

MEMBERSHIP/PUBLIC RELATIONS

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## **MEDIA ALERT — FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE!**

### ***ELKS LEADING THE WAY FOR 149 YEARS!***

### **ELKS WERE FOUNDED ON FEBRUARY 16, 1868!**

**Chicago, IL** – *Local Elks Lodges* throughout the United States and in Guam, Puerto Rico and the Panama Canal will be celebrating 149 years of community service on February 16, 2017.

Last year alone, the Elks donated approximately \$283 million in cash, gifts and time to make our communities better places to live. The Elks are one of the premier patriotic and charitable organizations in the United States of America.

Elks volunteers will visit thousands of hospitalized Veterans who have protected our freedoms. The Elks vow, ***“So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them.”*** The Elks support both active military forces and retired veterans. Elks furnish food, comfort care items, therapeutic items and gifts, host holiday celebrations and recreational activities at bases and hospitals, and stand ready to fulfill any need when called upon. Last year alone, the value of Elks’ contributions to the nation’s heroes provided more than \$32 million to more than 300 Veterans Administration Medical Centers, clinics, and state care facilities. The Elks have entered into a partnership with VHA to support efforts to rescue homeless Veterans in their communities. To this end, the Elks have pledged \$4 million dollars to help end Veteran Homelessness.

Annually, the Elks award college scholarships across the nation totaling more than \$4 million.

The Elks’ Community Investments Program [CIP] will award nearly \$10 million towards enriching our communities.

There are more than 1,900 Elks Lodges across the country with a total membership nearing 800,000. Elks’ members must be American citizens who are at least 21 years of age and must believe in God.

***To learn more visit [www.elks.org](http://www.elks.org)***