Strengthen Lodge through unity and teamwork

Henry Ford once said: “If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.” A successful Lodge is one whose Officers, Committees and Members work together and participate in Grand Lodge, State Association and Local Lodge programs.

Officers of the Lodge should lead by example, but not attempt to do everything by themselves. Show enthusiasm, and encourage the entire membership to become more involved in your Lodge programs. Delegate responsibility to your Committee Members and other Lodge Members who would welcome the opportunity to become more involved. Many hands make light work!

As the old saying goes, two heads are better than one, and with a team, even more so. Resolutions to problems and fresh ideas are generated by the brainstorming and friendship that teamwork fosters. Teams allow skills, knowledge, opinions and experiences to be pooled together for the benefit of the Lodge as a whole. This leads to better productivity for every Member of the team, and every task completed by each Member leads to one noticeable outcome that the whole team and Lodge can take pride in.

Lodges that conduct successful and highly publicized community programs heighten pride in their Members. This not only leads to fewer Members dropping their membership, it creates interest in others to join our Order.

In addition, you must continue to reach out to your inactive Members and constantly remind them of the community programs and good works that your Lodge accomplishes every day. Your Lodge bulletin is an effective tool to rekindle the pride that every Member had when they joined the Order. I am 

By EDWIN C. GEISHERT JR.
Committee Member

A resolution adopted at the Grand Lodge Convention in July changed the name of the Grand Lodge Public Relations Committee to the Grand Lodge Public Relations and Marketing Committee.

Section 4.357 of the Laws of the Order formerly stated: “The Committee on Public Relations is charged with the duty and responsibility of implementing a Public Relations Program of the Order.” The statute was changed to: “The Committee on Public Relations and Marketing is charged with the duty and responsibility of implementing a Public Relations and Marketing Program of the Order.”

This change was requested to better reflect the committee responsibilities. But what does this really mean? How will this impact Lodges and Lodge Members? Is this really a big deal?

Let’s examine just what the Public Relations Committee is all about. Public Relations Area Committeemen have the duty to assist State Associations and all Public Relations volunteers in preparing, presenting and promoting Elks programs, events and activities. Their duty is to help Lodges gain the exposure they need to engage their Members and the general public, to inform, to teach and to spread the word that “Elks Care – Elks Share” and much more.

But over the last few years the Public Relations Committee has been doing more marketing than public relations work.

Word to the wise
Secretaries: Keep those paper apps

Each year, many of our Local Lodges install new and inexperienced Lodge Secretaries. With this new office, there is a learning curve that each new Secretary must navigate in order to manage this important office, as well as our CLMS2Web and PC programs. A word to the wise: Never destroy or discard paper membership applications and records. Those are the only Local Lodge records available.

Sure, there is our computerized membership program, CLMS2, which started in the fall of 2008, but many records prior to 2008 were not entered into the program; hence the need to maintain those records.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING COMMITTEE

What’s in a name? Marketing now part of PR

By EDWIN C. GEISHERT JR.
Committee Member

DAP unveils Youth Award
Paperback dictionaries a God-send
Invest in our youth
Elks help address vets’ mental health
Let’s spread the message of all the good works Elks do

By ROBERT GUILLEN
Committee Member

With all the information gathered at our Grand Lodge Session in Houston in July, we are again asking for the help of all Secretaries and Exalted Rulers.

As you saw from our report, we donated a total of $282,160,455 with hours, mileage and cash from our membership. Your work showed an increase from the previous year by a bunch. We also know, in listening and talking with State Associations and local Lodges, that a lot of charity work was conducted throughout our great nation.

We are six months into our Elks Lodge year and need your help. Please submit your charity reports to the Secretary of your Lodge to include into the CLMS program for your Lodges. If you are a State or District Chair, submit your hours to the State Secretary, who will submit the report next year.

We would like to see our charity report for 2016-17 close to $400 million. We know a lot of work is being done nationwide, but it is not being reported. It is not fair to the Members and spouses of circumstances, increased income will allow the.

If you stopped at our booth at the Houston Convention, you know that we picked up on the Exalted Rulers and Secretaries who stopped to check their statistics for their Lodges or Associations.

It is your job as Exalted Rulers to monitor your committees and make sure they submit their reports. The Secretary can only do their job if the chairpersons submit their statistics. I know I am stepping on some toes out there, but we need these statistics to keep our non-profit status and to assist us in our endeavors.

As we also announced in Houston, we are attempting to gather strength in Washington in dealing with Congress to change the way the Unrelated Business Income Tax (UBIT) is being handled. Presently we have a $1,000 exemption on UBIT, and we feel it should be raised to $50,000 or $100,000. We can’t do this without your help.

If your Lodges have billboards in front of the Lodge, publicize that you gave X amount to your community. If you have a bulletin and/or website, have your editor publicize your charitable statistics to educate the Members what they have done. If you are familiar with your Congressman or Senator, give them a copy of our nationwide Charity Report showing our totals that we are doing for communities nationwide.

We must educate the non-Elks what we as a Benevolent Organization do for THEIR community and States. We need your help, and we are asking as a committee of eight to help us reach this goal.

For need assistance, contact your State Chairperson or Area Committee man. We must continue to contribute to our communities and let them know that we will continue to assist our communities regardless of our efforts in Washington.

We all know that “Elks Care – Elks Share.” Let’s spread the message and get to work.

I thank you in advance for all your hard work and hope we continue the work that has been done by the Elks since we began as an organization 148 years ago.

Veterans From Page 4

certain that your Lodge has scheduled many activities to benefit the youth of our nation, our veterans and other community programs and demonstrate that “Elks” continue “Leading the Way.”

As you know October is Elks National Foundation Month. Perhaps create a team to fashion and implement an event that will help your Lodge meet this year’s goal of $4.65 per Member. This will be a great exercise in team building and camaraderie, and will support the Great Heart of Elkdom as well.

Thank you for being an Elk and for Caring and Sharing.

Keep watchful eye on Lodge budget

By ANDREW W. MILWID
Committee Chairman

Per Section 13.040(j) of the Grand Lodge Statutes, the Lodge Auditing and Accounting Committee “shall, in the months of July, October and January, review the required record-keeping of the financial affairs of the Lodge and Club and compliance with the approved budget, and report at the last regular meeting of the Lodge during those months.” This is to ensure that the Lodge and its Board of Directors/Trustees (Board) are staying within the Budgeted Expenses, and to meet with them if the income sources are not meeting or the expenses are exceeding expectations. These quarterly reviews of the financials will give the Lodge the opportunity take corrective action to increase revenues or reduce expenses to maintain the overall financial health of the Lodge.

Under the best of circumstances, increased income will allow the Lodge to spend more on needed items and to donate more to local community needs through our various Charity Programs. If any line item exceeds the budget or reallocation is needed, then the budget needs to be amended. To do this, the Auditing and Accounting Committee would make recommendations to the Board, which in turn would decide on the increases or cutbacks. Once these changes are decided upon, the Board will propose, by motion, the amendment(s) to the budget at a regular Lodge meeting for approval by the Lodge.

Maintaining a constant review of the budget will ensure that the Lodge has a healthy financial position. It is likened to an annual physical at your Primary Care Physician: check your weight, blood pressure and take a blood sample to test for a variety of “unseen” symptoms. You then know what changes are required to maintain a healthy outlook and a long life.
Grand Lodge Activities Committee

Paperback dictionaries a valuable resource for quality education

By TERRY R. LIERSAPH
Committee Member

For some time now, the Elks have been partnering with the National Dictionary Project to distribute paperback dictionaries to third-grade students.

Paperback dictionaries are reliable for early educational development. A dictionary provides the basic information for students learning to read, as well as teaching punctuation, parts of speech and basic grammar.

I encourage your Lodge to become involved in this worthwhile project. To date, the Elks have distributed 2,917,218 books in schools throughout the country.

It is easy to get started. First, determine the available funds your Lodge has to participate in the program. You can then contact the GLAC representative for the project and get the necessary information and forms you will need. Also, you can contact the Dictionary Project directly at www.dictionaryproject.com to view the different dictionaries that are available. The cost is relatively inexpensive. The most popular dictionary – “Best Dictionary for Students” – costs only $30 for 24, which includes shipping.

Next you will need to contact your local school principals and explain the project. If you get permission from the school to continue, you will obtain the number of third-graders in the school. Once you have purchased and obtained the dictionaries, schedule a visit to the third-grade classroom(s) and distribute the dictionaries personally to each student. Let them know that they are a gift to them from your Lodge and encourage the students to use their dictionaries on a daily basis.

Many Lodges personalize the dictionaries with name labels and an Elks logo with the name and number of the Lodge. Keep your visit short and to the point. A third-grader’s attention span is much shorter than an adult’s.

This could also be a great tool to get positive local media coverage and let the community know the true mission of the BPOE and your Lodge. I would hope that every Elks Lodge will help in this united effort, proving once again that “Elks Care – Elks Share.”

For further information or questions, contact your Lodge Activities Dictionary Project committee representative.

Grand Lodge Drug Awareness Program

Drug Awareness Program presents first Youth Award

By FRANK SCARPINO
Special Contributor

The Elks Drug Awareness Program presents the Presidential Lifetime Volunteer Service Awards to adults who have volunteered 4,000 hours or more over their lifetime. We need to reward and recognize our Elks and community volunteers. You do not have to be an Elk to receive this award.

The Youth Award is new to the Elks. The volunteer hours required for a Youth Award are: Ages 5-10 (75 min); 11-15 (100 min); and 16-25 (250 min).

This past spring the Elks DAP and Wallingford, CT Lodge 1365 presented their first Presidential Volunteer Service Award to Ryan Bell, a 15-year-old high school freshman from Wallingford, CT, who logged 520 hours in 2015. He has set and exceeded goals that exemplify the citizenship, public service and moral character, which is the foundation of the Elks organization. Here is his condensed story of service:

When Ryan was 9 years old, his parents received a Heifer International magazine. Ryan was mesmerized with the Heifer concept of giving a needy family an animal, teaching them how to breed the animal and utilize all of its resources in order to provide a sustainable source of income for the family. A true animal lover at heart, Ryan was happy to participate. Ryan was told that his goal would require some fundraising. Challenge accepted. This became his first charitable goal.

Since that time, Ryan has continued to participate in annual fundraising for Heifer International through his four-five craft/church fairs, annual thanksgiving auction, sharing his story and leading a team of fundraisers through the Heifer International website. Ryan has put in an estimated 60 hours per year since 2010 on his fundraising efforts. His ever increasing goals have led to his most recent goal of $50,000.

Ryan also is quite active in volunteering within his church at the annual Christmas fairs and helping care for the younger children during weekly mass. He also volunteers at annual Wallingford Elks functions such as the Children’s Christmas and Halloween parties. He has been recognized during the Elks-sponsored Drug Awareness campaigns at both the local and state levels. Helping others is truly a huge part of who Ryan is.

Ryan has overcome many obstacles to get to this point. Born with a craniofacial disorder and undergoing over 40 surgeries, Ryan has also set and achieved many personal goals. Ryan is a natural at dreaming big. He knows how to reach for those stars, set goals that seem unattainable to some, and then believe in those goals until they become reality.

For more information or applications for this award, contact your State DAP Chair.

Elks History, Vol. 2 available in Chicago


The book is written by Past Grand Exalted Ruler Ted Callcott.

In addition, the History of the Order of Elks, Volume 1, 1968-1988, is back in stock and available at the National Headquarters.

Local Lodges may place orders for either book through their Exalted Ruler, Lodge Secretary or Chairperson of the Lodge Trustees. Orders for State Associations must be approved by and billed to the State Secretary.

Local Lodge Members may order through any of the Lodge Officials listed above to obtain a copy.

Order the books by the assigned code number – 511300 for History of the Order, Volume 1, $25 each; or 511301 for History of the Order, Volume 2, also $25.

Place orders at http://www.elks.org/shopping/GrandLodge/AllProducts.cfm (Secretaries only) or by calling 773-755-4710, e-mailing shipping@elks.org, faxing at 773-755-4711 or mailing Attn: Shipping Department, BPOE, 2750 N. Lakeview Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614-1889.
Elks help care for veterans with mental health issues

By MARY K. MORGAN
Commission Director

On July 7, the Department of Veterans Affairs released the results of a large-scale study in 2014 that showed an average of 20 veterans a day died from suicide, making the risk of suicide 21 percent greater for veterans than the general population.

These results are unacceptable, and the VA is taking action to solve this issue. They are increasing access to same-day appointments for veterans with urgent mental health needs. They’ve hired 60 new crisis intervention responders to work the Veterans Crisis Line, and they’re increasing online and over-the-phone mental health care opportunities to reach veterans in underserved areas. They’re being proactive and reaching out to veterans with the greatest risk.

They’re also counting on their partners to help. Though the Welcome Home program doesn’t mention it directly, it does play a role in assisting veterans in need of mental health services. Every veteran who receives emergency assistance from the Elks is also working closely with a VA social worker and enrolled in a comprehensive treatment plan that includes access to extensive mental health care.

Many of our VAVS Representatives hold events for veterans receiving treatment for mental health issues, and a few Lodges specifically address this issue by using their Lodge Grants to hold veterans support groups. Our Adopt-A-Veteran program is targeted at reaching out to veterans who lack support. Studies show that increased social ties decrease the risk of suicide.

The ENVSC also works closely with the group Make the Connection to help publicize the Veterans Crisis Line and to reach out to veterans. Make the Connection staff is always at our disposal.

Please see VETERANS, Page 2

Name From Page 1

“Elks” is a valuable brand we sell to our candidates, our Members and to everyone we can reach. We donated approximately $267 million last year in goods, time and services to those in need. This is our story. This is what we market. Our brand is what retains and attracts Members, and drives Member retention. By being Loud and Proud about our brand, we give our Members a sense of pride, a sense of doing good and a pride in their membership.

As active Lodge Members we need to be aware that public relations and marketing should not only be used to introduce our work publicly, but more and more to be directed toward our own Members. Nationwide only 10 percent of every Lodge’s Members are active. Only 10 percent participate in activities and events. Only 10 percent regularly use the club facilities, leaving 90 percent who need to be taught repeatedly just who we are and what we do. This is what PR and marketing are all about.

As you watch television, read magazines or newspapers, pay attention to the advertisements. Learn what to say, how to say it, and copy and use what works for your Lodge. We do not have to be original in what we say or do, but we do need to be aware, and we must be bold in marketing our brand.

Yes, public relations in Elkdom is changing. Make your Members proud and feel they are a part of the Lodge. This will pay off next year when your Members receive their dues notice. Have you made them proud enough of the good works of the Lodge to make them want to continue their membership? Lapsation starts with a Lodge giving its Members no reason to continue their membership.

Contact your State Membership Chairman and your Grand Lodge Public Relations and Marketing Committee for guidance and help. Expand your approach; reap the rewards.