



Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care — Elks Share



May checklist: Mother's Day, Memorial Day, Reporting

April showers bring May flowers—as the season blossoms so do the activities of the Elks.

In Minnesota, there is a possibility we could still get a snow storm. But in the rest of the country I am hoping that the season is changing for you and your Lodges. We are moving into the time of the year that traditionally can be a little slower for most Lodges because of the season coming upon us: Convention season... just kidding, the summer. But don't let it get you down.

This is a great time to have (safe) gatherings outside the Lodges for friends, families, and people who you can get interested in joining this super organization. We will take any Members,



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

PAUL R. RYAN

but young ones will *Create Momentum for the Future of Elksdom.*

A tradition for us this time of year was to go and visit our family on Memorial day. This is a time to remember our family, friends, and Members who have gone before us. Memorial Day is an opportunity to reflect. Although they have gone on

another journey, they will never be forgotten.

Also, a day to celebrate is Mother's Day. This entire month should be spent honoring them. I know that the mothers in my life have been a great influence on me. Make sure to give them the attention they deserve this Mother's Day.

Don't forget that this is when your Lodge's Annual Report is due. If you have been keeping up with the Financial Reporting System, this will be a much easier year for you. Now you will still have to have someone prepare your 990 and maybe a 990T but a complete audit can be avoided. Is this a wonderful feeling?

Please see GER, Page 4

Tampa Convention pre-registration is safe, convenient

Online pre-registration through the Elks.org website will eliminate registration lines at the convention center and will provide a safer way for you to receive your credentials from your State

Housing Coordinator at the hotel. **This option is highly recommended.**

GRAND SECRETARY
Bryan R. Klatt

Pre-registration is available starting April 1 thru June 21, 2021. Pre-registration fee is \$50.00 for all Members—no fee for non-Elk spouse or guest. In order to Pre-Register for the Convention you will need to establish a username and password for the "Members Only" section of the Elks.org website. Pre-register at <https://www.elks.org/convention/prereg.cfm>. When you arrive in Tampa be sure to have your e-mail confirmation and current membership card available to present to your State Housing Coordinator, at the hotel, to collect the badges for you and your

Please see CONVENTION, Page 2

GRAND LODGE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Local Scouts will love some praise

By MICHAEL T. OHREN
Committee Member, Scouting Coordinator

For more than a century, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America have combined leadership skills and educational activities to shape our nation's future leaders and set them up for a lifetime of success.

Each year, hundreds of our future leaders are honored with either the Boy Scouting Eagle Scout Award or Girl Scout Gold Award. These are the two most distinguished awards in Scouting and are the most difficult to earn. However, over this past year COVID-19 has restricted a great number of troops in obtaining these awards. I encourage you to contact your local scouting council to see if your Lodge could assist troop members with a project which will help them get either of these awards.

The Scouts Law states "A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent." As we work through COVID-19 restrictions, we as Elks should be ready to assist

troop members in obtaining their goals. Your Lodge can do this by working with your local Scouting councils, which can provide you with many ideas to support the troops in your community and reach their scouting goals. This support could be as little as a safe meeting place or a project in which they can obtain scouting badges or scouting awards.

Lodges can help their local Scouts by donating their facilities for special events, such as hosting the Cub Scout Pinewood Derby, Father/Daughter dance, Mother/Daughter brunch, Arrow of Light Ceremony, Eagle Scout Court of Honor, or Girl Scouts Gold and Silver Award Ceremony.

INSIDE

- Bolstering the Elks' image 2
- SA Bulletin Contest winners 3
- 4,100 CIP grants approved 3
- Celebrate lifetime achievers 3
- New year begins with 3 words 4
- Consider the Welcome Home Kit 4

CONVENTION From Page 1

spouse/guest and if qualified, voting credentials.

On-site registration will be available at the Tampa Convention Center Ballroom A and the fee will be \$60.00 for all Members—no fee for non-Elk spouse or guest. A Registration “Information Card” will be found on the tables in the Convention’s Registration Area. This card must be filled out in order to receive Registration Badges for you and your spouse and, voting credentials, if you are qualified to vote. Once the registration information card is filled out, payment of the \$60 registration fee must be made at the Cashier’s Booth in the Registration Area by cash, personal or traveler’s check or credit card. After payment, Elks

then will be directed to the end of the registration line where they will present both the completed Information Card and a current membership card (removed from any plastic case or covering so that it may be stamped).

All non-Elks guests, including Widows and Widowers of Elks, MUST pre-register on the Elks website with a member, to obtain their Registration Badges, or acquire a Guest registration in Ballroom A at the convention center. An official badge and event reservations are required for a guest to attend the Opening Ceremony, Celebration, and Installation of Grand Lodge Officers on Wednesday (or any other functions where guests are permitted).

Grand Lodge Registration and its required Fee are NOT included in any State

Association’s “Package” arrangement. A Grand Lodge Registration badge and Event Reservation will be required to enter all business sessions, seminars, and workshops. The Event Reservation program opens May 1 on the Elks.Org website.

Attendance at the Grand Lodge National Convention in Tampa, Florida, is voluntary this year. Please be aware that attendance at convention may pose a risk of exposure to and illness from infectious diseases, including but not limited to SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19). Preventative measures aimed at reducing exposure to infectious diseases have been mandated for this event and may reduce the risk of exposure and infection.

GRAND LODGE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

We need to become more relevant

By DANIEL J. CAPELLA
Committee Member

The success of our Order, whether on a national, state, district, or local level, depends upon several factors. We have a great product, no doubt about it. Patriotism, community service, and programs for kids, veterans, handicapped individuals and others in need are but some of our undertakings. Add in the rest of what we accomplish, as well as our social activities, and you have a charitable, creditable, and successful organization that should sell itself.

Unfortunately, that’s not always the way it works. Members of our communities, specifically those in government, need to be constantly reminded of what we stand for, what we accomplish, the sincere manner in which we fulfill our responsibilities, and our value to the community. The way we attain this goal varies and depends in part upon the town, city, or metropolis in which we live. What works in one locality does not guarantee success in another. Additional components are needed for success, including publicity, partnerships and Lodge visibility. As we work to achieve our goals we must additionally strive to make positive impressions, especially upon those in government.

Assuredly, a well-thought-out and well-presented publicity program is necessary, but in many cases it is difficult to establish. Finding the right individual to chair this committee and then broadcast or publish our articles and pictures can be daunting. This is why the development

of partnerships and appreciation of our reputation as Elks should also be pursued to bolster our identity and importance.

Partnering with other organizations allows us to demonstrate community spirit, increase our public image, and provide the opportunity to learn from others. “That’s the way we have always done it,” does not mean; “the way we do it is the best possible method.” Other organizations may demonstrate a different approach to success, and by working with these groups we can learn a thing or two.

Also, we must constantly strive to increase our recognition. Doing so means an increase in our participation and visibility at events such as parades, governmental meetings, dedications, and public programs. Elks need to serve on community committees and participate in public assemblies. When done in a manner that shows we are proud to be Elks, we demonstrate our commitment to and love of the town or city within which we live. This type of recognition is hard to ignore and will lead to improving our public image. It will also establish our organization as one that those in authority will want to work with, instead of simply being an organization that might come to mind once in a while.

The future of our Lodges is in our hands. We cannot sit back and let others control what happens to us—We must fulfill the purposes for which our Order was founded by actively working to become a more relevant, go-to organization that our community depends upon.

VETERANS From Page 4

Coupl said. Especially for veterans with physical disabilities, beds are essential.

Coupl told us about a veteran who has significant health issues and uses a walker to get around. He was excited to move into his own apartment after a period of homelessness, but was worried about where he would sleep. “I can’t sleep on the floor,” he told her. “I won’t be able to get up.” The veteran was thrilled to get a new bed through the Welcome Home Kit program.

Soon after delivering the bed, volunteers realized the veteran was still missing many items he needed for his new home. The Welcome Home Kit team rallied Lodge Members, who worked together and used their own funds to meet the veteran’s needs.

Most veterans who receive Welcome Home Kits have very few belongings. While beds are priority number one, they are far from the only need. Coupl said she is excited for the additional \$100 to spend on kits with beds. The Lodge will use the funds to provide veterans with more small household essentials such as dishes, silverware, and towels, while continuing to buy beds for all who need them.

Before purchasing supplies, Coupl calls each veteran and talks through what they have at home, room by room, to learn about their needs. The Lodge recently purchased a kit that included a baby bottle warmer and crib sheets for a veteran who will soon be having her first baby.

Every veteran has a different story. Greater reimbursement amounts for kits with beds means more funds available to meet veterans’ unique needs, whatever those might be!

DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

How to honor a lifelong volunteer

By **WILLIAM J. BRYAN**
Assistant National Director

In this day and under current COVID-19 restrictions, volunteers are as important as ever to the many missions of Elksdom. One thing equally important as the volunteers is recognizing them for their service. After a few years' hiatus, the new White House Administration has re-instituted the Lifetime Achievement Award category of the President's Volunteer Service Award. The Elks Drug Awareness Program is once again certified by the Administration to approve nominations for this award.

Established by executive order by President George W. Bush in 2003, this prestigious civil award was established to honor volunteers who have performed 4,000 hours or more of volunteer work in their community.

Recipients receive a certificate, a letter from the President, and a very nice "Lifetime Achievement Award" pin to proudly wear. Thanks to a grant from ENF, these awards come at no cost to your Lodge! It's a great way to honor the work of a brother or sister Elk, or to recognize someone in your community. After you present the award, if they are not an Elk, you can invite them to join!

For more information on the Presidential Volunteer Service Award, contact your State Elks Association Drug Awareness Chairperson.

In other news, the Elks DAP has been very busy in creating lesson plans for schools and organizations to teach youth about the substance abuse dangers in this age of virtual learning. Now is a good time to visit elksteenzone.org to see what they're up to. You'd be amazed by all that the program has done. Check it out! While you're at it, stop by elkskidszone.org to see what we're offering to younger kids.

Elks Care - Elks Share

What's on your mind?

Visit the Membership Forum to discuss Elksdom. Dozens of Members use the message board every day to share constructive information.

elks.org/messageboard/forum.cfm

GRAND LODGE FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

11 States win top bulletin award

By **JOHN R. HOLBROOK**
Committee Member

The State Association bulletin is a traditional form of communication appreciated by many Members. The Contest I: State Bulletin Contest recognizes the best bulletins in the country.

Judging was based on four categories: **Content.** Coverage of Grand Lodge and State Association Programs, and up-to-date information and news.

Layout & Typography: Ease of accessibility and readability.

Pictorial: Use of photographs or other graphics including borders, shading, and color.

General: Usefulness to Members, and effectiveness in telling the Elks Story to non-Members.

All entries this year received the coveted Five Star rating—the content and quality were impressive. Thank you to the many editors who keep our members informed and congratulations to those who entered the contest!

5 Star ★★★★★ Awards

State	Editor
Arizona	Shawnee Carlile
Florida	Rachael King
Georgia	Lynda Lewis
Kansas	Carl E. Lindsey
Kentucky	Leigh S. Ruble
Louisiana	Buddy Hartle Jr.
MD, DE, DC	Jane L. Swiger
Michigan	Karen J. Cary
New Jersey	Nancy Rochford
New York	Timothy R. Welp
North Carolina	Ashley Buckwell

Flexible CIP grants a hit in 2020-21

When the 2020-2021 grant year opened on April 1 last year, COVID-19 rates were spiking and daily life as we knew it was becoming increasingly uncertain. Thus, the Community Investments Program streamlined available grants and increased grant flexibility in the 2020-21 grant year. In total, more than 4,100 grants totaling nearly \$11.5 million were approved to support Elks communities.

The CIP approved 1,316 Gratitude Grants, the highest amount in three years. The CIP encouraged Lodges to use their Gratitude Grants to make direct donations to organizations that are better equipped to directly serve those affected by the pandemic, instead of encouraging active, in-person projects. Frankfort, KY Lodge No. 530 switched from its annual project of serving students and seniors to donating directly to a food pantry. The Lodge felt a responsibility to help where they were needed. Even with the current hardships, the Lodge said it loves to make a difference in our community.

The \$2,000 Spotlight Grant had added flexibility in 2020-21, as well. Lodges could select from one of the six projects to shine a spotlight on veterans' homelessness or family literacy, or they could use the funds for direct pandemic relief. For added flexibility, Lodges could also merge their Spotlight Grant with their Beacon Grant for a \$5,500 Beacon Grant project.

Santa Barbara, CA Lodge No. 613 held a drive-through Stand Down event. The Lodge partnered with local organizations and provided hygiene kits for veterans experiencing homelessness.

"Even though it was different than years past, the Elks showed up," Grants Coordinator Joe Woodruff said. "The Lodge's presence and work has made the veterans confident that they can count on the Elks."

The Spotlight Grant had a record-breaking year: 1,043 stand-alone Spotlight Grants were approved, and 345 Lodges opted to merge the Spotlight Grant with their Beacon Grant. In the end, 1,388 Lodges used Spotlight Grants to meet the needs in their communities—a 152 percent increase in approved Spotlight Grant applications from last year!

The Beacon Grant, which opened on August 1, set another record with 1,401 grants approved. Many Lodges suspended or changed their annual projects to meet immediate and pressing needs in a big way, especially because the Beacon Grant got a boost to \$3,500 from \$2,500.

Homer, NY Lodge No. 2506 used its Beacon Grant to provide winter coats to children through Operation Warm. With the larger grant, the Lodge was able to provide 245 coats to children in need, 80 more than last year.

Elks Lodges will continue building stronger communities in 2021-22. Gratitude Grants are the first grant to launch, and Spotlight Grants and Beacon Grants will roll out during the summer months. Like this past year, CIP grants will feature more flexible guidelines, allowing Lodges to meet local needs while staying safe. For more information, head to elks.org/cip.



Start the fiscal year with veteran outreach

By **NADEZH MULHOLLAND**
Programs Associate

Looking for a new way to get involved in serving veterans? Now is the perfect time to jump in with the Welcome Home Kit program. And, it's even growing!

Starting on April 1, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission will make more funding available for beds for veterans. We will reimburse up to \$500 for kits with beds, up from \$400 in previous years. (Note that the reimbursement level for kits without beds will remain at \$300.)

For many veterans, a bed is the most pressing need—and it can be a big expense. We want to make it easier for Lodges to provide a bed for every

veteran who needs one. We chatted with one committed volunteer about what Welcome Home Kits mean to veterans and how the bed reimbursement increase will help.

Marga Coupl is the Veterans Chair at Portsmouth, NH Lodge No. 97. Alongside Exalted Ruler Susan Talhouk and Veterans Committee member Brenna Cavanaugh, Marga donates her time to fulfill Welcome Home Kits for New Hampshire veterans. Together, the volunteers are a “three-legged stool,” Coupl said, working together and sharing the load

to meet the needs of every formerly-homeless veteran referred to the Lodge.

Over the years, the Lodge has built a strong partnership with a local company that supplies beds and mattresses to hotels. The vendor shares their mission of serving veterans in need and provides a special flat-rate deal on beds for Welcome Home Kits, including linens and pillows. He even delivers the beds to the veterans’ homes and sets them up for free.

“The bed is number one importance,”

Please see **VETERANS**, Page 2



BRYAN R. KLATT, Grand Secretary
Benevolent and Protective ORDER OF ELKS
2750 N. Lakeview Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60614-1889

May 2021

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. Postage
PAID
CHICAGO, IL
Permit No. 5244

GRAND LODGE PR AND MEMBERSHIP MARKETING COMMITTEE

3 words for Elks to rally around

By **RICK GATHEN**
Membership Marketing Manager

Respond, recover, renew are three key words for your Lodge in 2021.

We must recognize this as an opportunity to be better. Recover by using the lessons learned from 2020 to help build a new foundation and way forward. Respond by understanding that the importance of leading your Lodge to a sustainable future begins now. Think first about renewal as you grapple with your response and recovery.

In April we sent a direct mail piece to the Members who were dropped from the rolls in March. The reinstatement campaign is called “WELKcome Back”. It encourages people with “why” and “how”

to reinstate their membership.

Another reinstatement direct mail campaign is scheduled for September. It will focus on the way we operate after the COVID-19 crisis, with the majority protected by a vaccine by the fall.

We are developing strategies to address the daunting challenges our Lodges are facing with restoring Members’ comfort with socializing in groups again. Priority must be given to addressing the underlying public health challenges. We will address Member confidence through extending social protection to all, facilitating safe events, and promoting that our ‘new normal’ is a better one. This is how you reset your Lodges business strategy.

GER From Page 1

Stacey and I are diligently preparing for the Tampa Convention. It isn’t too far away and we will be preparing for the meeting and end of our term. We appreciate all the support you have given us throughout the year. We look forward to serving this organization in the years to come.

