



More than 300 veterans and 130 boats were involved in "Walleyes for Warriors."

Students sail the Schooner Appledore

Tawas Area Elks Lodge #2525 took 12 students from the Alternative Education Academy of Iosco County aboard the Schooner Appledore for their "Science Under Sail" program. The students and members of the Tawas Elks participated in science experiments, including learning how to identify non-native species and sources of marine debris and their impact on the Great Lakes. The students also learned about celestial navigation, chart reading, and commonly used knots in sailing. This event was funded by an Impact Grant that the Tawas Area Elks received from the Elks National Foundation.



BAY CITY ELKS LODGE #88

'Walleyes for Warriors' held

On Sunday, June 18th, Bay City Elks Lodge #88 was THE Presenting Sponsor the 7th annual Nels Larsen "Walleyes for Warriors" event.

This, Walleyes for Warriors provided a great day for more than 320 Veterans on more than 130 boats to a fun filled day of fishing on Michigan's Saginaw Bay.

Anglers landed more than 900 walleye which were filleted and packaged by volunteers. Each of the participating Veterans took home a few pounds of the Walleye fillets to enjoy.



From left, Howard Diehl PSP, Dennis Potter, veteran from Port Huron and George Lynch PER, DVP Northeast District, President of "Walleyes for Warriors."

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Elks Michigan
usa newsletter

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NEWS AND NOTES

Local lodges: Give us your history for 150th celebration

The BPOE, which is celebrating 150 years of service over the next year, is asking for your help in uploading on the Elks.Org website, any photographs, newspaper articles, community service projects and any other documents that provide a historical background of your Lodge. We will compile and archive the uploaded documents to show the rich history of our Lodges, membership and accomplishments. Don't be excluded. Learn more at www.Elks.Org/History on our website

REMINDER: November 5 marks the automatic filing date of our semi-annual Membership Report via CLMS2Web. Lodge Secretaries must make every effort to ensure your Lodge CLMS2 membership records are current by that date.

— Bryan R. Klatt, Grand Secretary

Drops require written notice Exalted Rulers and Lodge

Secretaries are reminded that written notice is required before a Member can be dropped for nonpayment of dues.

A Member is deprived of a substantial right of membership without due process of law when the Lodge seeks to drop him/her from the Lodge rolls without first strictly adhering to the requirements contained in Section 14.160 of the Grand Lodge Statutes Annotated.

Please review all required steps before a delinquent member shall be dropped from the rolls.

— Rick Gathen, Grand Lodge Membership and Marketing Manager

Elks selling 150th items through D. Turin

Local Lodges wanting to use the Elks' 150th Anniversary logo for stock and customized items, may do so through D. Turin Company. The Elks have granted D. Turin the exclusive rights to distribute the logo.

The D. Turin Company contact is David Plask, who may be reached at (305) 825-2004, ext. 312; or david@dturin.com.

Elks lodges host veterans' picnic at V.A. Medical Center

On June 17, 2017, six Michigan Elks lodges, represented by over 37 Elks, family, and friends, hosted the 22nd Annual Veterans' picnic at the Battle Creek VA Medical Center. Elks lodges that participated were Albion, Battle Creek, Coldwater, Hastings, Hillsdale, and Howell. Over 135 veterans and 20 staff members from the hospital and local Silver Star veterans' home were treated to grilled brats and hamburgers with all the picnic trimmings of coleslaw, macaroni salad, and homemade cookies. Over 25 muscle cars from the Southwest Michigan Muscle Car Club were also on site for the veterans' enjoyment. Battle Creek Lodge 131 was able to provide picnic supplies thanks to funding provided by a National Elks Foundation Gratitude Grant. This event helps exemplify the promise made by the B.P.O.E., "So long as there are veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them." For more information about the Elks, contact Battle Creek Lodge 131 at 269-288-8711.

Golf outing held in honor of veterans

Kalamazoo Elks Lodge 50 hosted the Annual Veterans Golf Outing on Friday, September 8.

Thirty veterans from the Battle Creek Veterans Medical Center were treated to lunch, followed by a nine-hole golf scramble. Teams of three or four were accompanied by an Elk member, and the teams with the lowest scores received cash prizes.

Vets were able to "shop" for items donated by lodge members. Each Veteran who attended was sent home with a bag filled with toiletries, socks and coupons to be used at the Medical Center Canteen.

We are so proud and so honored to be able to host our Veterans for this event each year. We, the Elks volunteers, get so much enjoyment interacting with our Veterans and the Vets are so appreciative. It truly demonstrates the Elks motto "As long as there are Veterans the BPOE will never forget them."

Dinner marks anniversary of Commemorative Committee

With money raised from a poker run held in June, the Lapeer Elks Lodge #2567 sponsored five tables at \$120 each for a dinner given by the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemorative Committee. This Honorary Dinner will be to thank and honor our veterans for their service and sacrifice along with thanking and recognizing their families on October 21.

Albion Elks #1798 host golf outing

WOW! What a great turnout! The best outing yet with 29 teams, plenty of sunshine and lots of fun on the golf course, and at the Elks cooking steaks. Our raffle winners: \$500 to Mark Ketchum; \$200 to Elizabeth Mangold; \$100 Teresa Masternak; \$100 Elizabeth Mangold; \$50 to Chris Walsh; \$50 to Keith and Mary Mangold.

The winning golf team was Team Sanders with a score of 52. The 2nd place team with 53 was Numm Nutts; 3rd place with 53 was Quality Asphalt, Random drawing was Team Staedtfield and last place was Team Walsh. We had lots of donations back to the lodge which was appreciated.

We will have over \$7500 profit to distribute to our charities of the Elks National Foundation; Gold Key Scholarship, Major Projects/crippled children; local scholarship; Veterans and more. THANKS to all of the volunteers the day of the outing.

And thanks to our hole sponsors and people who made donations for door prizes to make this outing possible. A Special Thanks to College Chevrolet of Albion who had a Chevy Silverado, golf club and resort golf package available to anyone who made a hole in one on the par 3's at Tomac Golf Course (which did not happen this year...again)

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Get Published in the Michigan Elks News!



Send us your articles and pictures and show us what you're proud of at your Lodge!

E-mail address: meanewsletter@mielks.org. Articles and hard copy photos may also be mailed to Karen Cary, Advantage Printing, 68838 Broadus, Suite A, Sturgis MI 49091.

Deadlines for submissions:

March 15 for April publication; June 15 for July publication;
Sept. 15 for October publication; Dec. 15 for January publication

STATE OFFICER MESSAGES

Never got a dinner and there are no free lunches!

Since the Installation of Officers in May, Debi and I have been very busy traveling this great Country and State of ours. In June traveled to Indiana for their Spring Convention. Had the honor of giving their Memorial address again this year. Indiana's Major Project is Cancer Research at Indiana University and Purdue University. They both receive \$ 250,000.00 each for their research.

The month of June was very busy with the First of six Gold Key Golf Outings. We travelled to Gaylord for the Northeast event then the following Sunday left for St. Joseph-Benton Harbor Lodge for the Southwest District. Both events were very profitable for the Scholarships Program.

July, we headed to Reno Nevada for the National Convention. Once again, the Convention was an enormous success. Stan, Cheryl, Chuck and Debb did a fantastic job with the hospitality room, Michigan Night and the Area Four Banquet with Indiana. The highlight of the banquet was our State Sponsor James Varenhorst racing my wife Debi in his electric scooter while she was in her wheel chair.

The highlight of the summer is always going to Bay Cliff in the Upper Peninsula. It is remarkable of all the different therapy that the kids receive during their stay. It makes you so proud to be an Elk and being able to support this camp. The Upper Peninsula District held their Gold Key on Sunday after the visit to Bay Cliff, another terrific event.

August, we headed to Port Huron for the Metro District Gold Key. Another fantastic event. They raised \$ 11,500.00 for the Scholarship Program. The Southeast Gold Key was held in Livonia. We had approximately 60 golfers for the day, another magnificent event for Scholarship.



**JOE
ANTONISHEK**

State President

August, we travelled to Ohio for their State Convention. Their Major Project supports Cerebral Palsy. Funds are raised through their penny banks and additional fund raisers with an average of \$4.00 per member state wide.

I am very proud of the work we do here in the State of Michigan with our Charitable Grant and Major Project. The Commissioners of both have worked very hard this past year. Donations have increased and Major Project has been able to reinstate the camps and therapy that had to be cut the year before. We have touch so many kids this year that it really has a Great meaning of "Why we are Elks".

By the time everyone reads this newspaper. I will have attended four District meetings with only the Northeast and Southwest for the winter and spring visits. Debi and I have visited 19 out of the 54 Lodges in the state so far, this year with many more to come. We thank you all for the great hospitality and friendship that you have shown us this year.

We need to talk about the Membership here in the MEA. Our membership Chairman Ken Hines has done a fantastic job so far with getting are numbers down to near the 5% that

Grand Lodge is looking for. With our help, we can meet that goal. But it starts in the Lodges with recruiting quality and not quantity members to make the numbers look good. The members you initiate could be the leaders of tomorrow in your Lodge and in the State.

We will have the honor of having the Grand Exalted Ruler Malcolm J. McPherson, Jr. and First Lady Pat with us at the Fall Convention. Be sure to stop by and introduce yourself and welcome them, as all Michigan Elks know how.

Finally, I need to talk about two gentlemen that have shaped my life. They came from two different walks of life. One was an Elk and won was not. They both lived by the same values. The first was a member of the Elks by the name of James Brennan. He was secretary of Livonia for many years. Many members passed through there as Exalted Ruler during his time. He taught us what being an Elk was all about. When it came time to roast that ER at the end of his term. There was Jim talking about how the ER. How he never got a dinner. The second man was my father and as we shape our lives today. he taught me that challenging work will pay off. He also said that there are No Free Lunches in this World and that somewhere down the line that free lunch will cost you more then you could ever imagine. Both men had the same ideas and values of life. What they have taught us all we will never forget.

We need to continue to work on and for all the charities that we support. Be sure to send in all your donations by March 1st, 2018 to get credit this year for your Lodges donations. Debi and I are looking forward to seeing everyone in Grand Rapids at the Fall Convention.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You

First of all, Cheryl and I give out a huge Thank You to all of those who took part in the National Convention in Reno this past July. The response to our request for assistance with the hospitality room was fantastic. From procuring food and beverage, putting up and removal of decorations, running for ice, to serving beverages and working the raffle/50-50 table, you all added to the success we, as an Association, experienced. More than once our greeters heard from visitors from other states, that the Michigan hospitality room was the friendliest of those hospitality rooms they had visited.

The two social events held were also a great success. The Joint Indiana-Michigan Banquet held on Sunday evening was attended by over 200 members and guests including our State Sponsor, Mr. Jim, and other Past Grand Exalted Rulers, of which several noted that in all their travels to various State and other National Conventions, the banquet was the best they have had in years and thanked us. Now this event was not completely ours to do. Thanks also go out to Chuck Curtis, PSP of Indiana. Working with him and his team from the Indiana Elks Association this event went on without a hitch. We also have to give a shout out to the staff of the Nugget Resort & Casino for their outstanding job!



STAN CHUBINSKI
1st Vice President

Michigan Night at the Great Basin Brewery was also well attended with some 90 members and guests taking over a good portion of the facility for a relaxing evening of good food and drink.

Once again the staff did a fine job of serving meals and beverages promptly for a group of our size and mentioned to us that they enjoyed our group of Elks. They even had a sign in our dining area that said, "Welcome Michigan Elks".

Upon returning from Reno there was no rest as Cheryl and I, shortly after landing, headed directly up to the U.P. for the Major Project visitation to Bay Cliff and the U.P. Gold Key Golf Outing. Since then we have taken in several other Gold Key Outings and have had a great time with each event as well as a couple of District Meetings.

In closing, we look forward to seeing all at the Fall Convention in Grand Rapids!

Excited for Elkdom's 150th

Members of the Michigan Elks Association: I would like to give a big thanks to 1st Vice President Stan and his wife, Cheryl, for the great job they did at Reno hosting the Michigan Elks, what a fun time.

I am so looking forward to setting up the Hospitality for you in San Antonio, Elkdom's 150th birthday. Mark your calendars; it is July 1st thru the 4th. In our meeting with the housing group from Grand Lodge, the following information was passed along.

Opening ceremony will start at 5 pm, after opening there will dinner-trying to set up where each area would have their own cuisine. There are 8 different areas in Grand Lodge, so you could sample every areas food or just eat what you wish. Then there will be entertainment provided a big name: they have not released the name yet, do to finalizing contract. After that at 10:00 pm, the Elks will have a fireworks display to celebrate the 150th year of Elkdom. Grand Lodge is expecting over 10,000 elks to attend this convention. All hotels are going to be located along the River walk. On July 4th, San Antonio will have a fireworks display to celebrate their 300th birthday.



CHUCK OATTEN
2nd Vice President

Room rates will be around \$113.00 dollars a day. Free parking is very limited, but there are places that you can pay to park. Reservations will need to be filled out as soon I as I get the information.

We will only be allowed a certain number of rooms, it will be first come first served! So Please figure out how many will be going from your lodge and get information to me as soon as you can-don't wait around on this. Write this down: mielks.org. ,all information regarding the convention will be on this website. This will be the only place to get information.

GRAND LODGE

Youth programs: One way to strengthen Elkdom

The kids are back in school, fall weather is upon us, football is well underway, and Lodges across the country are about halfway through the fraternal year.

The start of a new season always brings with it the promise of change, which is why I suggest you use this month as a checkpoint of your progress as a Lodge. Take this time to evaluate what you have already accomplished, review your goals for the next several months, implement any changes necessary to finish with a successful year come March and make our 150th year of Elkdom the best yet.

One great area to focus on is your youth programs. A large part of “Strengthening Elkdom Through Community Awareness” is investing in the young people in our areas — they truly are the future of the Elks.

With school still fresh in kids’ minds, think about your scholarship programs and begin to identify candidates in your



MALCOLM J. MCPHERSON

Grand Exalted Ruler

Lodge to nominate for local, state and national awards. It’s important that we honor our hardworking students and guide them to a bright future.

In addition, local Hoop Shoot contests should be taking place

at Lodges across the country. This program is a fantastic way for our youngest future Elks to challenge themselves both mentally and physically, and learn that hard work and practice do reap rewards. Rally your eligible children to participate — you may have a national champion in your midst!

Finally, now is the time to motivate your children in grades fifth through eighth to submit essays for the Grand Lodge Americanism Essay Contest. This exercise promotes the Elks’ core value of patriotism while also encouraging young people to express their opinions and creativity.

These programs, as well as the many initiatives Elks are doing at the local and state levels, are all excellent ways we can ensure the Order of the Elks is thriving for the next 150 years. I’m eager to hear about your Lodge progress on my visits and perhaps even meet some of your incredible youth. See you soon!

DRUG AWARENESS

DEA forges ties with Elks as drug epidemic worsens

By Frank Scarpino
Special Contributor

Acting Drug Enforcement Administration Administrator Chuck Rosenberg — a guest of the Drug Awareness Program at the Elks National Convention in Reno in July — had a grim message in an address to convention delegates.

“More than 59,000 people die a year of drug overdoses, and it’s going to get worse,” he said, warning that while heroin addiction is already a nationwide epidemic, a synthetic opioid called fentanyl is 50 times as bad and is becoming increasingly popular.

“We can’t enforce, interdict and incarcerate our way out of this one,” said Rosenberg. “We have to change our culture, and that’s where good men and women like yourselves can help.”

Rosenberg, the highest-level U.S. government official to attend a Grand Lodge Convention in decades, noted two key areas where Elks can help fight the opioid epidemic. This call for help was also repeated by Sean Fearn, DEA chief of Community Outreach who spoke at the Drug Awareness Seminar at the Reno convention. As four of five heroin addicts get their start on prescription pain medicines, and most pain medicine addicts get their pills from people who have received them legitimately, a good way to help is to eliminate unneeded pain medications from people’s medicine cabinets. The DEA runs nationwide Prescription Drug Take-back Days twice yearly, and Elks can help by publicizing these days and volunteering to assist with local take-back efforts.

The next Take-back day is 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 28. Check the DEA website (dea.gov) for take-back sites in your community and encourage your Lodge Members to help spread the word in your community to take this opportunity to dispose of their old or unused medications.

A second way Elks can help is through interactions with young people. Rosenberg pointed out that “If you don’t start by the time you turn 25, odds are nearly zero you will ever become addicted.” Therefore, the Elks’ existing youth-oriented Drug Awareness Program is a great start, and two additional resources available from the DEA include an educational curriculum available from www.operationprevention.com and the movie “Chasing the Dragon,” a hard-hitting documentary produced by the DEA and FBI that reveals the true costs of heroin and opioid addiction.

For years, the DEA has focused on enforcing the nation’s controlled substances laws, and on bringing to the criminal and civil justice system those organizations involved in the growing, manufacture or distribution of controlled substances appearing in or destined for illicit traffic in the United States.

According to Fearn, the DEA can no longer ignore prevention — “without it we cannot keep up and we will lose the fight,” and the work that the Elks do is vital to help the DEA do their job.

NOTE: Other DEA websites for parents, teachers, and students: www.getsmartaboutdrugs.gov and www.justthinktwice.gov

VETERANS COMMITTEE

Befriend a veteran in need

By Mary K. Morgan
Commission Director

When it comes to veterans’ issues, it can be easy to feel overwhelmed. Hearing about the high rate of veteran suicides, the difficulties of comprehensive medical care and understanding ever-changing benefits can leave some volunteers feeling like there’s not much they can do to help.

However, a new study shows that it might be much easier than we thought to help.

Researchers at the University of Chicago and California show that improving health for veterans, especially older veterans, is something with which anyone can help.

The study shows that patients who reported higher rates of social isolation had worse health than expected. On the other hand, patients with the same health issues who reported lower rates of social isolation and closer ties with family and friends, had better health than expected.

The only difference between the groups was

more frequent contact and connection with other people. Good relationships and regular social interaction can improve physical health.

This study, which builds on previous research, affirms what many Adopt-A-Veteran volunteers have known: A small amount of your time can be invaluable to a veteran in need.

This is the perfect time to get involved with Adopt-A-Veteran. And it’s so easy to begin! Visit a local Veterans Administration facility, State Veterans Home, nursing home or transitional facility to connect with a local veteran in need. Then, simply be a friend.

Visit with them each month. Call them to check in and talk. Send a card on their birthday. Invite them to the Lodge for dinner. Watch a football game together. Reach out to them not just on holidays and special occasions, but in other times when much of the population isn’t thinking about veterans.

Your support and friendship can make a huge difference in their life.

SECRETARY MESSAGE

Keep old paper membership records

By Bryan R. Klatt
Grand Secretary

Each year, many Local Lodges have new and inexperienced Lodge Secretaries. With this office, there is a learning curve each new and continuing Secretary must navigate in order to manage this important responsibility, as well as the continuing education of our Constitution and Statutes, plus our CLMS2Web and PC membership programs.

A word to the wise: Never destroy or

discard paper membership applications and records. Those documents are the only records available. It is the responsibility of the Local Lodge to maintain the records indefinitely.

Sure, there is CLMS2, which started in fall 2008, but a vast majority of the old membership records, prior to 2008, were never entered into the program; hence those records need to be maintained in case a former Member requests a Reinstatement, a Certificate of Release or other membership information.

LODGE NEWS



South Haven lodge awards scholarships

South Haven Elks Lodge #1509 is proud to award two \$500 scholarships annually. This year's recipients are Carsen Boyd, daughter of Scott and Holly Boyd, and Jarrett Esman, son of Eric and Natalie Esman. Awards were presented by Tim Hendrix, Exalted Ruler. From left, Holly Boyd, Carsen Boyd, Tim Hendrix, Jarrett Esman, Eric Esman, Natalie Esman.



10th year for bowling and pizza parties

This year marks the 10th anniversary for Cadillac Lodge's annual hosting of our very popular Bowling and Pizza parties for challenged youth and young adults. Each July, several Cadillac Elk members host and chaperone a bowling and pizza party for a special group of youth and young adults. This event is anticipated with great joy by the bowlers. Each contributes \$1 as their expression of appreciation. This money is then donated to the Michigan Elks Major Projects. It is a wonderful demonstration of the fact that Elks Care and Elks Share! Pictured is Donielle Greeley releasing her bowling ball.

Golf outing benefits Gold Key

Gaylord Lodge #2544 held the Annual Golf Outing to benefit the Gold Key program. This year's event which was attended by 69 golfers generated an income of \$3,910. The outing was well attended by state officers, Gold Key commission members and our local state Senator. (pictured from left, State senator Jim Stamos, Gold Key chairman Dennis White and Mrs. Stamos.



BATTLE CREEK #131

Elks stock the pantry for veterans

Battle Creek Elks Lodge #131 recently concluded a successful project stocking the food pantry at Silver Star Apartments in Battle Creek, which provides housing for homeless veterans. Each month during the past year, the Lodge purchased food with funds obtained through Freedom and Gratitude Grants it received from the Elks National Foundation, and also conducted several food drives with drop-off sites at the Lodge, The Melges Group of Raymond James, and Henkel Automotive Group.

"Silver Star's food pantry assists up to 60 veterans each month, sometimes more during the holidays and other special circumstances. It was a privilege to honor the service of these veterans by helping stock the pantry. We look forward to continuing our association with Silver Star in the future," said Robert Donathan, Exalted Ruler of Battle Creek Elks Lodge #131.

For more information about the Elks, contact the Lodge at 269-288-8711.



Jay Wilkerson, Zero Day Support Services Coordinator, in the Food Pantry at Silver Star Apartments.



Initiation ceremony held

St. Joseph-Benton Harbor Lodge #541 performed the initiation ceremony at South Haven Lodge #1509 for 16 new members! What a great experience of camaraderie and fellowship! Past State President Chad High sat in on orientation and spoke a few words about our great organization. Thank you to the Officers from both Lodges for a spectacular night!

LODGE NEWS

CHARLEVOIX ELKS LODGE #2856

Veterans Poker Run and Pig Roast

Thanks to you, the Charlevoix Elks' 9th Annual V-Twins for Vets Poker Run & Pig Roast on August 19, 2017 was a huge success. We had over 80 riders participate which began with a pre-run event at the Lodge. The event included an ever-so-humble Blessing of the Bikes by Robin Sommer and concluded with a beautiful video that accompanied the singing of our national anthem. The bikes left the Lodge at noon and headed to Wolverine for our first stop at B.S. & Co. We then continued to Indian River to the Wigwam and then to the Elk Horn Grill in Vanderbilt. We headed from there to the Whi-Ski Inn in Boyne Falls and then on to the 7 Monks in Boyne City. Our return to the Lodge included a pig roast, flag ceremony and live and silent auctions.



Charlevoix Elks' 9th Annual V-Twins for Vets Poker Run & Pig Roast was held in August.

We also honored a local veteran, Gordon Koteskey, who served in the U.S. Coast Guard in the North Atlantic during WWII (1941-46). This 97 year old veteran told a story about him and a fellow service man convincing their commanders to allow them to switch ships and he later learned that his friend's ship was torpedoed and he died in the attack. Realizing his life had been spared, he vowed to live a life of service to others. What an honor it was for us to thank him for that service!!

And we want to take this

opportunity to also thank YOU, our donators and sponsors. Although final numbers are not yet calculated, we are certain we will exceed \$18,000. This year's funds will assist us in supporting the Northern Michigan Honor Flight, Hospice of Northwest Michigan's We Honor Vets Program, the Patriot Guard, our veteran fishing charter next June, Quilts of Valor, the work of our local Veteran's Administration, and local veterans in need of food, clothing, and gas. We could not

do this without your support as well as the support of all our volunteers. We also want to send out a special thank you to James and Patricia Anderson for their generous donation and Bill and Susan Ritchie for their ongoing support through our live and silent auctions. On behalf of us and the Charlevoix Elks Lodge #2856, we are humbled by and thank you all for your support. Most importantly, we want to thank our service men and women for their service to protect our freedom! Let Freedom Ring!

Elks funding helps with classroom expense

On July 15, 2017, Barry Skuza, Trustee, and Barb Dotson, Secretary, of the South Haven Elks Lodge presented \$500 checks to Betsi Versaput and Hailea Kasishke, both teachers at Lincoln School. The money will be used for classroom equipment and supplies.



Service dogs Valor and Chili.

BATTLE CREEK ELKS LODGE #131

Service dog program supported

Battle Creek Elks Lodge #131 recently concluded a successful project supporting Dog Zone's service dog program. Dog Zone has a program that provides highly trained service dogs to veterans.

The Lodge was able to purchase service dog equipment for these veterans with funds obtained through a Gratitude Grant the Lodge received from the Elks National Foundation.

The Lodge also conducted a can and bottle drive that raised an

additional \$933, for a total project amount of \$1,850. "Our members really got behind this project and made it a success," said Robert Donathan, Exalted Ruler of Battle Creek Elks Lodge #131.

"Dog Zone staff is truly dedicated to providing support to veterans receiving service dogs. They are tireless in their efforts.

Our Lodge is honored to support this program and looks forward to continuing our association with Dog Zone in the future," said Donathan.

Grand Rapids Elks Lodge No. 48

Purple Pig Italian Dinner

and
Beautiful Things Silent Auction
to benefit
Major Project

Elks have been helping special needs children for 60 years!
Let's CELEBRATE our BIRTHDAY of 60 years of helping children!!!



November 4, 2017
6:00 PM
\$10.00 per person

Betty's homemade sauce, meatballs and spaghetti dinner, salad, garlic bread and special dessert!
Cash bar - RSVP is required!
Sign up at the bar

We are honored that State President, Joe Antonishek and First Lady Debi will be joining us!

Table reservations of 8 or more welcomed! Please indicate at sign up!

Let's rock the house and show our pride in helping special needs kiddos!

GRAND LODGE

ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

What project is your Lodge doing to make a difference in your community?

By David B. Lake
Committee Member

I want to share with you what some Lodges are doing in their communities:

■ Lompoc, CA Lodge #2274 hosted a party for about 45 children and adults with special needs and more than 100 well-wishers. The event featured lunch, balloon art, music provided by a DJ, games and safety demonstrations by police and firefighters. The event was held with the help of a \$2,000 Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant.

■ Liberty, NY Lodge 1545 held a Christmas party for more than 250 needy children. The event was held with the help of a \$2,500 ENF Promise Grant.

■ Weiser, ID Lodge 1683 used a \$2,000 ENF Beacon Grant to sponsor a Youth Bowling League that met for eight weeks.

■ Brockport, NY Lodge 2110 used part of a \$2,000 ENF Beacon Grant to purchase backpacks and school supplies for 48 needy elementary school students.

■ Barre, VT Lodge 1535 used part of a \$2,000 Elks National Veterans Service Commission Freedom Grant to provide Welcome-Home Kits filled with linens, pillows, coffee machines, kitchen ware and other home supplies to eight veterans who were moving out of a residential facility for recently homeless veterans, and into their own housing.

■ Covington, GA Lodge 1806 used a \$2,500 ENF Gratitude Grant to donate 1,600 dictionaries to local third-graders.

Is your Lodge taking advantage of the grants that are available from ENF and ENVSC for your Lodge's Community Project(s)? A special 2017-18 Anniversary Grant worth \$1,500 is available. It's an opportunity to do more in your community and to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of our Order.

Please make sure your Lodge applies for this grant. By using the available grants for Community Projects in our communities we can achieve our GER McPherson's theme "Strengthening Elkdom through Community Awareness."

AMERICANISM

Reach students through patriotic programs

By Randy Boudreau
MEAAmericanism Chairman

I hope all of our members have had a wonderful summer celebrating our country, especially on Memorial Day the Fourth of July and Labor Day. It is always appropriate to display and salute our flag any day of the year, but the holidays are even more special and deserving.

September 11 is also a day to show that you are proud to be an American and a time to salute and honor the Fire, Police and First Responder personnel for all they do to help us and keep us safe!

The Essay and Coloring Contest information may be obtained at mielks.org

under Programs, then Americanism. Every Lodge should participate in distributing these contests to the appropriate schools in their area.

These contests and the Teach the Flag in School program are some of the few contacts we have maintained to reach the children of our communities. Please make sure your schools have enough copies of these contests to provide that every student can obtain an entry.

If you need copies of these contests and are unable to print them, please contact me at rand1b@yahoo.com or 989-506-6332 and I will do my best to get you the amount of entries that you need to cover all the students in your community.

I should also have extra copies at the Fall Convention in Grand Rapids at the Americanism booth. Please distribute this information to as many schools as you can so they are aware of our commitment to Americanism and Patriotism.

Don't forget that Veterans Day is on the horizon. We should display the flags of the military branches, the MIA/POW flag and the flag of our country as we honor these special people who have fought for the American principles we hold dear to our hearts.

I hope all of you are Proud to be an American (which I'm positive you are) and God Bless the U.S.A.

SCHOLARSHIP

MVS program underway

By Jack McClelland
State Scholarship Chairman

Our Most Valuable Student (MVS) scholarship program began on September 1, 2017 student applications are available but only on line. The application is available for downloading by visiting enf.elk.org/mvs. Applications deadline is due on line to the Grand Lodge by November 27, 2017.

If your Lodge Secretary has registered your Scholarship Chair on CLMS (CLMS2Web) and made the assignment as the Lodge Scholarship Coordinator, the lodge chairperson will have full access privileges the next time he or she logs into elks.org. With that access, the chairperson will get to the scholarship dashboard from Grand Lodge for the judging process.

Based on feedback from the volunteers in the field the following implementation came about. When the lodge chairperson contact the schools or counselors in your jurisdiction inform them to select your lodge for the applicant. Now, applicants will choose from a drop-down of the five closest Lodge from the list.

This year, the Elks National Foundation will again award 500 Most Valuable Student scholarships worth \$2.44 million. For details on these four-year scholarships, which range from \$4,000 to \$50,000 visit enf.elk.org/mvs.

Eligibility is for any Michigan high school senior who is a U.S. citizen. After the MEA State Scholarship judging we will send 16 students application to the Grand Lodge for judging, there will be 8-boys and 8-girls included in that submittal. MEA will also award 32 girls and 32 boys with \$1,000 one-year scholarships. Many of our state lodges also offer scholarships to students from this scholarship program.

Legacy Awards

Did you know? Because of their relationship to the Elks through a parent or grandparent, Legacy Awards recipients are ask to serve with the Elks at least once per year.

Eligibility for the 2018 Legacy Award contest, is for any child or grandchild (or stepchild, step-grandchild, or legal ward) of a dues paying Elk. The ENF will fund 300 four-year scholarships worth \$4,000, an increase of 50 this year; Michigan will receive six of those allocations.

Some important date to put on your calendars:

■ Sept. 1, 2017 MVS application available on line

■ Sept. 1, 2017 - Feb. 3, 2018 11:59 pm Legacy Awards contest

■ Nov. 27, 2017 MVS applications due to Grand Lodges

■ Dec. 5-20, 2017 Lodge MVS Judging

■ Jan.3-15, 2018 District MVS Judging

■ Feb. 7-26, 2018 State MVS Judging

These scholarship programs would not be possible without dedicated volunteers and contributors to the ENF like you. Thank you for your dedication to and promotion of the ENF scholarship programs. We look forward to welcoming another class of outstanding Elks scholars into the Elks family in April 2018.

Finally, our State President Joe Antonishek has set his sights of 100% participation for the MVS program by all Lodges. Please get the word out to the high schools and students about our programs.

Engage Elks scholars in meaningful service at your Lodge, because today's Elks scholars can be tomorrow's Elks.

GOLD KEY

Big boost from golf outings

By Geno Grabinski
Southeast District Gold Key Commissioner

Summer is over. That means the great heart of Elkdom was just a drive and a putt away. This year, the Gold Key Golf Outings (one in every district) raised quite a bit of money to help special needs students to have an opportunity to further their education. It is because of you, the members, that this is possible.

The Gold Key Commissioners are now having a monthly conference call on the last Wednesday of each month. We encourage all lodge Gold Key Chairman to join in on this call, the number is 1-712-775-7031 and the meeting ID# is 753598735. Your District Gold Key Commissioners should be sending you out information on what is discussed on this call but we welcome your participation as well.

Please check our website www.mielksgoldkey.org for this year's scholarship applications. The website is being tweaked as it crashed over the summer. But it will be up and ready before the deadline. Students must fill these forms out completely online. Applications will not be accepted online unless they are completely filled out. Deadline for the applications to be filled out and filed online is December 1st. They will then be reviewed and judging will take place in February. Winners will be contacted by March 1st.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact you're lodge chairman or district commissioner.

STATE NEWS

ENF | GIVING

‘Top 10 Challenge’ update

By Brad Saegesser
ENF State Chairperson

In the July 2017 issue of the Michigan Elks Newsletter, I announced a Top \$10 Challenge – Beat Kentucky. In the 2016-17 Elks fiscal year, Kentucky was ranked #10 in per member giving with \$10.33. Michigan was ranked #40 with \$6.37 per member. I want to challenge us get into the Top \$10 by increasing our per member giving to the ENF to \$10, which should get us into the Top 10 in the U.S.

As of August 31, 2017, Michigan is ranked #34 with \$2.48 in per member giving. Kentucky is ranked #6 with \$5.64. We’ve got some catching up to do, but I am confident we can do it. All we need is for every Elks member in the great state of Michigan to donate \$10 this year to the ENF. Think about it – \$10. That’s just a couple of Starbucks coffees or five candy bars. Most of us probably have way more than \$10 in change just sitting in a jar at home. Let’s put that money to good use. For every \$1 donated to the ENF, more than \$4 comes back to us in the form of Community Investments Program Grants, Scholarships, and State Association Grants.

Congratulations to the Battle Creek Elks Lodge #131. They are already a member of the Top \$10 Club with \$11.75 in per member giving to the ENF. Congrats also the following Elks Lodges who are already ahead of Kentucky. Hopefully all of these Elks Lodges will be members of the Top \$10 Club by the January 2018 issue of the Michigan Elks Newsletter.

- Lapeer Area #2567 (\$8.88)
- Muskegon #274 (\$8.87)
- Albion #1798 (\$8.85)
- Allen Park #2194 (\$7.89)
- Tawas Area #2525 (\$6.38)
- Escanaba #354 (\$6.14)
- Copper Country #404 (\$6.07)
- Gaylord Area #2544 (\$6.04)
- Bay City #88 (\$5.94)

I challenge everyone reading the October 2017 issue of the Michigan Elks News to help us get into the Top \$10. As State Officers, State Chairpersons, Lodge Trustees, and Lodge Officers, we should all already be donating at least \$10 to the ENF every year. It’s easy, just go on-line and make a one-time donation, www.elks.org/ENF/supportENF.cfm.

If you are already a member of the Top \$10 Club, encourage your fellow Elks members to join you.

ORGAN DONOR

Inspiring story of organ donation

By Kimberly Deckard
Organ Donor Chairperson

The following is a speech given at the Elks Michigan State Spring Convention this past May in Sault St. Marie by Mary, whose husband is an organ donor recipient. In addition to being a very inspiring story, you will find a surprise “it’s a small world” connection at the end.

My husband Larry was diagnosed with end-stage emphysema in May of 2006 and in December of 2010 he was placed on the waiting list for a lung transplant. When we found out he had been placed on the waiting list, we were conflicted about feeling relief or hope—because lung transplantation is not possible from a living donor. You just don’t know what to “hope” for – you know that you have no possibility of recovery (that’s why you’re on a transplant waiting list), so you have to prepare yourself for your own demise, or the demise of a total stranger who may someday save your life.

Over the course of the 54 months and 7 days that he was on the waiting list, I watched my husband’s health descend to the point that he couldn’t walk across our living room – while on oxygen – without stopping to gasp for breath. I watched the hope drain from his eyes, and I prayed that he couldn’t see the hope draining out of mine when I told him “hang in there” and “don’t give up.” Eventually I started feeling like it wasn’t fair of me to ask him to keep fighting, so I told him I understood if he needed to let go.

The donor registry gives hope to those who are clutching to life by a thread, because you never know how anybody will be called from this Earth. So, if someone is called, and they are at least on the donor registry, that might improve your chance of surviving another year, 5 years, 10 years, or maybe more. And you think about what you can do with that time; how you can make a difference. Of all the transplant recipients that we’ve met, they share a common thread of wanting to pay it forward, to be considered worthy of receiving the most generous gift possible. They want to make a

difference, and they do.

A few days ago my husband and I attended services for a friend of ours who we met through our Organ Transplant Support Group. Sandy had received a double-lung transplant at U of M 5 years ago after having been diagnosed with Scleroderma. She received her transplant relatively quickly because of the rapid progression of her illness. Sandy was a beautiful soul and she was a fighter. She blazed a trail of courage for Larry to follow when he finally received his transplant.

The Celebration of her Life was in a venue about this size, and the place was packed. The mother of Sandy’s organ donor was there too. I watched and listened as Sandy’s 14 grandchildren got up on stage and told us their favorite memories of their grandma. The youngest was just a toddler, and the oldest grandchild was 20, so she was about 15 when Sandy received her transplant. There were 4 or 5 grandchildren who never would’ve had the opportunity to know their beautiful grandma, and there were many lessons they never would have learned from her, had it not been for the loving gift left by Sandy’s donor Michelle.

I listened as her grand children spoke of the lessons of love, faith, fortitude, and the importance of family and community that they learned from Sandy in those extra 5 years. I wept as her oldest granddaughter thanked her grandpa - Sandy’s husband - for teaching them by example how to stay true to your wedding vows "in sickness and in health, until death do us part." I thought about all the people in that room that Sandy had had a positive impact on in those 5 extra years of her life. Take a look around this room and imagine all those people that you could impact in such a great way by being an organ donor. Now multiply that by 8-because that’s how many lives can be saved by one organ donor. And up to 50 more can be impacted by gifts of tissue and eyesight. What a wonderful legacy of life a donor can leave.

We recently learned that Larry’s donor was an 18 year-old female. We don’t know her

name, but we write to her family through Gift of Life MI and hope that someday they’ll want to meet us and our family. We want to thank them for Larry’s chance to know his 7 beautiful great-grandchildren, and for his ability to play with them and help them grow, and to not only walk the length of our living room, but to take long walks in the woods. We want to thank them for his ability to blow out all the candles on his birthday cake- the first time he’s been able to do that in over 10 years. We want to let them know that we celebrate her life every June 8th – the day of Larry’s transplant in 2015 – and that she’s always with us; she’s living and growing and experiencing life with us. We want her to be proud of what we’re doing with the extra time she’s given us. We want her loved ones to know that we care for her and that we love her.

As of May 1, 2017 there were 3,474 men, women, and children in Michigan – 125,000 nationwide - waiting for life-saving organ transplants. We need to drastically increase registrations, and here’s why: 95% of US adults support organ donation, yet only 48% nationwide are actually signed up. Every 10 minutes another person is added to the waiting list. Only 3 in 1,000 people pass in a way that allows for organ donation. The waiting list continues to grow.

I urge you to share the importance of donor registration with your communities, and to let the members of your community know that if they have any questions or concerns about registering for organ donation they can go to the Gift of Life MI website-or call them-to get answers. There are so very many myths and misconceptions about donation, but Gift of Life MI has the facts.

After Mary gave her inspiring story, she was approached by Lisa Held, a member of Alma Lodge #1400. It turns out that Sandy- the organ donor recipient who passed away in the story- is the mother of Lisa! It is a small world indeed.

This just proves we never know whose life we will touch or help when we give the ultimate gift- the gift of life.

ACCIDENT PREVENTION/RISK MANAGEMENT

Prepare for lodge inspection

By Don Smith
Chairman

Your District Deputies will be doing Lodge visitations in the upcoming months. At that time, they will do the self-inspection for your Lodge and provide me with a copy. I will follow up with your Lodge if there are any problems.

Things to check off your Lodge’s maintenance list during the fall months include storing any patio furniture; ensuring smoke detectors are operational; having working carbon monoxide detectors if the Lodge is heated with natural gas, LP, or oil; removing leaves from roofs, gutters, sidewalks, and parking lots; storing garden hoses; and having chimneys inspected.

As the weather becomes colder and wetter, it is important to clean up water and debris promptly to avoid slippery floors since that may contribute to falls. Keep sidewalks and parking lots free of snow and ice. These areas should also be illuminated to permit safe, easy access to and from the Lodge.

With the holidays and their accompanying festivities approaching, remember only trained bartenders, whether they are employees or volunteers, can serve alcoholic beverages to members and their guests. Bartenders may not drink while on duty.

A person or organization using Lodge facilities around the holidays or for any other special occasion must sign an indemnity agreement and provide a Certificate of Insurance that names the Lodge as additional insured for that particular event. If the organization or individual cannot provide a Certificate of Insurance that names the Lodge as additional insured on their insurance policy, special event policies can be obtained by contacting Aon Affinity Services at 1-800-421-3557.

STATE NEWS

RITUAL

Impress new members on initiation night

By Pat Morgan

Ritual Chairman

The dust has settled and the long form Initiation Ritual will be used in all Lodges across the land.

I personally couldn't be happier! We judges would have soon been out of a job!

Let's all reckon with this and get back to basics. Remembering always that you can "hook" your future Officers and Committee Persons on that night that they are initiated into our Order. That's what it's all about. Always has been and always will be. We are seeing a few more PER's taking the Judge's Test and becoming Ritualistic Judges. This is a great sign.

This is your opportunity as a group of Officers and members waiting, or trying to decide whether or not to become Officers in your Lodges, to do what we all preach. Impress those new members on their induction night!

We Judges can and will help! Whether it be a strategically planned Ritual Night by visiting performers on one of your Induction Nights, or a class of Officers in any District in the State wanting a Ritual Clinic to help you become better performers.

We Judges can't be any more clear in our mission. We love our Ritual and we want our volunteer time to be spent promoting the good things about it and helping your Lodge Officers build a team of friendships for life. Confidence building, strong leadership skills, an overall happier environment at our meeting. These things are all tied together.

Call on any of us and let us know what we can do for you. This Ritual thing is something we must do anyway. Why do any of us accept less than even mediocrity in the performance of our Initiation Ritual?

It does not have to be this way. It shouldn't be this way. The Officer corps realistically changes over every 6 years. If not, you have to fix this to save your Lodge!

I encourage each and every one of you to ask yourselves, "What can we do to make this more fun and worthwhile?" To do nothing is a waste of time, at least discuss it. Ask us to help you.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you. E-mails or phone calls are always welcomed. Even nasty ones if you are so inclined. At least we'll know that you are reading these commitments of ours, to YOU.

MAJOR PROJECT

Celebrating 60 years as the state major project

By Diane Dusendang

Executive Director

Major Project is wrapping up the Camping Season! At this writing, we will have helped almost 300 special needs children attend various therapy camps throughout the state of Michigan! Hooray for Michigan Elks! We hope that every member understands the financial impact that YOU helped to make happen – giving each child the opportunity to learn, grow AND have the fun of attending a summer camp where they are included in activities where they might not be normally. ONE lodge cannot do it by itself, but together our 54 lodges made it happen! AND, it's not just the CAMPS, it is the ongoing individual CASES (34 thus far and at this writing) that, together, we make possible throughout our Elk year! Year after YEAR!

We are celebrating 60 years as the State Major Project!!! This dream, this vision...cooked up in the upper peninsula...became a reality in 1957! We can only remain grateful to these fine gentlemen for having a vision. Carl Fernstrum and Robert Burns...2 gentlemen who sat down with a simple idea and helped to make it a reality. The original Commissioners, and all those that followed are a part of that history; maintaining high standards, seeking ways to educate our membership about the Major Project, and of course, our members for generously and selflessly donating countless hours and dollars to keep special needs children's needs at the forefront. We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the MEA Leadership throughout these 60 years, for helping to give our Major Project a start and continuously promote this fine program. We continue to be blessed by our membership, and on this 60th Anniversary year, we thank you all from the bottom of our hearts for your support.

The fundraising continues, year after year. The excitement of reaching our budget goals never gets old, because we know how much it means to the families of these special children, and especially to the children themselves. Thank-you letters written by children, mom's and dad's, grandparent's, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles ... they are heartfelt, and we cherish each and every one of them. At the Fall and Spring Convention, we will continue to have these thank you letters at our booth, so you can take a look through and feel the impact this

office and the Commissioners are so lucky to see. We post some of these on our Facebook page, and there, we share the stories of these kiddos so you too will feel the gratitude.

The Major Project continues to look for ways to keep our momentum going, whether it is by reducing the paperwork, firming up our procedures, raising the bar for accountability from our Camps, responding quickly to those in need, and doing it with a helpful spirit and "can-do" attitude. We continue to look for ways to raise funds that are not typical, but always working on creating new ideas! Our "Passive Giving" program with Kroger Community Rewards, Spartan Nash Grocery Receipts, promoting dollar matching with corporations and our membership, and promoting the Donation Envelopes to include more than memorials to things like Anniversary Celebrations (thank you Deckard's from the Pontiac-Waterford Lodge!), Birthday Celebrations (thank you Jacob Vasquez, spouse of Grand Rapids Lodge!), and "just because". We will continue to look for other creative ways to make a difference in raising funds.

Education of our Major Project is CRITICAL in all we do. We have started Major Project Lodge Chairmen conference calls quarterly. Our next call will be our 3rd Quarter in November. These are 30 minute calls, with an agenda. Our goal is to give our Major Project Lodge Chairmen the TOOLS they need, create camaraderie among the lodges, perhaps a fun competitive atmosphere, and help to raise awareness of the Major Project within our lodges. I urge ALL Major Project Chairmen to give 30 minutes a quarter – it will not only be a gift of knowledge to YOU, but to your members and ultimately, the children.

The 3rd Quarter conference call will be posted on mielks.org/programs/MajorProject, as well as emailed to all Major Project Lodge Chairmen that this office has a valid address for!

Finally, the Major Project Commission and Gold Key are kicking off our Third Annual Charitable Raffle. Funds raised will be split between the Major Project and Gold Key. This year, the opportunity exists for up to 12 cash prizes, the ability for lodges to earn charitable dollars, and includes a cash prize to the lodges who sell the most tickets; 1st prize of \$500, 2nd prize of \$250 and 3rd prize of \$100! We can't wait to see who brings it home!

ENF

Don't pass on this opportunity

By Brad Saegesser

ENF State Chairperson

Every single Elks Lodge in Michigan is eligible for a \$2,000 Beacon Grant – no strings attached. You don't have to meet the ENF per-capita giving goal. All you have to do is come up with an idea and ENF will help your Lodge become a beacon of hope to the community. And, this year only, you can SUPERSIZE your Beacon Grant by adding on the \$1,500 Anniversary Grant, which celebrates the 150th anniversary of the Elks. That's \$3,500 of FREE MONEY. The Beacon Grant application is very easy to complete and you just check a box to add-on the Anniversary Grant. What are you waiting for? Are you going to pass up the opportunity to bring \$3,500 to your community?

I know, you are sitting there in your recliner thinking, "but to apply for a Beacon Grant, I have to come up with an idea for the project. That sounds like work." You couldn't be more wrong. ENF has provided information on the Elks website for InstaGrants – five projects that other Elks Lodges have done in their communities with Beacon Grants. The ENF has practically written the Beacon Grant application for you if you try one of these projects. Check out InstaGrants at http://www.elks.org/SharedElksOrg/enf/files/InstaGrants_Beacon.pdf and a simplified Beacon Grant application at <http://www.elks.org/SharedElksOrg/enf/files/BeaconGrantApplicationBreakdown.pdf>.

There are 54 Elks Lodges in Michigan. As of September 11, 2017, only six Elks Lodges in Michigan have applied for a Beacon Grant. Five of those Beacon Grants have been approved and four have been supersized with an Anniversary Grant. Congrats to Copper Country Elks Lodge #404, Big Rapids Elks Lodge #974, Negaunee Elks Lodge #1116, Flat Rock Elks Lodge #1731, and Albion Elks Lodge #1798. I hope that by the time I write my ENF article for the January 2018 Michigan Elks Newsletter, we have a lot more approved supersized Beacon Grants. If you have any questions or would like help writing a Beacon Grant application, please don't hesitate to contact me.

STATE NEWS

Planning your drug awareness program

To help with the planning and scheduling of your Drug Awareness Program and its events the following schedule was developed.

It is not designed to contain all Drug Awareness Events, just some of them. Please use this schedule to aid you in growing your Drug Awareness Program.

If there is an event you would like to see added, please let me know.

October

■ DRUG AWARENESS MONTHRED RIBBON WEEK. Are your Lodges and District signing up for the Alex's Lemonade Stand?

■ National Drug Take Back Day is October 28, 2017

■ State Enrique Camarena Award Winners due to Mr. Bryan by December 15

■ Are you working on your Drug Awareness Poster Contest?

■ Are you planning for Alcohol Awareness Week in November?

■ Planning for a Great American Smokeout event on the third Thursday of November, should be completed.

■ Remind your District's and Lodges to enter all DAP information into CLMS.

November

■ Is your Lodges and District signing up for the Alex's Lemonade Stand?

■ Alcohol Awareness Week

■ Great American Smoke out on the third Thursday of November.

■ State Enrique Camarena Award Winners due to Mr. Bryan by December 15

■ Are you working to nominate someone for the President Volunteer Service Award?

■ Remind your Districts and Lodges to enter all DAP information into CLMS.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Tips to organize youth involvement, activities

By Diana Armstrong
State Youth Activity Chairperson

It is that time again when the kids are back in school and there are so many activities planned for our Youth! Do you have your Hoop Shoot scheduled? Do you have your Pumpkin Patch scheduled? What about the Dictionary Project? Have you started planning for your Halloween and Christmas parties? Think about bringing Elroy the Elk into the facility for these activities and present drug awareness brochures to the parents at the same time. Youth Awareness and Drug Awareness can go hand in hand. Ask your committee chairs to work together when planning these events. The Hoop Shoot is a great time to pass out fliers and drug awareness information to all of the participants and parents. Put together a small bag of goodies for each of the Hoop Shoot Participants and include drug awareness brochures, rulers, airplanes and other drug awareness goodies. This is a great time to show the families what the Elks are about.

It is important to work with your local communities and try to get them involved in some of our youth programs. The Hoop Shoot along with the Dictionary Project are both ways to involve local communities including schools. By working with the communities and inviting others into your lodges, you will find that this can also help membership to grow. Scholarship deadlines are right around the corner! Let your membership and others know about the scholarships and how the Elks take pride in being part of this great program.

Steven Davis Elks Committee Chair writes "At the core of all Elks Youth Activities, is the importance of providing fun filled, productive, character-building activities for our youth. It doesn't take long before one truly appreciates the impact these programs have on our youngsters."

A few of the goals to all Lodges from our State President, Joe Antonishek include:

■ Conduct a youth program that involves the community

■ Participate in student certificate awards

■ Increase the number of Lodges who are participating in Scouts

These goals should be a guide to help each Lodge to add Youth Activities in your Communities.

Are you aware of the Antlers/Junior Elks Program? I saw on Facebook where another Lodge in another state was installing "Junior Elks" into their program. The officers were participating in the installation and it sure looked like a fun time. The Antlers program is for youth between 12 years and 20 years old to form their own "Junior Elks Program" This program helps to encourage the youth once they turn 21 to become Elk Members, thus helping to grow Membership! I have not heard of any Lodge in Michigan participating in this program. If you have a program like this or know of a Lodge doing this program, please let me know. If you are interested in forming an Antler's Program, don't hesitate to contact me for help.

Another program that involves older youth is the Scouting program called Venturing. This program is inclusive of the Boy Scouts of America for both male and female youth ages 14-21. The program focuses on building character, developing citizenship and personal fitness. A Venturing crew is led by youth officers providing and learning leadership skills. Another great program sponsored by the Boy Scouts of America.

Providing Youth Programs in your Lodges only helps to increase membership by showing the communities what the Elks are all about.

Don't forget to use your Youth Activities Manual to help understand our Youth Programs.

Remember, the Youth of Today are the Elks of Tomorrow!

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Who are Elks, and what do they do?

By Phil Boss
MEA State Public Relations
Chairperson.

How many times have you been asked this question? Let me ask you this, before you became a member how many of you could have really, truly answered this question and I don't mean the stereotypical answer, it's the local social club with cheap drink prices. I will be honest I could not have answered it correctly.

How many of you have heard of these companies, Menards, Farmers Insurance, NAPA, and Wal-Mart? How have you heard about these companies? Yep that's right, TV, Radio, Internet, Newspapers & Social Media. They have departments in their companies that focus only on promoting their brand, their message over, over and over again. It's so often for example, as soon as someone mentions Menards, somebody else says "save big money".

Bet you're saying to yourself is he ever going to get to the point, yes, yes, I am. As Elks we need to promote our brand, our message over, over and over again, same as those big companies.

Use the tools we have at our disposal, Facebook, twitter, snapchat, email, TV, Radio and your local Newspaper.

It doesn't matter how big or small the events, the causes or the contributions are, promote, promote, promote our Elks Brand and our image. One of the goals of the MEA Public Relations team is to build a database listing out local media outlets for use in further promoting our message. More information on that in the next newsletter.

In the meantime, Be that Elk, get the word out, tell those non-Elk members who we really are and what we really do. We are so much more than the local "social club with cheap drink prices."

Convention dates set

By Howard Diehl, PSP
Director, MEA Convention
Committee

Plans are in place for the Michigan Elks Annual Fall Convention being held at Crowne Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids – October 19 - 22, 2017.

All Reservation and Banquet Forms are available on the Michigan Elks website.

Upcoming Michigan Elks Association conventions, after our Fall Convention,

will be held at the following locations:

■ Spring 2018: May 17-20, 2018 - Kewadin Resort, Sault Ste. Marie

■ Fall 2018: Oct. 18 – 21, 2018 - Radisson Plaza Hotel, Kalamazoo

■ Spring 2019: May 16 – 19, 2019 - Kewadin Resort, Sault Ste. Marie

■ Fall 2019: Oct. 17 – 20, 2019 – Bavarian Inn, Frankenmuth

■ Spring 2020: May 14 – 17, 2020 – Kewadin Resort, Sault Ste. Marie

Future convention locations are always being investigated. Room reservation and banquet facility availability, and pricing, to fit the needs and price range of our delegation are always our foremost concern. Please contact one of the Convention Committee Members should you have questions or suggestions for future planning of convention sites.

I would like to thank the other members of the Convention Committee who spend endless hours in preparation for these conventions;

Past State President George Sermon and his wife Shelley; our new member, State Trustee, Jerry Alexie and his wife Stephanie; and of course my wife, Jeannie.

LODGE NEWS

ST. JOSEPH-BENTON HARBOR ELKS LODGE #541
**Elks present flag to Girl Scout
 for earning Silver Award**



St. Joseph-Benton Harbor Elks Lodge #541 presented Caleigh Dahn with an American Flag for accomplishing her Girl Scouts Silver Award, the equivalent of the Boy Scouts Eagle Scout Award.

Caleigh's Silver Award was a "Buddy Bench" presented to the Grace Christian School in Watervliet. It is a safe place where students can sit and silently say they want a friend. The purpose is to take a stand against bullying, and let all kids feel included. The project has received positive acclaim from students and teachers alike.

For her next project in July, Caleigh will be attending a summer destination camp in Costa Rica to learn about Panama's coastal ecology, and assist with sea turtle conservation efforts. She is raising funds through working, she held a 5k run/walk fundraiser. The 541 Elks is helping to fund her learning experience.

She will develop a lesson plan for elementary students, and hopefully spark some interest in science and ecology. Caleigh plans on returning to the Lodge this fall to tell us about her experiences.



Lodge sponsors championship team

Sturgis Elks Lodge #1381 annually sponsors a local Little League baseball team and this year that team won the championship! The team was treated to a pizza party at the lodge to celebrate their fabulous season. The team is pictured with ER Willy Watrous and coaches. Congratulations, boys!



Donation to food pantry

The South Haven Elks Lodge provided \$1,000 from its Gratitude Grant to the First Congregational Church "We Care" food pantry. James "Scotty" Mears (right) from the Elks Lodge presented the check to Shirlee Clark (left). The food pantry is dedicated to providing food to needy families within the greater South Haven area. The pantry is open three mornings a week, and is supported by a staff of 14 volunteers.

WARRIORS

Continued from cover

Our Bay City Lodge is the presenting sponsor for this great veterans event, but would never be able to do it without the support that we have from the community, we have some great sponsor who help with donations of money, supplies and their time. The Soaring Eagle and Saganing Eagles Landing provides bag lunches for all the veterans and boat captains and first mates, Frank's Great Outdoors supplies all the bait, Northwood's Wholesale donates a great deal of merchandise to give away, ATS prints hundreds of shirts that are worn by the veterans, volunteers, boat captains and first mates.....and many, many more.

And of course we can't thank our members enough for your support of this program along with donations from their ENF Gratitude Grant and in partnership with the Michigan Elks Association, we are able to present this program for our veterans. For more information or to get involved in this great event, stay tuned to our Elk Tales.

"So long as there are veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them."



Flag Day in Bay City

Bay City Elks Lodge #88 held its Flag Day event on the stern of the Edson. Our Exalted Ruler Kellie Snyder led the Pledge of Allegiance.