



Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care – Elks Share



Communities need Elks' help more than ever

As I begin my year as Grand Exalted Ruler, I want to begin by saying thanks to all of you and offer my sincere gratitude and appreciation that you have entrusted me as your next national president. This would not have been possible without all of you, my fellow brothers and sisters, and your support and guidance. I also need to thank my family and friends, and of course the assistance and aid of my wonderful wife.

When I started this adventure, finding a theme was something that I wanted to make sure stood out. I wanted to change a little of the landscape of the organization to make sure that we not only survive the future but thrive in it. With the changes happening in this world, my theme has become more and more vital to the situation. My Theme for 2020-2021 is **Creating Momentum for the Future of Elkdom**. Now more than ever we need to go out there and help our communities and get them to



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

PAUL R. RYAN

thrive again, get them to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Help to realize that this is a **great country**. And teach them who we are as Elks and that our organization is one that will Create Momentum for the Future of Elkdom and the people of this country.

The Elks are a community, and it is my hope for the coming year that by working together with the Elks National Foundation and through our Members and Lodges nationwide we can build both stronger communities and stronger Elks.

It is my goal that we can reach \$4.80 per Member in our ENF donations this Elks year. It's not a lofty goal when you consider that we have reached this amount for many of the past years. I understand that with the way the world is right now, it is hard to increase the goal. Lodges are closed and will have a hard time coming up with the extra funds to be able to sustain our current activity. Reach down and grab one more dollar. Believe me, the Elks National Foundation charitable giving will be needed more than ever and the funds will go a lot further now in the world that we are living in.

It is my challenge to each and every Member to practice the Elks values of Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love, and Fidelity in your work, your daily lives, and everything you do.

Stacey and I are looking forward to visiting you in each of your respective states and Lodges during our travels during the next year.

Elks donate \$373 million

The 2019-2020 Membership Report was filed online via CLMS2. As of March 31, the Order ended the year with a total membership of 768,926 for a **loss** of 2,107. With more attention to membership, the Order can show a gain for this year.

Totals from the Annual Charity Reports show the Order donated \$373,674,280 in time, mileage, and in-kind gifts. This dollar amount would have been larger, but 66 Lodges failed to file a charity report. Again, with everyone's help, during the 2020-2021 Lodge year we will strive to reach that elusive 100% reported.

Even though the Baltimore Convention has been cancelled, I would like to thank the Baltimore Host Committee, their volunteers and Past Grand Exalted Ruler Paul D. Hesel for all the work they have done. Do not forget what your plans were, as it sounds like we may be back in 2028.

GRAND SECRETARY
Bryan R. Klatt

GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

Organ donation is the ultimate gift

By **JAMES E. STEWART**
Committee Member

Remember as a child the anticipation and excitement of Christmas? Waiting for Christmas Eve to come because Christmas morning would hold a big surprise for you?

Well, imagine being someone who is waiting for a heart, a lung, a cornea, or a kidney. Imagine the anticipation and excitement of getting that phone call that an organ is ready for transplant and you are the lucky one who will receive it! There is your Christmas present!

Today, there are 113,000 people waiting for that call; 82% of those are waiting for a kidney. Waiting for that special gift of life from someone who has passed on but left their legacy behind as an organ donor.

Every 10 minutes someone is added to the waiting list, but unfortunately, 22 die every day still waiting.

One organ, eye, and tissue donor can potentially save more than 75 lives! Some 8,000 deaths occur every year because organs are not donated in time. One out of three needing a donation is over 50 years of age.

Statistics show that 98% of Americans are in favor of donation, but only 58% are registered donors.

Please see **DONATE**, Page 4

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**GRAND LODGE PUBLIC
RELATIONS AND
MEMBERSHIP MARKETING**

Two membership programs debut

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

Because of COVID-19, our Lodges are faced with the most serious social and financial challenges in our 152 year history.

Help is here with two new membership programs. We have been busy developing a shareable social media campaign to be used in conjunction with the Virtual Manuals site. Designed to target the Millennial and Generation X demographics to increase membership, this work will create a social media campaign that speaks to a younger audience.

We have produced a variety of items for people to share. The goal is to appeal to younger generations who may not have considered membership. The campaign will target what motivates this demographic: They like to choose the charities they work for, and they enjoy working in groups. The Elks' mission facilitates these principles. The campaign will clearly delineate that the Order is non-partisan. The branded social media templates can be easily shared.

We will also introduce a new optional billing renewal program for August. This will provide Lodges with a substantial time and money savings on its membership renewal efforts. It also modernizes your Lodge billing system by offering many payment options to your membership without adding fees. The cost is only \$.32 per renewal invoice. This includes postage, paper, envelopes, ink, credit card fees, and all labor of stuffing envelopes, printing, stamping the envelopes and bringing them to the post office. Lodges typically spend from \$.77 to \$1.00 per renewal for postage, paper, envelopes, ink and credit card fees. The average Lodge will save anywhere from 42% up to 68%. The expected savings on time and labor for Lodge Secretary's are more than 100 hours per year. Now they simply click a button! Lodge Secretaries can spend time on other important tasks while saving their Lodges money.

Please go to elks.org after July 15 to find out more about these exciting new programs to help your Lodge navigate through these challenging times.

Grow
Elkdom

DAP introduces new brochure

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

Everyone—and I mean everyone—has experienced stress at one time or another in their life. COVID-19 has affected each and every one of us. Our Convention has been cancelled, our Lodges have been shuttered, and our schools have been closed. Only recently have states been allowed to open slowly.

The Elks DAP has recently produced an informational piece, available for distribution, on the subject of stress. The information provided by the DAP identifies the different kinds of stress and what causes them, along with tips on how to deal with it.

This informative card, primarily created to help teenagers, is timely and informative. It contains resource information, including helpful websites and telephone numbers. Perhaps the biggest message contained in the card is: "Don't ignore a big problem, hoping it will go away. Remember, it's okay to ask



for help no matter what the reason is." This is good information for all of us.

Your State Chair for the DAP can provide you with this informative brochure, titled "Stress & Drug Abuse, The Connection." Funds to produce this and all DAP materials come from a grant provided by the Elks National Foundation. Let your Lodge DAP Chair know that this is information for everyone. Just ask for DAP 440 and the State Chair can order this brochure and any other printed material you might need. There is no cost to the Lodges for any of the DAP printed materials. DAP brochures are also available to you in Spanish and can be accessed for download by going to the Elks DAP on elks.org.

GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Kids get a kick out of Soccer Shoot

By **WAYNE D. COTTERLY**
Committee Chairman

The Elks Virtual National Soccer Shoot ended on March 31 and the second season of the national competition is now underway. Last year, only the State Contest scores were used to determine the national champions, but this year we plan to use the Regional Contest scores as well.

We currently have four established Soccer Shoot Regions (Area 1, Area 3, Mid-Atlantic, and Mid-America) encompassing 22 states. States that are not part of an established region are encouraged to run the program as usual and submit a State Contest Report before March 31. States that are already part of an established region will compete at a regional competition, and the Regional Director will submit a Regional Contest Report instead.

States that have not yet become part of a multi-state Soccer Shoot region are encouraged to work with nearby states to form a region. A region change form is available for download from elks.org.

This past year, to make the program rules clearer and update graphics, the Elks Soccer Shoot Manual has been revised. We encourage everyone to review the newly revised manual before holding their competitions. The manual can be

downloaded from the Manual section of elks.org.

The Elks Soccer Shoot brochure has also been updated. This brochure provides a quick overview of the program and can be used to explain the program to both Members and people in your community.

The Elks Soccer Shoot Program is a great way to support our nation's youth and to become actively involved in the community. The program is easy to run, and young people get the opportunity to exhibit their skills and strive for excellence as they work their way toward becoming a national champion.

If you are interested in starting a Soccer Shoot Program in your Lodge or State Association, the best place to start is to download the manual. If you have further questions, please contact the Activities Committee Soccer Shoot Coordinator, who will be willing to help guide you. This year let us make soccer our goal.



GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Charity reports are prereqs for changing lives

By **CARL R. LEDIG, SR.**
Committee Member

Charity programs are the very foundation and lifeblood of the BPOE, without which the organization would have no purpose and could not exist.

The only way Elks can sustain our vital programs is to be exempt from paying taxes, thereby allowing 40% or more of every dollar to go to our charity programs rather than taxes.

There is only one way to keep the charity programs and Elkdom alive. Unfortunately, it is boring and time consuming but absolutely essential. Each Lodge must fill out the right charity reporting forms for the IRS.

We are all too familiar with the word essential because of COVID-19. Only businesses that provided government classified services as essential were allowed to operate. Non-essential workers spent months at home. Essential is important!

Same for IRS charity reporting. The form is essential! Fill it out to get tax exempt status and keep 40+% of every dollar. Do not fill it out and see funding cuts, services cuts, and programs harder to sustain.

Make yourself essential! Fill out the forms and keep the Elks growing, alive, relevant, and in demand!

My last article ended with, “You can change a life with your charity programs, but you may find that the life changed is your own!”

Here is how filling out and filing the forms can change a life. Below is Sam’s journey. Think about how it makes you feel to know the Elks played a significant role in giving Sam the ability to walk.

Sam was born with clubbed feet and faced the possibility of never walking. When she was two years old, Sam’s doctor told her parents she would need years of expensive surgeries and extensive rehab. Her parents could not afford it and faced very difficult decisions.

Fortunately, the surgeon referred Sam’s parents to the Elks, who came to the rescue. At just two years old, Sam became a patient of the Elks Children’s Hospital. The hospital took charge and took care of Sam for 15 years.

The Elks Children’s Hospital arranged surgeries and transported Sam for surgery and back to the Elks Hospital for rehab. Rehab included months of recovery during which the Elks provided a physical place to recover, clothing, potty training, caring, and food. As she got older and had more surgeries and more rehab, there were more services and a very structured environment. School board employee teachers came to the hospital to educate

the patients, and volunteer Elks acted as surrogate parents and caregivers, caring for patients and taking them to local events.

The Elks provided crutches, walkers, wheelchairs, and programs to assist in Sam’s recovery, including a heated pool for physical therapy.

Over 15 years and multiple surgeries, the Elks Children’s Hospital covered all expenses that Sam’s insurance did not cover, from the costs of surgery, hospital, medical bills, recovery, rehab, and education, alleviating a huge financial burden from her parents and giving Sam the gift of recovery and the ability to walk.

Sam grew up, joined the Elks and today works in health care. It is all thanks to this wonderful organization that has made supporting medically challenged children one of its pillars, something we all can be enormously proud of.

Sam was just one child and she told us that through the years, although her journey was rough, there were many, many children way worse off than her at the Elks Children’s Hospital. She was very blessed that the Elks came into her life and knew the other children felt the same.

God Bless the Elks, our children’s therapy programs, and all of our charity programs!

Elks family serves on pandemic’s front lines

Jaime Graham has always had a weak stomach.

But the 2006 Hoop Shoot National Finalist’s admiration for healthcare workers led her into the field. As a medical staff coordinator, Graham helps ensure hospitals and providers comply with state and hospital guidelines.

But as the COVID-19 pandemic took shape in the U.S., her job changed. She’s been facing the unexpected with patience and lessons from her days at the free throw line.

“I think the most valuable thing the Hoop Shoot taught me is we have so many more things in common than we think we do,” said Graham, who was sponsored in the Hoop Shoot by St. Marys, WV Lodge No. 1701. “You can always find common ground with someone if you care to look hard enough. It’s been encouraging to see how quickly people can come together and work toward a common goal.”

Doctors, nurses, and healthcare support staff like Graham have united

to fight the pandemic. Medical students like 2014 Gunther & Lee Weigel Medical School Scholarship recipient and 2009 MVS scholar Lauryn Falcone are ready to help.

Falcone, who was sponsored by Enfield, CT Lodge No. 2222, is finishing her seven-year dual doctoral degree program at West Virginia University. She started her residency in internal medicine in June.

“I think it’s quite normal for anyone to feel nervous prior to entering residency, and that’s just compounded with everything happening in the world right now with COVID,” Falcone said.

The most encouraging thing for Falcone is watching people rally around healthcare workers and those most at risk. Many people have sent homemade personal protective equipment or care packages with snacks and kind notes, and she encourages everyone to reach out to a healthcare worker.

“Even sending someone a short message to say you appreciate them really

goes a long way to make them feel better and brighten their day,” Falcone said.

Falcone finished her classes online, and she’s since become an Elks scholar alum.

“I’m not sure I can ever repay the Elks for all they have done for me,” Falcone said. “The financial as well as emotional support during my early career played a big part in getting me to where I am today. Thank you for all that you do and for being such strong advocates for students and our community.”

A 501(c)(3) public charity, the Elks National Foundation helps Elks build stronger communities through programs that support youth, serve veterans and meet needs in areas where Elks live and work. For more information on the ENF, visit elks.org/enf.



Freedom Grants aid veterans in crucial June

By **HANNAH GRABER**
ENVSC Department Assistant

Congratulations to this year's Freedom Grant recipients! All 325 Freedom Grants have been awarded for projects or donations that serve veterans and/or military members in need.

This year, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the country right before Freedom Grants normally go online in April, there was uncertainty about moving forward as usual. We decided to open the Freedom Grants in June to allow Lodges access to grant funds to provide assistance that is needed more than ever. Planning for projects still involved a lot of uncertainty, but many Lodges have

made adjustments and formed backup plans as part of their grant.

One great example is Oak Harbor, WA Lodge No. 2362. Elks will partner with local veteran centers to assemble supply packages for veterans in need, which Elks can do at home while social distancing. Distribution of the supplies can take place throughout the grant year, allowing flexibility to adjust for safety and local regulations. The Lodge will also provide holiday food baskets for military and veteran families in need.

Golden, CO Lodge No. 2740 will partner with the Survivor Outreach

Services Support Coordinator at the Colorado National Guard to provide backpacks of school supplies and a trip to the Denver Zoo for kids from Gold Star families, as well as Christmas gifts. If the trip is prevented by changes in local COVID-19 guidelines, the Lodge's partnership will allow them to donate funds toward increasing their assistance for the same families during the holidays.

The pandemic forced Elks from Taunton, MA Lodge No. 150 to cancel their normal events that raise money to



Continued below

BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary
**Benevolent and Protective
ORDER OF ELKS**
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DONATE From Page 1

What can you do to help? Register today as a donor! The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks has partnered with Donate Life America.

April is National Donate Life month. Plan now for a fundraiser for Donate Life America by encouraging other Members and family members to become organ donors during the month of April 2021.

Visit the Donate Life America website for updates, registration information, printable handouts, videos of recipients, and more at donatelife.net.



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.

VETERANS From above

provide food assistance to local veteran service agencies. Instead, the Lodge will use a Freedom Grant to provide grocery gift cards and personal protective equipment to veterans experiencing food insecurity and living in transitional housing.

We are thankful for Elks volunteers everywhere who are serving veterans in their communities. Don't forget that Lodges can use Community Investments Program Grants and Welcome Home Kits to serve veterans, too! Visit elks.org/vets for more information.

