



Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care – Elks Share



Alcohol provision policies keep spirits high

November is when we move into the season of holidays. It is a time of festivity and gatherings when people join together for good times and camaraderie. It is also a time we need to be extra vigilant for those who may be consuming alcohol.

In recent years, the Elks have made a strengthened commitment that our Lodges will not allow the overserving of alcohol under any circumstances. The needless heartbreak and loss that can arise when people get on the road while under the influence of alcohol is something we just don't want to see. In my state, California, there are special programs in place that every person involved in the sale or provision of alcohol, whether paid or volunteer, must go through. Many, if not all, of the other states and associations have similar requirements. I ask every Lodge



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

ROBERT L. DUITSMAN

to make the effort to ensure all covered people are properly trained so that the coming season of festivity can be just that for everyone.

Something that isn't touched on enough, in my mind, is the concept of family. That network of those closest to us that we can rely on and share good times. Family is precious. But for many of us there really isn't anyone to share the good times with, and it is in this season that loneliness is all

the more biting for those without others close to them. It is for those people, more than for all the rest, that our Lodges can play an extremely important role in filling that empty space.

For some, our Lodges are their family, and it is a role that should not be taken lightly. Special events for the Members who may not have anywhere else to go can play a critical role in their lives. It would be a nice gesture if at least a phone call could be placed to every Member of the Lodge just to say hello and ask how he or she is doing. Extend a personal invitation for the Member to come for some special event, or just to let them know they are being thought of. That can be an important outreach and have lasting consequences.

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Elks Memorial perpetual care

Originally dedicated in 1926 to the memory of our fallen Elks of World War I, the Veterans Memorial Building is at the heart of Elkdom. Magnificently constructed in Chicago, the Memorial is a breathtaking structure representing the values Elks cherish. Through the years, the Memorial has been rededicated to honor the memory of American

GRAND SECRETARY

Bryan R. Klatt

Veterans who have died for our great nation. Our duty is to ensure this Memorial remains an extraordinary symbol of the bravery and patriotism of these veterans.

By making an individual or Lodge 501(c)(3) donation, you will assist in the perpetual care and continued restoration of this beautiful Memorial. Go to elks.org and click "Veterans Memorial" on the home screen. Take a virtual tour, read about the history, plan a visit, make an online donation, or mail a donation today.

DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

No blame game for child's addiction

By JACKI SCARPINO
Special Contributor

Many volatile emotions erupt as a result of drug abuse and addiction, not the least of which is anger. It is not unusual for substance abusers themselves to feel angry, nor is it unusual for their loved ones to feel angry. Parents may feel angry about their child's addiction, and some parents may even go so far as to disconnect from their substance abusing child's life.

Parents are supposed to raise, nurture, protect, and empower their child until their child is independent. Even then, the parent's job is to continue to encourage and support their child, guiding him or her through life and the difficulties that may be encountered. When their child becomes addicted to drugs and the child's life slowly spirals downward, it's fair to say that the anger the parents are feeling may be anger at their own failure.

A common and unfortunate belief held by many parents of addicts is that they

are at fault for their child's addiction. Many parents who believe this will berate themselves for the path that their child has taken, believing that something they did or didn't do directly caused their child's addiction. They will spend many sleepless nights going over their parenting, attempting to find any minute detail that will back up their claim. They will say things like, *If I had only been there for them more*, or *If I had only intervened earlier, maybe things would be different*.

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GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

November checklist: Veterans, voting, volunteering

By **JAMES W. MARTSFIELD**
Committee Member

November is the month to honor our V.E.T.S. It is also the month that we elect members of our legislative bodies; and a time to be thankful for all that we have.

V—Veterans Day. The Order of Elks has designated November as Veterans Remembrance Month and we as Elks remember our solemn pledge that *“So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them.”* In 1917, our Order established a war fund to care for veterans. In 1946, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission was established with the goal of serving hospitalized veterans, and to this day we are proud of our pledge to never forget the veterans in our hospitals. We also honor our servicemen and women whose sacrifices have preserved the freedoms we all enjoy. They are the heroes of our country. Let us also never forget the volunteers who make our programs so successful. The men and women who donate their time to make our Elks Veterans Program work are also heroes. Be sure to recognize and thank them.

E—Election Day. November is also significant because November 5 is Election Day. We as Elks have a duty to vote and support candidates who share our dreams, morals, love of country, our Pledge of Allegiance, and our American Flag. Do you know your government officials and your first responders? Do you set aside an evening where you honor your policeman and your firefighters? Do you invite your local government officials to your Lodge whenever possible? Have you ever held a Legislative Day at your capital? After the election, do you send a congratulatory letter to the newly elected and re-elected legislators and local city and county officials? Along with your letter, don't forget to include a copy of your State and National Survey of Volunteer, Youth, Charitable and Community Service Programs report.

T—Thanksgiving Day. This day is a time to give thanks to our Creator for the blessings that have been bestowed on our families, servicemen and women, veterans, the Elks, and America. It's time to thank those who are still in harm's way while protecting our freedom. When we

gather with friends and family, may we be thankful this day and every day for the many blessings of family, the fellowship of friends, Lodge members, and our beloved American heritage.

S—Support Our Military Families. At tables across our nation, we will share our gratefulness for the service of our men and women in uniform and their families for the many sacrifices made to keep our nation safe. Our military families offer strength and encouragement to our service members while managing the household, caring for children and putting the country and the military's mission in front of their own desires and dreams. The holidays can be very stressful for many of these families that remain at home. Consider adopting a family and invite them to your Thanksgiving dinner or prepare and deliver dinner to a family. Let's not forget them during this holiday season, and please always remember that *“Elks Care – Elks Share.”*

The Grand Lodge Government Relations Committee wishes all Elks, your family and all the military families a happy and safe Thanksgiving.

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As understandable as this feeling is, parents are not at fault for their child's addiction. Knowing this will not necessarily make that much of a difference, nor will it even be that much of a comfort for the parent, who has to deal with the fact that their child has become addicted to substances. But, understanding that parents are not to blame will help bring a sliver of peace to an otherwise impossible situation.

Addiction is an illness that changes brain chemistry. A child may have made a choice to use an addictive substance, but we all make mistakes. The only difference here is that the child became addicted and lost control. It is not the parent's fault, and it's not the child's fault, either. Would you blame yourself if your child were born with another illness? You might try to find reasons to blame yourself, but ultimately you would understand that illnesses simply just occur and that no one is really to blame for them. You would fight hard to try to help your child in any way you could, but you would not carry the burden of guilt that parents of addicts carry.

The same applies with addiction. Your child may have been born with the genetic

predisposition to become addicted. They may have grown up in a household where addiction was present; If this is the case, then own your difficulties, but this does not mean that you caused their addiction to start or that you caused their addiction to continue.

Parents who blame themselves for their child's addiction are not only spinning their wheels and going nowhere, but are more likely to lash out at their child—driving the individual who most needs their compassion, caring, understanding, and encouragement to withdraw further into their addiction. They will try harder to hide it since they feel that they cannot resolve it, and the gap between parents and child will open wider and wider.

Parents must realize that some difficulty in their child's life caused their child to turn to drugs. This does not mean that they have failed as parents, it means that they have an opportunity to really succeed as parents by helping their child overcome one of the most challenging difficulties life can present them. And it can be overcome.

Here is a link to an excellent article on this topic: drugfree.org/parent-blog/i-hate-the-word-enable-getting-blamed-shamed-when-you-have-a-child-with-an-addiction/.

GER From Page 1

Please consider Veterans Day on November 11, a time to honor those men and women who have served our country in military service. Few need to be reminded of the Elks commitment that *“As long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them.”* Too little is said or done to pay tribute to these individuals, and the Elks have a long tradition of service to and support of our veterans. Do your part in letting your local veterans know you care.

Now is the time to plan for the Elks Memorial Service on December 1, required under our laws but more importantly an opportunity for us to remember and pay tribute to our departed Members. It exemplifies our cardinal principle of Brotherly Love. The service should be conducted with meaning and propriety, as befitting a remembrance of a departed Member. Make sure to invite the surviving spouses of departed Members; the service will undoubtedly have special meaning to them and will be a fitting tribute of respect not only to the departed but to their families.

Beth and I extend our best wishes to each of you for a happy Thanksgiving and a wonderful holiday season.

GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

How to recognize your local heroes

By MARGARET O'POLKA
Committee Member

As I am writing this, Hurricane Dorian is devastating the Bahamas and is closing in on the East Coast. By the time you read this, we will know the damage that was done and will have heard stories of heroic acts performed by thousands of emergency responders and valorous citizens who helped those affected by this horrific hurricane.

Your Grand Lodge Activities Committee has a way for Elks to honor these public safety heroes. A Medal of Honor can be presented to an emergency responder or citizen who has gone above and beyond the call of duty, and a Medal of Valor can be awarded to the family of a fallen hero.

Medals can be ordered from the Grand Secretary's office for \$9.00. The medals can be engraved on the reverse side with the person's name.

You can also present certificates to law enforcement, firefighters or emergency service providers, which

can all be accessed at elks.org on the Activities page. These certificates can be personalized as well.

Please consider holding a Public Safety Night in your Lodge. This is a wonderful way to show your community that the Elks respect the courageous men and women who selflessly help others on a daily basis. Holding an event such as this is a wonderful opportunity to bring comfort to grieving families because they would be surrounded not only by Elks, but by local public safety providers as well. This also can promote membership into your Lodge.

If you do present medals or certificates, I would greatly appreciate it if you could e-mail me photos and a short description of your presentation so we can share these in Baltimore next year at the National Convention. My e-mail address is pegopolka@gmail.com.

As always, your Grand Lodge Activities Committee is here to help you with any questions you may have.

GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

Essay theme: Freedom of speech

By DAVID P. CIOE
Committee Member

The Americanism Essay Contest stirs youth pride in America. Grand Lodge once again is pleased to offer this national contest to fifth and sixth graders for Division I and seventh and eighth graders for Division II. For 2019-2020, members of the Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee have selected the theme, "*What does freedom of speech mean to me?*"

This important patriotic contest gives school children the chance to express their pride in America. Fostering our youth's appreciation and respect for patriotism is central to understanding our country's heritage. They come to understand the symbols that represent what this country stands for and gain a deep appreciation for the individuals who sacrifice everything for our freedom.

The Fraternal Committee and all Elks across the country enthusiastically endorse this program because patriotism is one of the BPOE's great cornerstones. Another academic year has begun and students across our great country are back in classrooms to study, learn, and grow into our future leaders. Lodges should have already contacted local school districts, private schools, home schools,

charter schools, and teachers (especially those who may also be Elks) to provide them with the new Americanism Essay Contest to add to their fall curriculums.

Information was given out on this contest at the National Convention. All area DDGERs and ERs should have thumb drives with instructions, forms, and other files. If you do not have your thumb drive with this information, contact your DDGER immediately to get one or to have the zip files e-mailed to you. All information is also available at elks.org.

This contest is important because it demonstrates Americanism at its best to school children in your area.

Essays must be submitted to Local Lodges by December 15, 2019. Plaques will be awarded by the Grand Lodge for first, second, and third place for national winning essays in Division I and Division II. Winners will be announced at the Grand Lodge Session in Baltimore, MD in July 2020.

Your action *now* will shape the youth of our country, which impacts all of our futures. I urge all ERs and Americanism Committee members to implement this contest in your local schools, or follow up on the essays if you already have the contest underway in your school district. God bless you and God bless America!

ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION

Emergency fund helps Vietnam vet through dark time

To honor Veterans Remembrance Month, here's a story about a Navy veteran who was featured in ENF's "Be the Spark" series.

Jesse has lived an incredible life. He married his high school sweetheart, raised 11 children, and is now watching 28 grandchildren and great-grandchildren grow up.

Intertwined in these moments of joy are painful memories. While serving on the *USS Guadalupe*, many of Jesse's fellow Navy comrades were killed during the Vietnam War. When Jesse returned home, he was diagnosed with PTSD. He also remembers when he received the call after his youngest son passed away. Ten months later, he lost his brothers who were twins.

"The thing with trauma is it always put me in a bad place," Jesse said. "I have been in some dark places in different times in my life."

Jesse always found a way to rise back up with help from the V.A., which offered mental health care and other services.

"If I didn't have the V.A., I don't think I would have made it through that," Jesse said.

The V.A. referred Jesse to the Elks' Emergency Assistance Fund when the funeral costs for Jesse's son wiped out his savings.

"I didn't know what I was going to do," Jesse said. "I called on the Elks, and they came through for me."

The emergency assistance paid for a month and a half of Jesse's rent and helped him escape an eviction notice. Since receiving emergency assistance, Jesse has told other veterans and his friends at the V.A. about the Elks.

"I appreciate the Elks organization," Jesse said. "They're a Godsend. I will spread the word that you guys are there for veterans."

Since July 2015, the Elks National Foundation has contributed \$5.3 million to help end veteran homelessness. The money funds the Elks National Veterans Service Commission's Welcome Home initiative, which includes an Emergency Assistance Fund for veterans in eight metropolitan areas targeted by the V.A. for increased focus by the Elks. To date, the Elks have helped more than 1,350 veterans exit or avoid homelessness through emergency assistance. Learn more at enf.elks.org/WelcomeHome.

Two holidays commemorate veterans this month

By **JOHN D. AMEN, PGER**
NVS Commission Vice-Chairman

While we as Elks support our nation's veterans throughout the year, we step up our volunteer efforts in November. Our motto is most important during this favored month: *"As long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them."* Let's all ramp up that meaningful motto to produce more support than ever before.

We have two significant opportunities to show our support: Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. Volunteer at your Lodge to make sure no veterans are forgotten.

Veterans Day on November 11 is our first major event. Bring in veterans for an

honor lunch or dinner. They deserve your respect and gratitude for their service.

On Thanksgiving, take some time out of your family activities or bring the family along for some service and acts of charity to ensure that no veteran misses a beautiful Thanksgiving dinner.

Most importantly on both of these two special days, be sure no veteran in your community is left to sit alone in their home. Your presence and show of appreciation will be worth more than gold to these heroes who have defended our nation in war and peace.

Take time to assist events at any of the 430 veteran centers supported by our great

Elks National Foundation charity through the VAVS program. Picnics and Lodge meals will satisfy our commitment to remember veterans. Supporting the current Elks drive to restore and enhance the Pearl Harbor Memorial with a donation or fundraiser is another great gesture. Look for the banners for this project on Elks.org.

These and many more of our Elks veterans programs will achieve our mission. The veterans are counting on us.



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GRAND LODGE PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP MARKETING

More than 2,500 Members use virtual manuals

By **RICK GATHEN**
PR and Membership Marketing Manager

Our new Virtual Membership & Marketing Manuals have created unlimited potential for our Lodges to grow a more active and robust membership. The manuals offer many exciting and effective branding and communications tools.

These tools will help expand the Elks' footprint in all the communities we serve for many years to come. They are packed with quality ideas, featuring many videos

of successful Lodges in action. By better understanding what makes some Lodges successful, we should be able to produce even more successful Lodges and happier members as well.

The Elks are one of the premier charitable, patriotic, and social organizations in the United States. We are an organization that is back on the move and growing. We are powered by courage and faith with a clear understanding that we will grow by change, not by chance.

Elks support Pearl Harbor

We're asking for your help to preserve, restore, and modernize the Pearl Harbor National Memorial.

Our goal is \$1 per Member to preserve history and honor veterans' service. Visit enf.elks.org/ph to donate!



VETERANS DAY

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11

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

