



Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care – Elks Share



November starts the season of caring and sharing

The holiday season is upon us. I know as Elks we are in a giving mood 24 hours a day, seven days a week. But, at this time of year we all reach down deeper and work a little harder to help those who are less fortunate. Something about this time makes me crave the spirit of giving more than usual. I think that is why I love this organization so much. I get to have this feeling all year by volunteering and helping any way I can to keep *“Meeting the Challenge.”*

Thanksgiving is one of my favorite times. I do not know what I would do if not for the family gatherings and social activities. I remember growing up and being surrounded by family and friends for the entire day. Socializing, playing



**Message from
the Grand
Exalted Ruler**

**T. KEITH
MILLS**

games and, of course, consuming more food in one sitting than I ever thought was possible. I know many Elks Lodges open their doors to serve meals for the homeless and others in need. I have had the pleasure helping at these events during some of my travels and seeing firsthand the random acts of kindness

that happen every day through our benevolent activities. It is one more reason why I am proud to be an Elk.

Now is also a good time to hold a veterans event at your Lodge coinciding with Veterans Day. So long as there are Veterans, Elks will never forget them. Set up a dinner, hold a social event, set up an activity or reach out to veterans homes or hospitals in your area and determine if there is anything your Lodge can do to thank them for their service. We all owe gratitude for the commitment they made to our country.

In addition to veterans activities, the Americanism Essay Contest and Elks Most Valuable Student Scholarship

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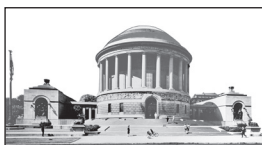
Elks Memorial perpetual care

Originally dedicated in 1926 to the memory of our fallen Elks of World War I, the Veterans Memorial Building is at the heart of Elksdom. Magnificently constructed in Chicago, the Memorial is a breathtaking structure representing the values Elks cherish.

GRAND SECRETARY
Bryan R. Klatt

Through the years, the Memorial has been rededicated to honor the memory of American 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.



GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

Contest theme centers on love of country

By DAVID P. CIOE
Committee Member

Grand Lodge once again is pleased to offer the national Americanism Essay Contest to fifth and sixth graders for Division I and seventh and eighth graders for Division II.

For 2021-2022, members of the Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee have selected the theme, *“What does it mean to love your country?”* This very important patriotic contest gives school children the chance to express their views on their pride in America. Kindling our youth’s appreciation and respect for patriotism is central to understanding our country’s heritage. Our youth come to understand the symbols that represent what this country stands for, and can get a deep appreciation for the individuals who sacrifice everything so all can enjoy its freedom. The Grand Lodge 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 all across our great country

are back in classrooms or distance educating 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 (who may also be Elks) to provide them with the new Americanism Essay Contest to add to their fall curriculums. In this time of distance learning, employing the help of groups like the PTA and hosting zoom meetings are great tools to spread the word about this contest.

Entry information and contest rules are available for download online, or you can contact your local Lodge Americanism Chair. All Area DDGERs and ERs should have thumb drives with instructions and forms. If you do not have your thumb drive with information, contact your DDGER immediately to get yours, or have the zip files e-mailed to you. All information is also available online at elks.org.

This contest is important because it shows Americanism at its best to school children in your area. Plaques will be

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GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Charitable reporting cannot be stressed enough

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

The following excerpts from Grand Lodge Newsletter's Government Relations articles indicate an issue that may need clarifying:

Carl Ledig, March 2020: *"The lifeblood of the Elks is Charity, so it is critical that each Lodge ensures it has the proper forms available and procedures in place together with the people to handle charity reporting."*

Kenneth Bruckner, April 2020: *"At the Lodge level, we must forward our charitable activity results to the Lodge Secretary to complete and forward to Grand Lodge, which in turn forwards this information to the federal government."*

Glenn Foster, July 2020: *"You must be certain that all charitable giving is reported after every event, whether it is volunteer hours, miles driven, or anything to do with charity."*

Vernon Saunders, September 2020: *"Reporting charitable activities is one of the most important things we can do as an organization to continue to qualify for our federal tax exemption status."* And:

"Did you know you can report mileage to and from meetings and hours spent during the meeting?"

Is the picture getting clearer?
Continuing:

Mary Williams, December 2020: *"In order for us to keep our nonprofit status, and use more of our money for all the charitable works we do, we must document and report all our activities."*

Glenn Foster, March 2021: *"We should count everything that every Lodge has done: all volunteer work, miles driven, dollars given, hours worked."*

Vernon Saunders, April 2021: *"Report, report, report"*

Mary Williams, July 2021: *"Record 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."* And: *"We must show our government what we do with our time and money."*

Report it. Whether you are a new or old Member, Lodge Officer, PER, PSP,

PGER, Committee Member, Secretary, or Treasurer, you should know all your volunteer time: planning, working, cleaning up, driving, and travel, as well as non-Member volunteer time and money. As a Member in good standing, you should be recording and reporting all volunteer hours, miles, and money spent in supporting the Elks to your Lodge Secretary, who will input the volunteer data into CLMS and summed up at the end of the Lodge year and reported to the Federal Government to maintain our 501-C(8) tax exempt classification.

Anyone who knows of any event that has not been reported should prompt the appropriate person to record and report any missing volunteer time and/or money. The Lodge Secretary should prompt the Government Relations committee or any other volunteer to record and report. The committee chairman or other volunteer could follow-up to get the report. Ask your Secretary to lend a hand to assure all volunteer hours are reported promptly.

Please do your part to make sure all volunteer time and money is recorded and reported!

DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

Open schools bring drug pressures

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

With many schools returning to full in-person classes, the Elks Drug Awareness Program is asking parents to speak to their children about the dangers of drug use.

"Students are returning to a normal class schedule and to their social circles," said EDAP National Director Kent Gade. "They could now face new challenges related to peer pressure to experiment with substances."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were more than 92,000 drug overdose deaths in the U.S. in 2020. This is the largest amount ever of overdose deaths in a 12-month period. Opioids accounted for more than 68,000 of those deaths. Synthetic opioids, such as illicitly manufactured fentanyl, remain the primary driver for the increases in drug overdose deaths.

Another significant concern is the increase in counterfeit pills flooding the illegal drug market. The drug cartels are capitalizing on the opioid epidemic, manufacturing mass quantities of counterfeit prescription pills containing fentanyl and sending them to the United

States for distribution. Counterfeit pills are extremely dangerous and often have the same markings of legitimate prescription medications such as Oxycodone, Xanax, and Adderall. The user is most likely unaware they are counterfeit and of how lethal they are.

"It is very important to talk to your family members periodically about these dangers," Gade said. "Kids need to know that taking one counterfeit pill could be enough to cause a fatal overdose. The earlier that we can get this information to kids the more impactful it can be that they will make better and possibly life-saving choices in the future. Those who are selling these drugs do not care about the health and well-being of your child. These conversations can be enough to save a life."

Not sure what to say? For Elks DAP resources for parents and students, visit

www.elks.org
www.elkskidszone.org
www.elksteenzone.org

Or, you can check out the following websites from the DEA:

www.GetSmartAboutDrugs.gov
www.JustThinkTwice.gov

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deadlines are this month. Reach out to your schools and give them a friendly reminder. One more reminder: Do not forget to turn in your membership report.

Now is the time to start working on your annual Memorial Service that will take place December 5, 2021. As you all know, this is the time to remember all our departed Members over the past year and also reflect on those who have departed in years past.

No matter how you celebrate Thanksgiving or volunteer to serve, thank those around you for everything they do and give thanks for what you have received.

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awarded by the Grand Lodge for first, second and third place for winning essays in Division I and Division II. Winners will be announced at the Grand Lodge Session in Atlanta in July 2022. **Essays must be submitted to Local Lodges by December 15, 2021.**

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 your school districts already have the contest underway.

GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Community Projects Contest recognizes volunteer work

By **MICHAEL B. BRYANT**
Community Project Contest Coordinator

As we start to emerge from the hibernation we have been dealing with for the last 18 months, it is time to once again interact with our local communities to fill their needs and promote Elksdom's great deeds.

Our communities desperately need assistance that local governments are challenged to provide at this time. Connecting with members of the community in these projects also introduces them to the Elks and the many wonderful programs and activities we do.

The Grand Lodge Community Projects Contest is a way for your Lodge and your Members to gain recognition for this hard work. It is encouraged that you identify a need in your community, develop a plan to address the need, and solicit volunteers to follow through with the plan. Try to engage both Members and non-Members in both developing your plan and putting it into action. This builds relationships, fosters goodwill, and can result in new Members joining your Lodge. Try to identify a program that can grow from year to year and be an icon of what your Lodge stands for in the community.

The Community Investment Program administered by ENF provides many grants that can be used in your program. The \$3,500 Beacon Grant is perfectly suited for continuing active projects. You can merge the Spotlight Grant with the Beacon Grant, which provides \$5,500 total. Or, your Lodge can start a program with other CIP grants. Visiting the ENF Community Investment Programs page on elks.org can provide past examples of projects that have been successful.

Be active in your project; don't just give a check to a project or organization. The best reward comes not only from providing for your community but from engaging with it. These relationships are what build the foundation for strong and proud communities.

Get recognition for your Lodge and Members by applying for the Community Project Contest. The Committee awards first, second, and third place in each of the six membership categories based on the size of your Lodge. The categories have been restructured this year to balance the categories with each having roughly the same number of Lodges. It does not matter how large or small your Lodge may be—you will be competing against Lodges your own size. The form is a fillable PDF

that can be completed, saved, and e-mailed to the project coordinator, whose contact information is listed on the form.

The contest is based on criteria such as number of Lodge people involved; number of man-hours; number of days for the event; number of newspaper articles; number of social media messages; and number of signs posted. There is a point value for each item. It could not be easier.

The Community Project contest form is located at <https://www.elks.org/grandLodge/activities/files/communityProjectsContest.pdf>. A five-minute YouTube video explains the history of the Community Projects Contest and the concept of the program at <https://youtu.be/XQH9Oq7LKBm>.

Applications are due to the project coordinator listed on the application by April 1, 2022, but don't wait until then to submit. Once the project is completed fill out the form and submit it then. You can e-mail or mail the completed form. If e-mailed, please provide a few .jpeg photos that depict the nature of the project with your community. Reward your Members and receive publicity for your Lodge at the Grand Lodge Convention.

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so if you come across a veteran who is in dire straits, you can call it for them or share it with them. The number for Veteran Crisis Line: Suicide Prevention is 1-800-273-8255.

If you come across a soldier who has recently come home from Afghanistan due to our recent evacuation, please acknowledge them with respect and thank them for their service. They have retreated from a country with the knowledge of leaving Americans behind. This is going to weigh on them. Let them know that if they are hurting the Elks are here to help!

November 11 is Veterans Day. Plan an event in your Lodge, recognize the veterans who are members and the ones who are not. Invite veterans to come to the Lodge and have a meal or a cocktail. See if you can get them as Members, but even more importantly, show them that *Elks Care—Elks Share*.

Generous givers earn Platinum award

By **CATHLEEN DRAPER**
ENF Communications Coordinator

In 2020, a record seven donors achieved the Platinum level of the Elks National Foundation's cumulative recognition program, which honors lifetime gifts totaling \$50,000. They are: Linda Weigel, Jerry and Linda Grimes, Ernest Roales, L. Scott Henry, Raymond Ross, and Mark Caron. They join a group of 33 Platinum lifetime givers.

Jerry Grimes made his first donation to the ENF on the night of his initiation to Kingman, AZ Lodge No 468. He and his wife, Linda, kept giving to the charity they saw as essential to the Elks' role in the community.

"[The Elks provide] the opportunity to be called upon when a community member is involved with a project or needs assistance for a worthy cause," Jerry said. "They ask an Elks Member who is willing to go the extra mile to give them a helping hand."

Dr. Raymond Ross has been going the extra mile since he joined Colorado Springs, CO Lodge No. 309. Elks scholarships hold

a special place in his heart. He and his late wife, Amie, spent hours interacting with MVS and Legacy applicants, and Ross has served as his Lodge's Scholarship Coordinator for more than 25 years.

"For me, the scholarship program helps cultivate the citizens of our future, and the students who receive our scholarships never forget that it was the Elks who helped them when they needed financial assistance the most," Ross said.

For Mark Caron, a Member of Sanford, ME Lodge No. 1470 since 1994, reaching the Platinum level and supporting the Foundation all stems from the pride he takes in being part of a team of compassionate and giving people.

"This cannot be an individual recognition," Caron said. "It is shared by all those at the Sanford Lodge, as well as the state of Maine, who have contributed and participated to create the benefits to the ENF program recipients."

To learn more about the Elks National Foundation and our recognition programs, visit enf.elks.org/recognition. To view your cumulative giving total, visit enf.elks.org/MyENF.

Elks Care — Elks Share

Veterans in need sometimes let pride get in the way

By **PAUL R. RYAN, PGER**
Commission Member

Here we are in the fall. I just received my invitation to assist during an Elks/Disabled American Veterans Deer hunt at the famous Camp Ripley in Minnesota, one of the largest National Guard training facilities in the country. This is always the time I cherish because it allows me to meet a new veteran and share his or her stories.

November is Veterans Remembrance Month for us Elks. Not that we need a special month to remember our veterans—One of our slogans is, “*So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget*

them.” However, during this month we should really pay close attention to our veterans, especially those veterans in need.

One thing I learned on my travels is that our veterans are a very proud group of people. During my Washington, D.C. visit last year, many leaders of our country who advocate for veterans acknowledge they often don’t know if the people who are in the food pantry or in the shelters or looking for county or state assistance are veterans. The people are too proud to let us know, and therefore our numbers do not really reflect the true

state of veterans in need. If your Lodge is having an event that feeds people of the community, make sure to ask if people are veterans. It will help us discover more realistic statistics to get our leadership in this country to realize the magnitude of what is really going on.

Recently, I was offered to put a sign in my yard for the Veteran Crisis Hotline: Suicide Prevention. This is really something we should all put up in our Lodges, our homes, and everywhere else we can. Put this number in your phone and label it



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BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary
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November 2021

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G/L PR AND MEMBERSHIP MARKETING COMMITTEE

Don’t just go through the year—Grow through the Year

By **RICK GATHEN**
Membership Marketing Manager

Every Exalted Ruler’s top priority is membership growth. The Elks’ website features our new virtual manuals, including a membership guide, marketing guide, and social media shareables. They are loaded with great information to help your Lodge Membership Committee work up to its fullest ability.

Use these valuable tools and build a better Lodge. View the virtual orientation experience called “My Journey Begins.” Print out the new Member survey. Check out the new online Membership

invitations and applications. Visit the printable section and brand your Lodge social quarters with tent cards, placemats, and signs. Learn more about the new GER interactive e-greeting sent to all new Members. Watch both the Orientation and Recruitment videos. Take advantage of the indoor and outdoor branding opportunities we offer. Learn how to attract new Members and retain your current Members. Please visit the new recruitment website join.elks.org. It produced 463 new membership applications and 97% Lodge contact rate.

We have created dynamic pages with easy-to-find and easy-to-use

applications. The intuitive navigation options are simple to locate and visually attractive. The new contact features allow you direct access to your Grand Lodge Membership & Marketing Committee. The Bricks & Clicks applications are ready to help transform your Lodge. The content will enhance your expertise in Membership & Marketing. Use it to build your Lodge brand, which will help attract new Members, retain existing Members, and motivate Elks to be more active and engaged. It’s all designed for the betterment of our Lodges.

Please make sure you initiate all your Candidates in a timely manner.