



# Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care – Elks Share



## Upcoming holidays and events require prep work

Is there any better time to be an Elk than the holiday season? November is the month when we enjoy special moments with friends and family and some of our most important Elks events.

November is also a month for preparation. While we enjoy Veterans Day and Thanksgiving, we should also start laying the groundwork for next year's Lodge activities. Does your Lodge use a monthly planning book? Do you have a five-year planning book? Both short- and long-term planning ensure that our programs remain polished and empower incoming officers to get the most out of their tenure.

First and foremost, November is a time to plan for your Lodge's Veterans



### Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

**MICHAEL T. LUHR**

Day event. Properly honoring our veterans' sacrifice requires preparation and organization. What better way to commemorate Veterans Day than with a well-planned program that expresses heartfelt gratitude to your local veterans?

Thanksgiving is also right around the corner. To commemorate one of our most cherished American holidays, many

Elks Lodges open their doors to the community for special dinners. This makes it possible for all visitors to enjoy a satisfying meal regardless of their situation. It's also one of the finest ways for us to share our many blessings with those who may not be as fortunate.

This year, the Elks Memorial Service is on December 2. Now is the time to start planning for this important ceremony by inviting family and friends of deceased Members to the event. Preparation will ensure that every participating officer understands the solemnity of this occasion, allowing them to publicly demonstrate that Elks are "never forgotten, never forsaken."

Please see GER, Page 2

## Elks Memorial perpetual care

Originally dedicated in 1926 to the memory of the fallen Elks of World War I, the Veterans Memorial Building is at the heart of Elkdom.

Magnificently built 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](http://elks.org) and click "Veterans Memorial" on the home screen. Take the virtual tour, read about the history, plan a visit, and make an online donation or mail a donation today.

### GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

## Medal honors public safety heroes

By MARGARET O'POLKA  
Committee Member

Thousands of firefighters and emergency personnel traveled to the West to fight wildfires. Nine police officers and one firefighter died in the line of duty on the East Coast. A fireman rescued a child from a burning home in the South. An Army lieutenant saved a drowning girl. Navy SEALs rescued 12 soccer players and their coach in Thailand.

Events like these happen across the nation and the world every day. Some have happy endings, but unfortunately, others do not.

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

Medals can be ordered from the Grand Secretary's office. The medals, which cost \$9 each, can also be engraved on the reverse side with the person's name.

You can also present certificates to law

enforcement, firefighters, and emergency service providers. These certificates can be personalized and can be accessed at [elks.org](http://elks.org) on the Activities page.

Consider holding a Public Safety Night in your Lodge. This is a wonderful way to show your community that the Elks care about and respect the courageous men and women selflessly helping others on a daily basis.

Holding an event such as this is a wonderful opportunity to bring comfort to grieving families. They will be surrounded not only by Elks but by local public safety providers as well. This also can promote membership into your Lodge.

### INSIDE

- The family impact of the opioid crisis . . . . . 2
- Americanism Essay theme announced . . . . . 2
- November is for V.E.T.S. . . . . 3
- A money-saving tip for small Lodges. . . . . 3
- Keeping in mind Remembrance Month . . . . . 4
- What not to do on social media. . . . . 4

## DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

# 'Grandfamilies' on the rise due to opioid epidemic

By **FRANK SCARPINO**  
Special Contributor

The growing opioid crisis has been declared a public health emergency and has sparked a parallel crisis: The impact on children neglected by addicted parents.

After years of decline, the number of children entering foster care is rising dramatically. Grandparents are being called on more and more, and usually quite suddenly, to step in and take care of children whose parents are either in jail, in treatment programs, or dead. They are dealing with many emotions and their instinct is to protect, to love, and to care for the children. They will go to incredible extremes to do so, often without any support.

Various sources report that as of 2015, more than two million American children lived with grandparents, primarily because of their parents' addiction to opioids and other drugs: heroin, crack, meth, and alcohol.

The numbers continue to rise. Grandparents are putting off retirement and plowing through savings to rescue their grandchildren from danger.

While these grandfamilies are often formed in critical situations, they can also be built and strengthened over

time. A grandfamily is a family unit in which a grandparent (or sometimes two grandparents) is the head of household and is actively parenting one or more grandchildren. It's a form of kinship care, in which a relative of a child takes over the parenting responsibilities. (Specifically, the term "kinship care" is often used in the foster care system when a state or county agency places a child to live with relatives). Sometimes aunts, uncles, cousins, or other relatives assume this role, but by and large grandparents are the individuals most likely to parent children born to someone else in the family. Another name for this kind of household is a "skip-generation family."

One main reason for the rise in grandfamilies is substance abuse, as addiction and alcoholism have created the need for grandparents to raise their grandchildren. Over the past decade, the number of young adults unfit for parenthood continues to soar as opioid use and addiction take precedence over other obligations. Addiction to opioids may even be fatal, meaning that children, sometimes known as "opioid orphans," are often left in their grandparents' care.

It's not just opioid use. Addiction to other drugs, as well as alcohol, claims

lives and turns families upside down as children are neglected or abused by their addicted parents.

Grandparents face the daunting task of caring for young, vulnerable children while navigating courtrooms and complex child welfare systems, often with little financial or social support — all while coping with their adult offspring's addiction. When a grandchild is placed in the care of a grandparent, the decision-making role can vary greatly depending on the individual situation. However, one role that is fairly consistent is that the grandparent will be called on to help determine whether their addicted son or daughter is capable of visiting, caring for, or parenting his or her child.

Earlier this year, CBS ran a 12-minute segment on *60 Minutes* about this topic. To view the segment online, search for: "Opioid epidemic leaving grandparents to raise grandchildren."



## GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

# Essay contest promotes American pride

By **DAVID P. CIOE**  
Committee Member

The 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. Members of the Fraternal Committee have selected the theme, "*What Makes You Proud Of America?*"

This very important patriotic contest gives children the chance to express their pride in America. Fostering our youth's appreciation and respect for patriotism is central for them to understand our country's heritage. Our youth learn the symbols that represent what this country stands for, and can get a deep appreciation for the individuals who sacrifice everything so we all can enjoy our freedom. Elks enthusiastically endorse this program because patriotism is one of the BPOE's cornerstones.

Students across our great country are in school to study and learn, and to grow into our future leaders. Lodges should

contact local school districts, private schools, home schools, charter schools, and teachers to provide them with the new Americanism Essay Contest to add to their curriculums.

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

Plaques will be 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 St. Louis, MO, June 30–July 3, 2019.

**Essays must be submitted to Local Lodges by December 15.**

Your action now will impact and shape the youth of our country, which affects all of our futures.

## GER From Page 1

The holiday season also means that a new year is swiftly approaching. Are your officers lined up for next year? February nominations are coming soon, so don't wait until the last minute to find Members who are dedicated to filling these roles with pride.

Now is also the time to finalize your selections for Elk, Officer, and Citizen of the Year Awards. Just as we celebrate our veterans, we should celebrate the efforts of our exemplary Members. Acknowledging their efforts is one of the finest ways to show appreciation for the hard work of your fellow Elks. Plan to give out these awards at a special event where Members and non-Members alike can see the many rewards of being an Elk.

Arranging these events is easier when you maintain a detailed planning manual. As officers move through the chairs and enter into new roles, they will have the collective knowledge of countless past Elks at their disposal. This is yet another way that the officers in your Lodge prove that they're "*Working Together to Make a Difference.*"



## GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

## Patriotism runs deep in November

By JAMES W. MARTSFIELD  
Committee Member

November is for V.E.T.S. It is when we honor our veterans, elect members of our legislative bodies, give thanks for all that we have, and recognize the families of the individuals who serve for our country.

**V—Veterans Day.** November is 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.*” Our Order is proud of the 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. Let us also never forget the volunteers who donate their time to make our Elks Veterans Program so successful. Be sure to acknowledge and thank them.

**E—Election Day.** Tuesday, November 6 is Election Day. We as Elks have a duty to vote for candidates who share our dreams, morals, and love of our country. Let us all remember that there are not just blue or red states, but a red, white, and blue United States. Do you know your government officials? Do you set aside an evening where you honor your policemen and firefighters? Do you invite your local government officials to your Lodge whenever possible? Have you considered holding 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, the Elks, and America. It's time to thank our servicemen and women who are still in harm's way while protecting our freedom. 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. Invite and welcome a veteran family to your Thanksgiving celebration.

**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. 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.

## GRAND LODGE AUDITING &amp; ACCOUNTING

## Small Lodges can stay in-house

By MICHAEL L. PETTIGREW  
Committee Chairman

Are you a small Lodge with limited financial activity and limited finances, and do you have someone involved with the Lodge qualified to handle financial reporting? If so, you may be able to complete your required Annual Financial Report using in-Lodge personnel to save the Lodge some money.

Under Section 13.040(j), a Lodge may request permission to prepare its Annual Financial Report using in-house personnel if it meets certain criteria and is approved by its Past Grand Exalted Ruler State Sponsor. Applications may be obtained from the Grand Lodge web site or in the Auditing and Accounting Manual (Exhibit I).

Completed applications must be filed with the Area Auditing and Accounting

Committee Member by December 31 every year for the Lodge fiscal year to end the following March 31. Applications must be accompanied by a current balance sheet, complete profit and loss statement(s), and all budgets as prepared internally, from which the Annual Financial Report will be prepared.

A couple of things to keep in mind:

- You may still need someone else to handle any tax filing unless the person doing the report is also qualified to handle tax filings.

- This is still only recommended for the smallest of Lodges.

- This request is not necessary if your accountant is simply a Member of your Lodge but not involved with the day-to-day accounting of the Lodge.

If you have any questions, please contact your Area Auditing and Accounting Committee Member.

## ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION

## Giving back with Freedom Grants

By TAYLOR ODISHO  
ENF Communications Assistant

The Elks National Veterans Service Commission, through the generosity of the Elks National Foundation, increased the number of Freedom Grants offered to 300, allowing even more Lodges to give back to local veterans.



The Lodges did not hesitate: Every Freedom Grant was accounted for just one month after the online application opened, setting a new record.

Tucson East, AZ Lodge No. 2532 will use its Freedom Grant to provide backpacks filled with food and health supplies for veterans experiencing homelessness. The Lodge will also create and send care packages to deployed military members from the nearby Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. Projects like this show that as long as there are veterans, the Elks will never forget them.

It's never too early to start thinking about how your Lodge can serve veterans in your community during the next grant year. Visit [elks.org/CIP](http://elks.org/CIP) to learn more about available Freedom Grant opportunities.

## VETERANS From Page 4

This is a special day within a special month to give that extra measure of recognition and service to the veterans who have sacrificed for our nation. The Elks extend that recognition and service to military personnel and their families.

During this month, every Elks Member and Lodge should put forth extra efforts to reach out and help the veterans and military members who live in their communities. Of course you can continue to do what you have already been doing, but now's the time to think out of the box and find new ways to increase your level of service to these heroes and their families. We can certainly do more, and the need is there—many times right in front of us as we go about our daily lives.

If you need ideas or guidance in taking that extra step, contact your State Veterans Service Chairperson or Mary Morgan, National Director of our Elks National Veterans Service Commission in the Chicago office.

Let's all work together to make this November a banner month of service for the heroes of our nation!

# Creativity encouraged during Remembrance Month

By **PAUL D. HELSEL, PGER**  
Past Chairman

In 1948 the Elks made a promise that *“So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them.”* This promise is as important today as it was on the day it was adopted.

Today the service provided through that promise has never been greater or needed more. Our Veterans who have sacrificed so much to protect our freedoms and allow us to live the American dream continue to need our help every day.

Traditionally, our Veterans Service efforts focused on veterans in VA facilities. It still represents a major part of our overall service efforts with many Elks

volunteers in those facilities every day. Over the years, and with our nation’s military involved at some level of conflict throughout the world, those service efforts have expanded to include our Army of Hope Program, which focuses on helping military personnel and their families, and our Welcome Home Program, which centers on service efforts to eliminate homelessness of those who previously served and those currently returning home.

These more recent programs, and even others that are yet to be defined, offer many opportunities to help veterans,

military personnel, and their families outside of our traditional endeavors and in the local communities of our Lodges. Those opportunities include State-run facilities for veterans; homeless veterans housing facilities; homeless shelters that service veterans; stand downs; military bases; guard units; and other forms of assistance for those in need across all spectrums of the community.

With that in mind, the month of November is our Veterans Remembrance Month. As we are all aware, within that month is Veterans Day on November 11.



Please see **VETERANS**, Page 3

BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary  
**Benevolent and Protective  
ORDER OF ELKS**  
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**November 2018**

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## GRAND LODGE MEMBERSHIP AND MARKETING

# 10 helpful tips for conversing on social media

By **RICK GATHEN**  
Membership and Marketing Manager

Local Lodges are finding social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, an effective means of broadening their reach into their respective communities.

The objective is to keep the messages positive. To remain on the high road, here’s a social media disclaimer for your Lodge to consider adopting into your By-Laws.

Do not post, publish, or share messages and images that:

- ⊗ are hateful or mean-spirited.
- ⊗ are potentially libelous, obscene, or sexually explicit.
- ⊗ are personal attacks, or involve profanity or insults.
- ⊗ are private or public information published without Lodge consent.
- ⊗ violate any law or promote the violation of any law.

- ⊗ contribute to or encourage discrimination or harassment.
  - ⊗ display photos of Members drinking or smoking, or any other actions considered harmful to the Elks’ image.
  - ⊗ contain the names of minors.
  - ⊗ divulge Lodge business that may violate your Obligation.
  - ⊗ are not positive and informative.
- Furthermore, do not accept non-Members as friends or followers.

**VETERANS DAY**      *Show your appreciation*      **THANKSGIVING**  
 Sunday, November 11      Thursday, November 22