [elks.org/convention/prereg.cfm](http://elks.org/convention/prereg.cfm) through June 28.

**GRAND SECRETARY**  
Bryan R. Klatt

New this year in Atlanta, registration will be open on Friday, July 1 from noon until 4 p.m. in the Georgia World Congress Center - Building C, Hall C1. Be advised, exhibitors and vendors will not be open at this time. Normal registration and vendor/exhibitor hours will begin Saturday, July 2 at 8 a.m.

The Elks National Convention Commission is working closely with the Georgia World Congress Center and the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau to plan for a safe and healthy Convention. Follow [discoveratlanta.com/coronavirus/](http://discoveratlanta.com/coronavirus/) to see the latest requirements for the area.

### GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

## 6 Lodges earn five-star website award

By MERYL ARNS  
Committee Member

A Lodge with a good website is a Lodge growing in membership! Thank you to the many Lodge webmasters across the United States and congratulations to those who entered the Lodge Website Contest.

It is obvious that Lodge websites are keeping our Members informed and

telling the world what we do. Attractive photos welcome Members and Elks who may be traveling across the country to stop and enjoy the many activities offered by our Lodges. Through websites we are *“Meeting the Challenge.”*

The Lodge Website Contest is free to enter and the reward is knowing that you have let the world know what we do. *Elks Care — Elks Share.*

#### 5 Star ★★★★★ Awards

- Sierra Vista, AZ Lodge No. 2065 [elks.org/lodges/home.cfm?LodgeNumber=2065](http://elks.org/lodges/home.cfm?LodgeNumber=2065)
- New London, CT Lodge No. 360 [elks360.org](http://elks360.org)
- Lebanon, OH Lodge No. 422 [lebanon422.com](http://lebanon422.com)
- Reno, NV Lodge No. 597 [renoelks.org](http://renoelks.org)
- Fredericksburg, VA Lodge No. 875 [elkslodge875.org](http://elkslodge875.org)
- Bremerton, WA Lodge No. 1181 [facebook.com/BremertonElks1181](http://facebook.com/BremertonElks1181)

#### 4 Star ★★★★★ Awards

- Sarasota South, FL Lodge No. 2495 [sarasotaelks2495.org](http://sarasotaelks2495.org)
- St. Louis, MO Lodge No. 9 [elkslodge9.org](http://elkslodge9.org)
- Silver City, NM Lodge No. 413 [silvercityelks.com](http://silvercityelks.com)
- Oswego, NY Lodge No. 271 [oswegoelks.com](http://oswegoelks.com)
- High Point, NC Lodge No. 1155 [hpelks.com/](http://hpelks.com/)
- Provo, UT Lodge No. 849 [facebook.com/groups/290986561176/](http://facebook.com/groups/290986561176/)

#### 3 Star ★★ Awards

- Wallace, ID Lodge No. 331 [wallace.idahoelks.org](http://wallace.idahoelks.org)
- Kent Island, MD Lodge No. 2576 [kentislandelks.com](http://kentislandelks.com)

## Grant lets Georgia Lodge bring festivities to veterans home

By CATHLEEN DRAPER

ENF Communications Coordinator

Lake Oconee, GA Lodge No. 2849 has used its Impact Grant to partner with the Georgia War Veterans Home since 2018. Through the project, Reaching Out to Our Veterans, the Lake Oconee Elks build relationships with the residents by holding monthly outings and events that provide entertainment and companionship.

Reaching Out to Our Veterans was originally designed to provide interaction with the outside world, as the veterans at the home rarely had the opportunity to leave. However, throughout the course of the project, the Lake Oconee Lodge realized that many residents use wheelchairs. Without a wheelchair-accessible



vehicle, the Elks couldn't bring many of the veterans along on their adventures. So, the Lake Oconee Elks reworked the project, pivoting to include monthly events right at the Georgia War Veterans Home to be enjoyed by all residents. The refreshed project has yielded incredibly positive results.

In the third quarter of their 2021 Impact Grant, the Lake Oconee Elks threw both a pizza party and barbecue luncheon for more than 100 residents. The Lodge has been creative in sharing its events with the local community, and the luncheon was no different. The publicity inspired two community members to donate fully-functional wheelchair vans. Though the community members are not affiliated with the Elks, they were so moved by the dedication and passion of the Lake Oconee Lodge that they wanted to give back to the veterans at the home.

"The [first] donor, whose husband had used the van before he passed away, asked that our Lodge facilitate the donation," said Lodge Grants Coordinator Mary Zachary. "We are very proud that our efforts have helped to engage the community in supporting the Veterans Home."

With the donations, the Lake Oconee Elks will be able to deepen their impact and provide more accessible services to show that Elks always care.

The new 2022 Impact Grant recipients were announced on Take a CIP. Tune in to [enf.elks.org/TakeACIP](https://enf.elks.org/TakeACIP) to see how Lodges across the country will use their 2022 Impact Grants to make a meaningful, positive difference in their communities.

CIP grant applications are set to open on April 1. Learn more at [elks.org/cip](https://elks.org/cip).

### GER From Page 1

financials to your accounting personnel so they may prepare your 990s and 990Ts for your Lodge shortly after April 1. Once completed, you will need to upload them to [elks.org](https://elks.org) and file them with the Internal Revenue Service.

I know that all Lodges are actively involved in their communities. You are encouraged to establish at least one community project that emphasizes the charitable work of our Order. The Grand Lodge Activities Committee also has a Community Projects Contest. The Committee will award first, second, and third place within the six membership categories. This award will give your Lodge national recognition to show your Lodge is actively supporting your community. You have done the work, now fill out the form and submit before the May 1 deadline.

By this time, your District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler should have informed you of the place and time for their Spring District Deputy Clinic. This is a great learning opportunity to gather with other officers within your district. It is also the time that your District Deputy will help you and your officers get the year off to a good start.

Finally, good luck to you during this Elks year. Being a Lodge leader has some work involved. However, it can be lots of fun and a truly rewarding experience for you and your Lodge. If you need anything, your Past Exalted Rulers, local District Deputy, state leaders, and other Grand Lodge committee members are there to help and guide you. You just need to ask.

### DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

## DEA plan addresses ODs, violence

By WILLIAM J. BRYAN  
Assistant National Director

The Drug Enforcement Administration announced a new initiative, Operation Overdrive, aimed at fighting the rising rates of drug-related violent crime and overdose deaths plaguing American communities.

Last fall, DEA used national crime statistics and CDC data to identify hot spots of drug-related violence and overdose deaths across the country, in order to devote its law enforcement resources to where they will have the most impact: the communities where criminal drug networks are causing the most harm.

Launched in February, Operation Overdrive uses a data-driven, intelligence-led approach to identify and dismantle criminal drug networks operating in areas with the highest rates of violence and overdoses. DEA, working in partnership with its fellow federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, has mapped the threats and initiated enforcement operations against those networks in 34 locations across 23 states in the initial phase of Operation Overdrive.

Today, the United States faces an unprecedented overdose epidemic claiming 275 lives every day. Violence, often associated with drug-related activity, is also rising sharply nationwide: in 2020, homicides increased a record 30 percent, and 77 percent of the murders in the United States were committed

with a firearm. In 2021, DEA and its law enforcement partners seized more than 8,700 firearms connected to investigations of drug trafficking organizations.

Operation Overdrive revealed alarming trends about the networks that DEA has mapped. The vast majority of identified criminal drug networks are engaged in gun violence. A majority of identified criminal drug networks sell fentanyl or methamphetamine. And almost all of the identified criminal drug networks that sell those deadly synthetic drugs (fentanyl or methamphetamine) are also engaged in violent gun crimes.

"DEA's objective is clear," said DEA Administrator Anne Milgram. "DEA will bring all it has to bear to make our communities safer and healthier, and to reverse the devastating trends of drug-related violence and overdoses plaguing our nation."

Kent Gade, National Director of the Elks Drug Awareness Program noted: "Last year, the DEA confiscated enough fentanyl off the streets to kill each and every American citizen. If this doesn't scare you, nothing will. There's still so much more on the streets. We applaud the effort of the DEA and if your city or Lodge is located in one of the 34 locations, you need to sit up and take notice. Get your DAP committee involved."

More information on Operation Overdrive can be found at [dea.gov](https://dea.gov).

## GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

# Get the most from Elks Activities' online resources

By **MICHAEL B. BRYANT**  
Committee Member

Are you aware of the valuable resources available to you via the Grand Lodge Activities Committee web page? The link to the Activities Committee page is [elks.org/grandlodge/activities](http://elks.org/grandlodge/activities).

Many programs and resources are available on the site to assist you and your Lodge to become more active in your community, especially in helping local youth and people in need. These initiatives will make your Lodge a valuable and respected partner in your community. Promoting activities can also aid in growing membership.

In addition to the Community Projects Contest, which recognizes Lodges for their charitable work, the Activities Committee pages have information about the Antlers Program for young people in our community to get involved with the Elks. Also included is information on Soccer Shoot with a complete guide to setting up a program, managing the actual competition, and even building the equipment needed to hold a successful event.

Medals of Valor and Service are a simple way to thank and recognize individuals for their dedication, sacrifice, and service to our communities as first responders, firefighters, and police personnel. The Student Recognition Program includes Student/Teen of the Month/Year and is a way for Lodges to recognize outstanding students.

The Dictionary Program's sole mission is to distribute dictionaries and other reference books to as many third graders as possible. The Junior Golf Program is

an excellent opportunity for Lodges to interact with our youth through teaching and participating with them in golf. The Junior ROTC Awards Program is designed to recognize and encourage outstanding JROTC Cadets for being successful students and citizens while fostering a constructive and disciplined learning environment in school.

For Youth Week Proclamations, it is requested that all Lodges designate one week in May as Elks National Youth Week and sponsor programs dedicated to the youth of your community. There is also recognition for Boy and Girl Scouts via certificates and the Marvin M. Lewis Award, which recognizes Elks who have contributed significantly to the youth of their communities by volunteering in the Scouting programs.

Forms and certificates for Soccer Shoot, Scouting, Student/Teen of the Month/Year, youth recognition, JROTC, Certificates of Participation, Public Safety Medals of Valor & Service, Certificates of Appreciation, and Honor our Flag certificates can be found at [elks.org/grandlodge/activities/downloads.cfm](http://elks.org/grandlodge/activities/downloads.cfm).

Multimedia and YouTube videos on the Community Projects Contest, Activities Committee, Antlers Program, Student Recognition Program, Junior Golf Program, JROTC Program, Public Safety Medals of Valor/Service, Dictionary Project, and Soccer Shoot can be found at [elks.org/grandlodge/activities/media.cfm](http://elks.org/grandlodge/activities/media.cfm). These are roughly five-minute videos that provide an overview of the respective programs and suggestions on how to get started.

The Activities Committee is finalizing

brochures that can be downloaded and used to promote our various programs in the very near future.

The Activities Committee gives you the tools to allow you to be an important and impactful member of your communities. Lodges, by providing needed assistance, also drive home the message of the great deeds we, as Elks, are doing.

The Community Projects Contest has a deadline to submit applications by April 1. Please submit these applications to reward the great work your Lodges are doing and receive national recognition.

The link for the contest application is [elks.org/grandlodge/activities/files/communityProjectsContest.pdf](http://elks.org/grandlodge/activities/files/communityProjectsContest.pdf).

### G/L PR AND MEMBERSHIP MARKETING COMMITTEE

#### Helpful Recruitment Resources

Visit [Join.Elks.org](http://Join.Elks.org)

Making a Difference Campaign

[elks.org/MakingADifference](http://elks.org/MakingADifference)

Elks.org Membership Guide

[virtualmanuals.elks.org/membership-guide/](http://virtualmanuals.elks.org/membership-guide/)

Marketing & Membership Resources

[virtualmanuals.elks.org/membership-guide/#resources](http://virtualmanuals.elks.org/membership-guide/#resources)

Social Shareables Campaigns

[virtualmanuals.elks.org/social-shareables/](http://virtualmanuals.elks.org/social-shareables/)

# Updated Elks web pages can answer your questions

By **WAYNE D. COTTERLY**  
Committee Chairman

For the past two years, the Grand Lodge Activities Committee has been working on streamlining the content of its web presence on [elks.org](http://elks.org) to provide Members with the information they need for conducting one of the committee's programs. These programs include Soccer Shoot, Antlers, Community Projects Contest, Medals of Valor & Service, Student Recognition Program, JROTC Award Program, and support of the Boy & Girl Scouts.

Several YouTube videos are now available in the multimedia page of the Activities Committee section. These short videos give a great overview of

each of the committee's programs and can be used to introduce new Lodge Members to what the Elks have to offer.

In addition to the videos, we have been working on redesigning and re-writing our program brochures to provide a simple way to learn about the programs as well. These brochures are currently in the approval process, and we hope they will be ready by the Grand Lodge Session in Atlanta.

Beyond our own committee, [elks.org](http://elks.org) provides Members with a treasure trove of information. Want to see how much money your state has given in charitable contributions? Check out the Charitable Reports tab under the Reports section. Do you want to know when a specific

Member passed away? The Necrology section allows you to find out about our departed Members not only in our own Lodge but also around the country.

Learn about the Elks history in the History Project section, where you can also add your own historic information. Include a suitable memorial for a fellow Member in the Never Forgotten section. Want to find out how your state has fared in the National Ritual Contest in the past? The information is also there in the history section.

Whatever your question about Elksdom may be, the answer will be found on [elks.org](http://elks.org). We encourage you to take full advantage of the site and learn about our great Order.

# New Freedom Grant options suit range of project sizes

By **HANNAH GRABER**  
ENVSC Programs Coordinator

This year, we're making big changes to the Freedom Grant! We're excited to offer more flexibility than ever. We're also increasing the number of Freedom Grants to 600.

Freedom Grant applications will become available on April 1 at 12:01 a.m. (Central Time) and will close on April 15 at Noon (Central Time). Grant recipients will be notified in mid-May. Freedom Grants are competitive, and applications will be evaluated based on the type of project proposed and the quality of each Lodge's plan.

Each Lodge will have the choice to apply for the type of Freedom Grant that best fits their project. restrictions and is an excellent choice for Lodges just getting started with service to veterans, or for smaller Lodges in rural areas.

The Freedom Grant Classic, at \$3,000, is for active projects and requires direct service to veterans. Projects with a high level of Elks involvement will qualify for this grant. Consider this option if your Lodge is planning a large event or has experience with an ongoing project.

The Freedom Grant Spark, at \$1,000, is for projects that serve veterans in need. Involvement is encouraged when possible. This option has fewer

All Freedom Grant projects must serve veterans and/or military members and their families. Grant projects must focus on one of these five areas of need: employment, homelessness and housing, military families, health, and educational support.

More information about the Freedom Grant and how to decide which version would be the best fit for your Lodge can be found at [elks.org/vets](https://elks.org/vets).



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

**April 2022**

**NON-PROFIT ORG.**  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
**CHICAGO, IL**  
Permit No. 5244

## GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

# Submit reports monthly to avoid tax season crunch

By **MARY R. WILLIAMS**  
Committee Member

Well it's that time of year again. No, it's not Christmas or your birthday—it's **tax season!**

It's the end of the Elks' fiscal year, which means many reports to finish, the most important of which is Charitable Reporting. As you well know, for us to keep our 501(c)(3) status, we must report our charitable giving. Did you know that volunteer time, mileage, and cash or items donated can be counted? Many of your Lodge's programs and activities are eligible. If you have questions or need help, Government Relations can explain

what can and cannot be reported. It can also provide you examples of report forms, and suggest who submits the forms and when.

Grand Lodge has created a CLMS Report for your Lodge Secretary to enter information and submit. Don't wait until now, the end of the year—do this every month, after every event. Make sure the forms are everywhere for people to use. All committee chairs should have report forms and get them to the right person to submit to the Secretary. Then, once a month the Lodge Secretary can enter the information in CLMS and submit to Grand Lodge.

**Report! Report! Report! Report! Report! Report!**

We are recovering from a long two-year crisis and we are stronger and more resilient in our efforts to help our communities, our families, and each other. Our membership is growing and our neighbors want to help, so ask them if they would like to be a Member of this great organization.

Hoop Shoot and scholarships are a great way to get involved, and families are looking for opportunities to get out of the house and start enjoying life again. What a greater way to do that than to become an Elk.