

these statistics can be a powerful tool when times get tough. In Delaware, we operated our gaming machines in the good faith belief that a statewide referendum supporting this activity constituted legal authorization. Years later the authorities declared that this was not the case and we were ordered to cease operation of the machines. As you can imagine, many Lodges, Legions, and VFW's experienced an immediate, and dramatic, reduction in income. When confronted with the facts of how this decision impacted not only the fraternal organizations, but the communities that reaped the benefits of the combined charitable activity provided, legislators and citizens quickly found common ground and created a structured program to return this source of revenue to those adversely impacted.

When we grant scholarships, fund little league teams, support volunteer fire departments and rescue squads, obtain a grant from the William J. Jernick Memorial Fund for a family in distress, participate in Drug Awareness programs, support our Veterans, conduct Hoop Shoot and Soccer Shoot competitions, send kids to our youth camp, or any of the myriad of other wholesome activities, we need to publicize it!

Those of us who have been fortunate to attend a Grand Lodge Convention have at one time or another wandered through the various State Association exhibits overwhelmed by the variety of good works we do nationwide. I urge anyone who has not experienced this to give serious thought about attending in 2020 when we will host the Convention in Baltimore!

Let's work together to shine and polish our public image to truly become "Beacons of Light in our Communities".

Respectfully and Fraternaly,

John C. Loftus

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President