



Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care – Elks Share



Work still needs to be done, even in birthday month

Our Elks' birthday this year falls on Wednesday, February 16. Hold an event to celebrate the occasion. One more important reminder: Do not forget Valentine's Day. I can honestly say I have never forgotten this day, but I have needed to run to the store early to get a few things before someone wakes up.

February is a very important month for us. Only a few weeks remain in this Elks' year and a lot of work still needs to be done. For example, new officer elections should be held at your last regular monthly meeting this month. Do not look at February as only having a few weeks left to serve, but as the opportunity to finish the year strong. Do your best to make your Lodge



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler
T. KEITH MILLS

more successful than you started for the Members and community to continue *"Meeting the Challenge."*

Current Exalted Rulers, there are many programs and awards at your disposal. Any Member who has a combination of sponsoring or reinstating three Members is eligible to receive the Grand Exalted

Ruler Award Pin. Exalted Rulers can also submit two Members for the Grand Exalted Ruler's Outstanding Service Commendation. There are also two Making A Difference Special Citation awards, one for the Exalted Ruler and another for the Lodge. You can find this information in the Lodge Activities Program supported by the Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee.

The Elks Legacy Scholarships deadline is also this month. Remember, this scholarship is for any Elks Member's children and grandchildren. Make sure your Members are aware of this program.

Finally, new officers need to start

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Chairperson report due via CLMS2Web

After the election of Lodge Officers this February and before April 15, the Secretary must complete the **2022-2023 Lodge Committee Chairperson Report** in CLMS2Web and confirm acceptance.

The worksheet was mailed to all Lodge Secretaries in January to assist in compiling the needed information.

GRAND SECRETARY
Bryan R. Klatt

Remember: This information is to be filed via CLMS2Web. Please, do not mail to Grand Lodge or your District Deputy.

With the pending automatic submission of the Annual Membership Report, all membership activity must be entered in CLMS2Web by 11:59 p.m. **March 31.**

What does that mean? All membership records (additions, drops, and deaths) must be finalized. If not, the Lodge membership total will be out of balance.

GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

Contest helps active Lodges stand out

By **SANDRA C. BRANTNER**
Committee Member

The Contest 'A' — All American Lodge Contest. What is that? What are the requirements for my Lodge to get that award? Is it only for certain Lodges? Why should we do it?

Every Lodge in our Order is eligible for the All American Lodge Contest! The contest showcases your Lodge in every aspect, from community service to the programs of the Order. It shows all the wonderful things your Lodge has done throughout the 2021-2022 fraternal year.

The past year and a half have certainly not been "normal" for any of us. Due to COVID-19, Lodges were closed for extended periods of time—and of course, getting volunteers and staff is a whole other subject. But, one thing that is normal for our Lodges has been the continuation of our services and programs we provide to our Members and the community.

Did your Lodge do any programs for veterans, youth, Americanism, or Flag Day? Did you compete in a ritual contest, hold a Hoop Shoot, or participate in the

essay contest? Did your Lodge apply for and/or receive any ENF grants? All of these, and much, much more qualify your Lodge for the contest.

Sure, your Lodge may not be the leader in the contest, but it will make your Lodge a fraternal organization that will get recognition within your community and the realm of Elksdom. Officers and Members will be proud of your Lodge and its accomplishments. You are already a winner; now you can show it to others.

The contest deadline is drawing near, so get your officers together to review the contest requirements. You will be surprised at just how much your Lodge has done this year.

There are six membership divisions:

- Division I:** up to 150 Members
- Division II:** 151 to 225 Members
- Division III:** 226 to 300 Members
- Division IV:** 301 to 450 members
- Division V:** 451 to 700 Members
- Division VI:** 701 Members or more

Your submissions must be sent to your District Deputy and postmarked no later than April 1, 2022 for your Lodge to be eligible in the contest.

Elks Care – Elks Share

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having meetings to plan for the next year. Start developing your yearly budgets and, if possible, set your yearly calendar of events. Be realistic when developing your budget. This is a working document that can and should be amended as your year moves forward. The work and effort you put in now will show throughout the year in your operations. Your year will still have some bumps and curves, but you will be better prepared to handle any situation that will arise. All officers should act as one. Having monthly meetings better prepares you for your upcoming activities and will help you to continue *"Meeting the Challenge."*

**G/L PR AND MEMBERSHIP
MARKETING COMMITTEE****New membership
motto for 2022**

By **RICK GATHEN**
Membership Marketing Manager

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks is one of the premier charitable organizations in the United States. Our membership over 15 decades has consisted of tens of millions of America's finest citizens.

We continue to grow, connect, educate, and engage people nationwide. We are driving positive messages, expanding the Elks brand, and engaging new audiences every day. Just like generations of Elks who came before us, we too continue to make our mark on history and bravely stand our watch.

Our membership battle cry this year is **Respond, Recover, and Renew in 2022.** Our recovery is real and robust. We will hit our January goal of 75,000 Members added. We have more than 13,000 candidates waiting to be initiated! Lodges have been working hard to add Members. Our Order has not added 90,000 new Members in one year since 1994.

Help us get there. Urge your Lodges to hold initiations, share content that shows the public what we do, and invite your friends and family to join.

<https://join.elks.org>
#meetingthechallenge

*Happy
Birthday
Elks*

**GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE****Connection is key with local legislators**

By **WALTER S. ICE**
Committee Member

Although it is the shortest month, February has many dates to celebrate. But, no date is more important than February 16, the 154th birthday of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks! *Happy Birthday to us all!*

Another noteworthy celebration in February is Presidents' Day. Twenty-two former presidents served as state legislators in their political careers. The legislative bodies in each state gain their powers from the 10th Amendment of the US Constitution. Forty-six state legislatures hold sessions annually with four states only meeting in the odd number years. Thirty-nine state legislative sessions began in January and the remaining five will begin this month. You may be asking yourself, why is this important to the Elks?

One of the most important roles of your Government Relations Committee is to monitor any potential legislation being proffered which may directly impact non-profit fraternal organizations or the causes for which they support. The most common types of legislation involve the tax-exempt concerns of non-profits,

gambling issues and licensing, liquor laws, social media implications, personnel of non-profits, and insurance matters. Please let your Government Relations Chairperson or committee members in your Lodge or state level, or even your Area Grand Lodge Chairperson know of any potential legislation that you may become aware of.

Several states hold days where groups are allowed to set up information booths at their state capitals while the legislature is in session, allowing legislators to learn more about local constituents. What a better showstopper than to have all of the Flag Day flags set up behind your information table. Consider holding a 'Breakfast With Legislators' event and invite one to three local legislators to expound upon the legislation they feel are pertinent to our causes.

These events will provide the perfect opportunity to establish relationships with key decision makers and allow you to voice opinions on issues related to the Elks. Don't forget, legislators are voted on by you so they love to hear their constituents' points of view. Let them know how much *Elks Care, Elks Share!*

GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE**Medals honor heroic first responders**

By **DUANE D. HELDENBRAND**
Committee Member

We all see and hear about it every day. Wildfires out west, flooding in the east. Hurricanes, building collapses, and, as I write this article, destructive tornadoes in the heartland. Although the tragedies listed happened at different times and places, they do have something in common. Law enforcement, fire fighters, emergency medical technicians, and any other person working as a first responder answered the calls for help.

These men and women place themselves in harm's way for our communities every day. For this reason, our Order has the Medal of Valor and Medal of Service Program. This allows us, as Elks, to honor and thank those who work to keep our homes and communities safe.

Your local Lodge can help meet the challenge in your area by participating in this program. The Medal of Service can be awarded to any deserving person working to maintain public safety. Sadly, not all who protect us with their service get to go home when the workday is

finished. They've lost their lives while performing their duties. For this sacrifice, your Members can give thanks to the families of these fallen heroes with the Medal of Valor.

The medals can be ordered from the Grand Lodge Supplies department by your Lodge Secretary. The order code #575100 will get you the Medal of Valor and #575200 is the code for the Medal of Service. Cost is \$9 per medal plus shipping and handling, and you may order as many of each as your Lodge feels appropriate. The medals come encased in a clear top plastic display and have space on the back for personalization engraving.

I urge your Lodge to take up this program if you aren't currently participating. It is very simple to do and has a high impact return for the public face of the Lodge and the membership.

For more information, please go to the Activities tab of the elks.org website and always know your Area Grand Lodge Activities committee member is only a phone call or email away to assist.

DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

Counterfeit pills present added danger to teens

By WILLIAM J. BRYAN
Assistant National Director

Our partners at the DEA have asked us to share this message with all our members as part of their “One Pill Can Kill” campaign. Here are some facts:

- Criminal drug networks are mass-producing fake pills and falsely marketing them as legitimate prescription pills to deceive the American public.

- Counterfeit pills are widely available and easy to purchase. They often contain fentanyl or methamphetamine and can be deadly.

- Fake prescription pills are easily accessible and often sold on social media and e-commerce platforms, making them available to anyone with a smartphone, including minors.

- Many counterfeit pills are made to look like prescription opioids such



as oxycodone (OxyContin, Percocet), hydrocodone (Vicodin), and alprazolam (Xanax); or stimulants like amphetamines (Adderall).

“When we know the facts, we become educated. When we become educated, we are able to make informed decisions” said National Director Kent Gade.

He went on to state: “That is why our partnership with the DEA is so important. Because they are on top of this issue, we can pass it on to our membership faster than anyone.

“I encourage each and every Elk Member to visit the following websites:

www.justthinktwice.com (for teens); www.elksteenzone.com (for teens); www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com (for parents, caregivers and teachers); www.campusdrugprevention.gov (for teachers and college campus advisors); and join the already two thousand plus individuals who have subscribe to the new Elks Drug Awareness YouTube channel.”

Lodge chairs (or any concerned Member) should visit www.dea.gov/onepill for your very own tool kit.

Members are encouraged to visit all of the Elks Drug Awareness Programs websites so that you may educate yourself on the works of the Drug Awareness Program. If you are interested in becoming an Elks Drug Awareness Ambassador, contact your Lodge chair and or your state chair for additional information.

Champion award goes to 4-tool talent

By CATHLEEN DRAPER
ENF Communications Coordinator

In baseball, talent scouts grade players by focusing on five tools that are central to success: hitting for average, hitting for power, running, fielding, and throwing. Teams need players who possess multiple tools; they covet the ones who have all five. Five-tool talents are rare.

ENF Director Jim O’Kelley recently reflected on the ENF equivalent of the five tools. He came up with four. To thrive, the ENF needs:

- volunteers to work the programs it funds;
- volunteers to raise money;
- donors with a generous spirit, and;
- Elks leaders who use their platform to amplify the Foundation’s mission.

“Many, many people do one or two of those things for us,” O’Kelley said. “Even three. But all four? I only know of one.”

And that’s why he went to Ohio to present the first ever Champion of the ENF Award to four-tool talent, Mary Carolyn Nicholson.

Nicholson joined Ohio River Valley, OH Lodge No. 231 in 1997. For years, she has served her Lodge, district, or state as Fundraising Chair. She also has volunteered with her Lodge’s Community Investments Program grant projects.

“I feel we have made a huge difference by touching many aspects of people’s lives,” Nicholson said. “Without CIP

grants, our small Lodge could never have accomplished the numerous programs we initiated.”

What draws Nicholson to volunteerism is threefold. First, Elks build community with their neighbors through grant projects. Next, Nicholson sees their “sweat equity” as an investment in the Lodge’s future. Lastly, helping others makes her feel good, too—both about her role in building stronger communities and how ENF programs elevate the Lodge.

On top of giving her time, Nicholson and her spouse, Jim, a Past Grand Exalted Ruler, support the Foundation by donating. And as Fundraising Chair, a dedicated volunteer, and an exemplary Elk, Nicholson spreads the word about the Foundation and its programs.

“Educating people about the ENF is the best way to inspire them to support its efforts,” she said. “If they understand how important the ENF is to the Elks and to our Lodge, they will give.”

It’s that willingness to inspire and raise awareness that makes Nicholson an incredible advocate for the ENF—and an obvious choice for the first Champion of the Order Award.

“Some days being an Elk means a great deal of work,” Nicholson said. “Other days being an Elk means laughter and being with friends. But all days, being an Elk means reaching for my best self and sharing it with others.”



VETERANS From Page 4

surveyed by VA said the regular visits helped them to feel less lonely, and 77% said the experience increased their overall well-being. Volunteers also said they loved having this opportunity to connect with veterans.

Compassionate Contact Corps has already been initiated in several places across the country, and VA is gradually expanding to include more locations. Veterans who would like to be matched with a volunteer can ask a clinician or advocate for a referral to get started. Volunteers who want to get involved should contact their local VA to find out when training is available.

If your area doesn’t have training scheduled for Compassionate Contact Corps yet, let VA staff know that you are interested in helping bring the program to your community. In the meantime, consider other ways to serve veterans at a distance in February. Lodges could sponsor a Super Bowl party, collaborate with a classroom or Scouting troop to create Valentine’s Day cards for veterans, or initiate an Adopt-a-Veteran program in your Lodge.

New program virtually links volunteers with veterans

By **HANNAH GRABER**
ENVSC Programs Coordinator

Each year in February, VA hospitals celebrate National Salute to Veterans week with special events to pay tribute and express appreciation to veterans. It is also a time when citizens are encouraged to become involved as volunteers and visit veterans in hospitals.

But with Covid restrictions, opportunities to get involved at hospitals have been limited. Elks volunteers have struggled with the inability to serve veterans in the same ways they usually do with meals and interactive events. Staff members for the Center for Development and Civic Engagement (formerly

VA Voluntary Service) recognized that veterans have become even more isolated and decided to create a new program to address that problem.

Compassionate Contact Corps is a program that connects volunteers with veterans and facilitates socially distanced conversations on a regular basis. Clinicians give a “social prescription” to veterans who may benefit from these phone or video conversations. Volunteers are trained and carefully screened to be matched with veterans who share interests and experiences.

CDCE partnered with VA Mental

Health and Suicide Prevention, Caregiver Support, Whole Health, and others to create the training that volunteers must complete to participate in this program. Training topics include confidentiality, privacy, customer service, empathy, and boundaries. Volunteers do not provide clinical, spiritual, or financial advice to veterans or their caregivers.

Veterans who have participated in Compassionate Contact Corps so far have responded positively about their experiences. Over 80% of the veterans

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BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary
Benevolent and Protective ORDER OF ELKS
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February 2022

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Elks Lodges celebrate 100 years of service

The following Elks Lodges have stood the test of time as they celebrate their 100-Year Anniversary this 2021-2022 fraternal year during GER T. Keith Mills’s term. Here’s to 100 more years in service to humanity, community, our nation, and our Order’s noble principles.

LODGE NAME & NO.

INSTITUTED

Vineland, NJ Lodge No. 1422	July 27, 1921
Panama Canal, PN Lodge No. 1414	September 4, 1921
Tulare, CA Lodge No. 1424	September 14, 1921
Blackfoot, ID Lodge No. 1416	September 19, 1921
Natick, MA Lodge No. 1425	September 28, 1921
Duarte, CA Lodge No. 1427	October 3, 1921
Metropolis, IL Lodge No. 1428	October 13, 1921
Ventura, CA Lodge No. 1430	December 2, 1921
Ketchikan, AK Lodge No. 1429	December 8, 1921
Gardner, MA Lodge No. 1426	December 14, 1921

Greybull, WY Lodge No. 1431	December 28, 1921
Lakewood, NJ Lodge No. 1432	January 20, 1922
Hollister, CA Lodge No. 1436	January 20, 1922
Tillamook, OR Lodge No. 1437	February 4, 1922
Arlington, MA Lodge No. 1435	February 8, 1922
Herkimer, NY Lodge No. 1439	April 10, 1922
Rice Lake, WI Lodge No. 1441	April 19, 1922
Ilion, NY Lodge No. 1444	April 19, 1922
Gallup, NM Lodge No. 1440	April 22, 1922
Oxnard, CA Lodge No. 1443	April 29, 1922
Caldwell, ID Lodge No. 1448	May 5, 1922
Winchester, MA Lodge No. 1445	May 10, 1922
Puyallup, WA Lodge No. 1450	June 10, 1922
Pratt, KS Lodge No. 1451	June 20, 1922
Freehold, NJ Lodge No. 1454	June 20, 1922