



# Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

*Elks Care — Elks Share*



## Teamwork relies on communication, cooperation

Officers, you are now part of the team. Strengthen it by building relationships with one another. This is an opportunity to make new friends and learn from experience during your service to your Lodge.

The Exalted Ruler cannot do everything alone; you should be proactive by seeking opportunities to contribute to the advancement and success of your Lodge. Those opportunities will allow you to develop your own leadership and management skills. Approach all your activities with a positive frame of mind. Goodwill towards others will be extremely invaluable in the coming years when you may be relying on them to help. The diverse skills demonstrated by you and your fellow Officers will enable your Lodge to succeed and prosper.

As you lead and support Lodge



**Message from  
the Grand  
Exalted Ruler**

**RANDY P.  
SHOOK**

activities, please remember that your actions create a perception of who we are. As Officers, we must be exemplars of Brotherly Love.

Embrace these concepts when working alongside other Officers and Members, and you will advance the interests of your Lodge within your community. Use the resources provided by Grand Lodge, your state association, and your district.

April begins with change. New Officers

must get to work at once. It is time to plan and pass a budget for your Lodge that each committee can work with. This budget must keep your Lodge financially sound throughout the new Lodge year. Get all the Officers, Board of Directors, and committee members together to review your Lodge budget. Discuss any ideas to make your Lodge programs even better. Plan your goals for the Elks National Foundation, your State Major Project, and any other community activities that your Lodge may be involved with. Brainstorm with your Members and listen to suggestions.

**Membership** is the life blood of our Order. Work with your appointed Membership Retention Chair as a team. All Members are a part of your membership

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## Pre-registration for Convention opens in April

Online pre-registration for the Grand Lodge Session in Austin opens April 1 and will be available at [elks.org/convention/prereg.cfm](http://elks.org/convention/prereg.cfm) through June 26.

Registration will be open on Friday, June 28, from noon until 4:00 p.m. in the Austin Convention Center. Be advised, Exhibitors and Vendors will not be open at this time. Normal registration and Vendor/Exhibitor hours will begin Saturday, June 29, at 8:00 am.

**GRAND SECRETARY**

Bryan R. Klatt

The online pre-registration fee is \$50 for all Members. The on-site registration fee will be \$60. A current credit card for PayPal will be needed. There is no fee for a non-Elk spouse or guest.

A registration badge will be required to enter the exhibit hall and all business sessions.

## GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

### Updated manual guides new Officers

By **DAVID NITZE, SR.**

Committee Member

Welcome to all the Officers elected for the coming year, and to those who will continue in their current position.

Lodge Secretaries should be receiving their new Government Relations Manual. Please share it with the Officers of the Lodge so they better understand what Government Relations is all about. It is more than monitoring and lobbying legislation in our state. Tracking and reporting all the hours and money donated to our charitable programs have many benefits to our organization and are an integral part of this committee.

We keep preaching about reporting all events that the Lodge does throughout the year. Our committee has done its best to make it easier for everyone to work on their report pages with an updated manual.

I am asking all Exalted Rulers to please appoint a Government Relations

Chairperson who is willing to help the Secretary get the reports done and sent to State Chairs and Grand Lodge in a timely manner.

When you have different events at your Lodge, make sure to invite city and county members to attend so that they can see what your Lodge is doing at a local level.

If anyone has any suggestions to advance the learning curve for members to understand and participate in Government Relations, please contact your area Chairperson.



**Hoop Shoot National Finals**  
April 18-21, 2024 • Chicago, IL

## DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

# Any questions? Ask your State Drug Awareness Chair

By **WILLIAM J. BRYAN**

National Director

Exalted Rulers: Are you missing out? I know what you're now asking yourself. *"Missing out on what?"*

Well, to begin, you're missing out on a couple of great opportunities—and it doesn't require you to do much if you have a Lodge Drug Awareness Chairperson. And, if you have a good State DA Chair (or District Chair), you're on the cusp of increasing the positive image you have in your community.

Right now is the best time to have your Lodge's DAP Chair communicate with your State District Chair or the State Chair. Each year the State Chairs attend an extensive two-day training, and they are anxious to share what they learned with your Lodge Chair. It's that simple.

Every week we get requests from Lodges asking *how do we...?* The State Chairs have the answers. A webinar with our national speakers costs you

nothing; our drug awareness materials cost you nothing; having Elroy attend a Lodge event should cost you nothing; our contests cost you nothing; our award certificates cost you nothing; and our numerous websites cost you nothing. But if you don't know what's available, you are shortchanging yourself, your Lodge, and your community. If you don't know about them, it could cost you the opportunity to have a great image in your community.

Everyone—and I mean everyone—is talking about the fentanyl issue that is affecting us all. Folks blame the border crisis, poor parenting, law enforcement, schools, gangs, and a variety of other

sources. But that's no reason to do nothing.

The Elks Drug Awareness effort is tasked with educating children, but that's only a start, and a good one at that. We have the tools to assist Lodges within their communities.

The key is to get involved. The easiest way to do so is to establish good communications with your State Drug Awareness Chair. Contact information can be found at [elks.org](http://elks.org) or through your State Association newsletter.

If all else fails, please don't give up. Contact one of the national directors and we will work on both ends to solve your problems or to help you get started.



## Elks share their thoughts

Want to discuss the Elks? Check out the Membership Forum. Members use the message board to share constructive information every day.

[elks.org/messageboard/forum.cfm](http://elks.org/messageboard/forum.cfm)

## GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

# Top sites show Lodges' successes to Members and visitors

By **RONALD A. BROOKS**

Committee Member

As we close the Lodge year and prepare for our Grand Lodge Convention in Austin, Texas, this summer, the Fraternal Committee has named the Local Lodge Website Contest winners.

The Lodges that participated told

the public the great news on what Elks Lodges do. The websites show our Members and volunteers who work for our communities, aid our veterans, provide for the State Major Projects, fund our scholarships, and more. The sites invite the locals to come and join in. Visitors can see that Elkdom is alive

and well within the Lodges, championing the four principles of our Order.

All the Lodges showed our Grand Exalted Rulers theme was kept in mind: **"We Are THE Elks."**

Stop by the Fraternal Committee booth and pick up your award after the Grand Lodge Session.

### 5 Star ★★★★★ Awards

Essex, MD No. 1866  
New London, CT No. 360  
High Point, NC No. 1155  
Sitka, AK No. 1662  
St. Louis, MO No. 9  
Sanford, NC No. 1679  
New Britain, CT No. 957  
Palo Alto, CA No. 1471  
Silver City, NM No. 413  
Ferndale, MI No. 1588  
Pascagoula, MS No. 1120

essexelks.org  
elks360.org  
hpelks.com  
sitkaelks.org  
elkslodge9.org  
sanfordelks1679.org  
elks957.org  
paloaltoelks.org  
silvercityelks.com  
elks1588.com  
pascagoulaelks.org

### 4 Star ★★★★★ Awards

Telluride, CO No. 692  
South Bend, IN No. 235  
Lebanon, OH No. 422  
Reno, NV No. 597  
Wallace, ID No. 331  
Provo, UT No. 849  
Chattanooga, TN No. 91  
Hightstown, NJ No. 1955  
Salem, OH No. 305  
Louisville, KY No. 8  
Cuyahoga Falls-Akron-Barberton, OH No. 1923

tellurideelks.org  
southbendelks.org  
lebanonelks422.com  
renoelks.org  
wallace.idahoelks.org  
provoelks.org  
chattanoogaelks91.com  
elks1955.org  
facebook.com/salemelks305/  
facebook.com/ElksLodge8  
fallsakronelks.org

### 3 Star ★★★ Awards

Glastonbury, CT No. 2202  
Sierra Vista, AZ No. 2065  
Springfield, IL No. 158  
Tooele, UT No. 1673

glastonburyelks.org  
elks.org/loдges/home.cfm?LodgeNumber=2065  
elks158.org  
facebook.com/profile.php?id=100070111148818  
elks622.com

#### Website or Facebook page judging is based on:

- Content.** News of Grand Lodge, state, and local programs.
- Layout.** Menu or table of contents, accessibility, and readability.
- Design.** Special presentation methods.
- Graphics.** Pop up or scrolling messages, overall continuity of site, use of photographs or graphics.
- Telling the Elks story.**

## GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

# Community involvement fills needs, enhances Elks' image

By **MICHAEL B. BRYANT**  
Committee Chairman

One of our foundations as an Elk is to work with our local communities to fill needs that are not met by other available resources, either by government agencies or other charitable organizations.

There is ample financial support for these community programs by applying for ENF Grants provided in their Community Investment Program. ENF's website states that from the inception of the CIP in 2005, when the initial grant budget was \$350,000, they have now grown it to their largest program at \$15 million.

All you have to do is apply for these grants to allow your Lodges to support your community needs. Many states also provide local grants that can be used to support these wonderful community programs. Lodges can also hold fundraisers, which make your Members and community more aware of your programs and can assist in gaining support for those programs, not only financially, but with needed volunteers.

Our local community programs make a difference to those who are in need and enhance our image in the community, showing that we serve many needs even in very difficult times. The thing I truly love about Elksdom is that we can customize our programs to our individual communities, drilling down to those specific

needs as best known by you in the Local Lodges. These projects may involve youth, underserved homeless, food insecurities, veterans, teachers, and any others in need.

ENF provides a variety of grants, including the Beacon Grant for an ongoing, Lodge-led charitable project with grants of \$4,000, as of the previous year. The Spotlight Grant, which was \$2,000 the previous year, can be used to piggyback the Beacon Grant and Lodges can select from one of seven ready-made projects outlined in the Grant Toolkit. These grants are available to any Lodge.

The Gratitude Grant is available to every Lodge that meets the GER's per-Member giving goal in the prior fiscal year. These Grants ranged from \$2,000 to \$3,500 last year.

The Impact Grant is designed to set a standard of excellence in community leadership through service. These grants are competitive, and a Lodge may be able to receive up to \$10,000 the first year. If their project is selected as a renewal program the next year, the Lodge may receive from \$2,500 to \$10,000, based on the programs.

The Freedom Grant is available to Lodges with an active project that includes a high level of Elks participation that directly serves the veterans in need. This Grant was \$3,000 the previous year. The Spark Grant was \$1,000 the previous year

and is also for use for an active project involving veterans' needs, but is more tailored to donation of funds, supplies, and more to those veteran programs. (All grant figures are subject to change in the coming and future Lodge years.)

Please visit the ENF website for the CIP at [elks.org/cip/](http://elks.org/cip/). There, you may also see programs that have been successful for other Lodges, which may be customized to your Lodge's specific needs.

While you are performing these worthy local projects, why not get recognition for your Local Lodge, Members, and volunteers by applying for the Community Project Contest? Now is the time to start planning for your entry for the coming Lodge year. The Lodge Community Project Contest is awarded by the Grand Lodge Activities Committee and is to encourage participation in supporting local communities and reward exemplary programs. There are six divisions based on Lodge size and awards for first, second, and third places in each division. This is a wonderful way to bring recognition to your Lodge and to encourage further participation in your programs. The Community Projects Contest form is online at [elks.org/grandlodge/activities/files/communityProjectsContest.pdf](http://elks.org/grandlodge/activities/files/communityProjectsContest.pdf).

Let's do our part to improve the lives of others in our communities and raise public awareness of the Elks.

## Lodges can honor outstanding Scouts

By **DAVID C. FOSTER**  
Committee Member

I applaud the Lodges that have accepted our Grand Exalted Ruler's challenge with financial support of the Boy and Girl Scouts programs, or allowing Scouting to use their Lodge, once proper insurance coverage is provided by BSA & GSA, and by acknowledging their activities as part of our youth programs.

Thank you to the Lodges that have recognized Eagle Scouts with a Grand Lodge certificate and sent photos of your presentations, as well as to the Lodges that have done the same for your Girl Scouts. Always remember that Elks are no longer allowed to be Chartered with either youth organization. I encourage more Lodges to inquire about how your Lodge can still assist them.

Please recognize the Girl Scouts with our Gold, Silver, and Bronze Awards.

The Gold Award, for high school aged girl scouts, is similar to the Eagle Scout Award for young men. The Silver award is for cadets in grades six through eight who have completed the eight-step program. The Bronze Award is for scouts in grades four and five who complete a seven-step program. Certificates may be downloaded at [elks.org/grandlodge/activities](http://elks.org/grandlodge/activities). Then click on Forms/Certificates.

The Scout Court of Honor should be strictly a scout function, not infringed upon by the Elks. GER Shook will send a letter and a pin to the Eagle Scout. Grand Lodge will print an attractive certificate, so please let the Activities Committee member know so they can provide the proper information to Grand Lodge.

Thank you also to the Lodges that have sent in nominees for the Marvin M. Lewis Scouting Award. These Elks are helping to advance scouting in their communities.

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committee. It is important to reach out to delinquent Members to bring them back into your Lodge. It may only take one phone call. There is a chance that by speaking with that person, you may get them to renew their dues and become an active Member again. The Lodge Secretary plays a very important role for Members who were dropped for non-payment of dues. I encourage you to review Statute 14.180. This Statute is very clear that your Lodge Secretary shall advise the unaffiliated of his/her right to re-affiliate within 60 days. Make +1 in membership a priority during your term.

Finally, appoint statutory committees. Budget to be posted by second meeting of the month.

Remember, "*Elks Care—Elks Share*" and "*We Are THE Elks.*"

God Bless our great Order, our troops, and the United States of America.

# Do more for veterans with boosted Welcome Home Kit

By **MARY K. MORGAN**  
Commission Director

When a veteran becomes housed it is a joyous occasion, but it is not the end of the story. Rather, it signifies a new beginning.

Many veterans need help getting off to a strong start, and that is where the Elks come in. Veterans frequently enter permanent housing directly from shelters and may have no belongings other than the clothes on their backs. As we all know, a home is more than just four walls and a roof.

Through the Welcome Home Kit

program, Elks help veterans around the country feel at home in their new residences.

And soon, Lodges will be able to do even more for veterans exiting homelessness. Starting April 1, Lodges will be able to apply for up to \$400 per kit, an increase from \$300 per kit last year. Also, Lodges can still apply for up to \$600 for each kit that includes a bed. These extra funds can mean a big difference for veterans and their families.

Every veteran has their own story as to how they became homeless. Similarly,

every veteran has unique hopes and dreams. A stable home provides security and can be the first step for veterans to achieve bright futures.

Thanks to the dedication of Elks far and wide, the Welcome Home Kit program recently surpassed 12,000 total veterans served with this program! All Lodges are eligible to participate, and with your help, the upcoming year can be our biggest yet.

Visit [elks.org/vets/WelcomeHome.cfm](https://elks.org/vets/WelcomeHome.cfm) for details on how your Lodge can get started.



BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary  
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**April 2024**

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## 4 cents per day maintains Elks' membership experience

By **RICK GATHEN**  
Membership Marketing Manager

Recognizing the sensitivity surrounding recent pricing adjustments, particularly the \$15 per capita increase, we are actively engaging with Members to provide transparent explanations for these price changes. Upholding affordability for our Members remains a top priority as we navigate this transition.

This may appear substantial, but when examined closely, it translates to only a 4 cents per day increase over the three years. It is crucial for us to consider this adjustment in a broader context.

The primary motivation behind this adjustment is our commitment to

maintaining the group liquor liability insurance, a critical component of our operations. The privilege of selling alcohol at our Lodges significantly contributes to our membership retention. Losing this privilege would result in a significant decline in our membership base—an outcome we must be keen to avoid at all costs. I would like to underscore that the decision to spread the increase over three years was a deliberate effort to minimize the impact on our Members.

To offer further perspective, let's compare the 4 cents per day increase to the recent three-year price hikes in various essential commodities:

- Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs: 8% increase
- Fruits and vegetables: 9.3% increase
- Electricity: 14.1% increase
- Utility (piped) gas service: 20% increase
- Airline fares: 42.9% increase
- Rent of primary residences: 7.5% increase

Considering these substantial increases in everyday expenses, I firmly believe that our 4 cents per day adjustment over three years is a responsible and measured approach. Your understanding and support during these times are invaluable. If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out.

Thank you for your continued dedication to our organization.