



COURTESY OF STURGIS JOURNAL

Volunteers helped youth select footwear in December at Sturgis Elks annual "Boots & Shoes" event

STURGIS ELKS LODGE #1381

Footwear for youth with 'Boots and Shoes'

About 55 K-2 students in Sturgis are more prepared for the holidays and winter weather.

Sturgis Elks and Kiwanis clubs collaborated for "Boots & Shoes" in December.

Here's how it works: Sturgis schools provide a list of students who may benefit from the program.

Adults from the two clubs go into the community to provide rides to and from the event for students. They make a stop at Willer's Shoes, where children are fitted for a new pair of boots

or shoes. Willer's provides footwear to Elks at or below-cost, said owner Todd Maynard, who has participated in the program for years.

Students also go to St. John's Episcopal Church for a pizza party that includes visits with Santa and a gift.

Scott Boland, who organizes the Elks portion of the event along with his wife, Natalie, said "Boots & Shoes" has been running pretty much the same way for years now.

"It works really well," he said.



Harry Daniels, Pam Rayne, Jerry Seidner, Joan Rowland, "Boots for Kids" President Don Schmuckle and Terry Husby.

TRAVERSE CITY ELKS LODGE #323

Lodge collaborates with 'Boots for Kids'

Traverse City Elks Lodge #323 its Promise Grant to partner with "Boots for Kids" to provide 880 pairs of boots, hats, gloves, socks, and dental supplies to students in need

in 24 local area schools and agencies. Elk members worked with 8 students from Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools to unload and sort boots according to size and gender.

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Elks Michigan
usa newsletter

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NEWS AND NOTES

Christmas for soldiers and their families



Cadillac Elks provided Christmas dinner and Santa with gifts for the soldiers and families of Company D, 3-126 Infantry at their armory. Company D will be deploying to Afghanistan and the Cadillac Elks wanted to ensure that their Christmas party was memorable! Freedom Grant funding helped to defray the costs.

Maintain balance with transfer dimit

Secretaries: Transfer dimit must be processed in a timely manner. Currently there are more than 2,000 incomplete transfer dimit.

The CLMS2Web program automatically transfers the member's information from the outgoing Lodge computer to the incoming Lodge computer, with no typing required.

Keep in mind, a transfer dimit started during the current Lodge year must be approved by the accepting Lodge before March 31. If not, that member remains on your membership roll. Any variance from this procedure will cause your membership total to become out of balance.

Reminder: All year-end membership information must be updated and completed in CLMS2Web by 11:59 p.m. on March 31.

— Bryan R. Klatt, Grand Secretary

Download/upload lodge audit forms: 2018-19

For your convenience, the forms required for submission to the Grand Lodge auditing committee are now available for download.

Note that the Excel forms need to be saved to your computer and then prepared with your financial information.

NOTE: The 2018/2019 audit forms were revised 5/10/2019. If you downloaded the form prior to this date, please download again and use this version instead.

Forms should be uploaded prior to June 30.

Important Note: Your completed audit forms should be converted to Adobe PDF format, and then uploaded to the auditing and accounting committee through the elks.org website.

Audit forms uploaded in this way do not need to be mailed to the auditing and accounting committee via postal mail. Supplementary data such as your accountant's recommendations and suggestions, and any and all 990(s) filed on behalf of the lodge, should also be uploaded in Adobe PDF format.

Bowling outing scheduled

Clawson-Troy Elks Lodge #2169 will host the 100th Elks National Bowling Tournament, held between March 6 and May 3, 2020. It's open to all members and spouses. Register by January 15, 2020. For more information, visit elksbowling.org or e-mail elksnationalbowlingassoc@gmail.com.

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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

**CHUCK OATTEN**

President

Membership: An alarming trend

I would like to thank PSP Ed Geishart and Ellen Markovich for their hard work on getting the website moved to Go Daddy, and for getting the new email set up.

All members should now be using the mielks email. If you have not set up an address yet, please go to the website and under email-help request your new email address. Lodges will need to request an email address also. All of our communications will come through the email system.

I need to address a major issue we as Elks are currently having, Membership. Here are some alarming numbers that I truly believe we can correct. All it takes, is a phone call, a home visit, addressing a delinquents or dropped members concern, and initiate your members in waiting.

See the accompanying chart, showing figures from Nov. 25.

We have currently 159 Candidates waiting to be initiated. Let's get them initiated!

Membership Chairman Hugh Hall (membership@mielks.org) is available to assist you. Use him!

I have noticed many Lodges during

Delinquency, by the numbers			
District	Number of Delinquents	Unpaid Members	Projected loss
Northeast	230		
Metro	304		
Upper Peninsula	161		
Southeast	128		
Northwest	110		
Southwest	184		
TOTALS	1120	1571	1034

fundraisers, and supporting the community in various ways. This is what we do, and what a way to get our name out, be proud of what you do and work with your local news agencies to promote your works through advertising. I enjoy reading your bulletins and getting your updates. Please do not forget Major Project, Gold Key, Elks National Foundation, our Veterans and the Pearl Harbor restoration when you plan a fundraiser.

Ritual: are all Districts ready to participate? At this point in time, I am only aware of two Districts performing the Ritual. If your Lodge

or District would like to compete in a Ritual contest, please contact Bruce Stark Ritual State Chairman, (ritual@mielks.org) he can make the arraignments necessary. A well performed ritual is very impressive.

I have read all the visitation reports that were conducted by the District Vice Presidents and District Vice Chairman, for which I thank them for doing a very good job. If your Lodge is having a few internal issues, have you consider contacting Business Practice, to help answer your questions, or guide you through an issue? They are here to assist you, not beat you up.

They understand everything from bar sales and operations, to club operations, statutes and financials. Contact Denny White or myself if you would like to have them visit your Lodge and guide you through your issue(s). (businesspractice@mielks.org).

I will be sending out letters to all Lodges pertaining to the visit after the first of the year. Only have 52 to write.

We are having a pretty good year overall. There are a lot of activities that remain, such as District, and State Hoop shoots, scholarship judging, election of Officers, District meetings and I am sure your Lodges have other activities for you to enjoy. Get out and support your Lodges and their functions. We, the State Presidents will begin traveling to various Lodges to stop by and say hi. Our trips will be updated on the Presidents travels on the website.

Keep up the good work, and always remember, if need any assistance from us, please let us know. Thank you for putting the effort forward to continue showing our motto of Elks Care-Elks Share.

**JERRY ALEXIE**

1st Vice President

Without new members, our time is limited

Stephanie and I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and hope you had a safe and happy holiday with friends and family. Out with 2019 and in with 2020. I hope it will be as great as last year.

The convention in Frankenmuth was enjoyable, informative and fun. We had the opportunity to greet our new GER Bob Duitzman and his wife Beth along with PGER Ron and Nancy Hicks at the Saginaw airport.

We then made our way to the Michigan Field of Honor at the Alma Lodge then celebrated their 100th Anniversary before proceeding to the convention.

We still have many places to visit this winter before my term as 1st Vice President is up. We will be busy traveling to the State and Regional Hoop Shoot finals, a few Districts will hold Ritual Competition which is always fun to watch. Scholarship judging, annual meetings of

the Gold Key Commission, Major Project Commission and State Trustee interim meetings, and a few Presidents Dinners. We have had the opportunity to visit 24 lodges so far this year.

I would like to request from the newly elected District Vice Presidents and Exalted Rulers that you select your chairman wisely and go over their chairman duties and responsibilities. Don't just put in a name to fill the spot. After the election of Lodge officers in February, I will be

sending an excel information form that must be filled out A.S.A.P I need this information so the State Directory can be printed for the May convention.

Now, we need to finish our Elks year with a bang. Our biggest challenge is how to promote new membership. This has been an ongoing question for years and it doesn't seem to have a definitive answer. Let's keep trying, ask a friend, relative, girlfriend, boyfriend, children or even

**JAMES ROWLAND**

2nd Vice President

Preparation begins for Grand Lodge convention

I hope everyone had a Happy Holiday Season. I know ours was nonstop, the last three months have sailed by.

We had the pleasure of participating in the 100th Anniversary Celebration of Alma Lodge #1400 prior to the Fall Convention, along with GER Robert Duitzman and his wife Beth as well as our State Sponsor PGER Ron Hicks and Nancy. Followed by a jam packed Convention at Frankenmuth. I would like to thank the

individuals that took the time to present at the breakout sessions; Jordan Alverson for the moving and informative Drug awareness seminar, Ed Geishart for filling in at the Members Luncheon with a briefing on the Financial Reporting System, and to Keith Alverson and Ed Geishart for conducting the Financial Reporting System breakout session.

My wife, Joan, and I, as well as Jerry and Stephany Alexie, visited Baltimore to make

preparations for the upcoming Grand Lodge convention in July. We will be housed at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront, a beautiful hotel overlooking the Patapsco Harbor. We are on the edge of Little Italy and in walking distance of many of the local points of interest, including the fleet of historic ships, the Holocaust Memorial, Camden Yard, National Aquarium, etc. We are surrounded by good restaurants and are approx. a mile and a quarter from the

Convention Center. Please don't delay in making your hotel reservations, once the window opens, as we have limited rooms. I will have hospitality information available at the Spring Convention in the Soo as well as info on the Michigan Night Festivities.

Please be safe on the winter roads and we're looking forward to visiting many of you in the near future.

GRAND LODGE



ROBERT L. DUITSMAN

Grand Exalted Ruler

New year opens with awards, scholarships

Welcome to 2020! Beth and I extend our best wishes to everyone for a happy and successful year.

January is a time to wind down the affairs of the year gone by and plan for the year to come. The efforts of our Members too often go unrecognized. While many Members serve in varying capacities just for the love of the organization, an expression of gratitude and recognition is always appreciated.

Also to be recognized are those Lodges that distinguish themselves through their dedication to working the programs of the Order and serving the needs of their

communities. Awards for Elk of the Year and Officer of the Year are available from Grand Lodge, and there is nothing to prevent things like Exalted Ruler Special Citations from being prepared to express appreciation to those who make our Lodges successful.

In January, all Lodges will be receiving an application form to enter the All American Lodge Contest. It is a tremendous opportunity for a Lodge to receive recognition for its efforts during the year. Receiving such an award will inspire Members to continue their efforts with the knowledge that they are important and are

being recognized. Something to consider.

While many of us were focused on the Most Valuable Student scholarships that had a November close date for applications, there is also the Legacy Scholarship that is available until January 31. It provides \$4,000 scholarships to the children and grandchildren of Elks Members. The Elks are doing their part to try to give deserving individuals the opportunity to further their education without allowing a lack of financial resources to be a barrier. More information on these and other opportunities can be found on the Grand Lodge website.

Some may not be aware, but in the Ritual there is provision for a Past Exalted Rulers' Night. On the first Lodge meeting in February the Exalted Ruler can appoint Past Exalted Rulers to fill the four chair positions as well as Esquire and Chaplain. This is a good opportunity to give special recognition to those who have served in the highest office in their Lodge over the years, and keep them involved in the life of your Lodge.

In some cases, Past Exalted Rulers are called on to conduct an initiation, which would be a special treat that generates interest among the membership.

VETERANS

'Coming Home' video series addresses homelessness among veterans

By Brianna Bueltmann
Elks Scholar Fellow

The Elks National Veterans Service Commission and Elks National Foundation recently launched our "Coming Home" video series about the Elks' pledge to help end veteran homelessness.

We traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with some of our volunteers, veterans, and VA social workers to learn about the impact the Elks have made in the five years since the Welcome Home program began.

Through our Emergency Assistance Fund, the Elks are able to provide veterans in eight cities with one-time rent, a security deposit, or utility assistance needed to stabilize the veteran's housing.

"The Elks are a big part of veterans getting back on track, getting over their obstacles, and being able to be successful," VA social worker Kathryn Scalfari said.

Emergency assistance isn't the only way Elks make an impact.

Through our Welcome Home Kit program, Elks volunteers can provide newly housed veterans with household supplies such as bedding, towels, pots and pans, and cleaning supplies.

Elks volunteers like Carl Robinson from Laurel, MD Lodge No. 2283 and Wayne Blake from Loudon, VA Lodge No. 240 go a step further and help move veterans into their apartments. Veterans themselves, Robinson and Blake dedicate countless hours to help provide beds, furniture, and Welcome Home Kits to help veterans get off to a new start.

"I'm a veteran. If the situation had been reversed and stuff, I could be on the street," Robinson said. "I want to help get those veterans off the street and get them into that safety net."

For our final video in the series, we met with U.S. Army veteran Nicole and her two sons to hear how the Elks had helped her family.

After returning from her service in Iraq, Nicole worked to overcome PTSD and homelessness with the help of

therapy and subsidized housing through the VA.

Nicole's landlord needed to make some repairs on her home. What

Nicole, a full-time student, didn't anticipate was that all the tools the repairmen plugged in and used for weeks would lead to an excessively large electric bill, a bill for which she was responsible.

An electric bill can be a huge obstacle for someone living in affordable housing through HUD-VASH or a Section 8 voucher. If you don't pay your electric bill, your electricity can be shut off. If you don't have electricity connected, your home can be deemed unfit for human habitation and fail inspection. Without the Elks' help, Nicole and her family could have lost their entire home.

Thankfully, that didn't happen, because Nicole contacted her social worker, who worked with the Elks to make sure Nicole's electric bill was paid and her housing saved. "When all else fails," said Scalfari, "at least we know we have the Elks."

ENF

Members can pass down a legacy

Scholarship-seeking season comes to an end on January 31 when the Legacy Award application closes. Legacy Awards are available to high school seniors who are the children or grandchildren of dues-paying Elks who joined the Order on or before April 1, 2017, or are charter members of a Lodge that was instituted on or after April 1, 2017.

Each Legacy Award recipient will receive a \$4,000 scholarship distributed over the course of their college career.

"This award means so much to me because I've seen how much my grandparents enjoy being Elks, and I look forward to getting involved," said Erin Murphy, a 2019 Legacy scholar sponsored by Inverness, FL Lodge No. 2522.

Legacy Awards scholars are required to serve with the Elks once per year. Legacy scholars can get involved, for

example, Members can pass down a Legacy Elks National Foundation by rebounding at a Hoop Shoot contest, assisting with Lodge-run projects or Community Investments Program grant projects. The chances for Legacy scholars to serve with their community and learn about the Elks are endless.

Timothy Wilbert, a 2019 Legacy scholar, volunteered with Louisville, KY Lodge No. 8—his sponsoring Lodge—and Frankfort, KY Lodge No. 530 to take veterans fishing, one of his favorite hobbies.

"It is a great feeling to help others do what you love to do," Wilbert said. "Serving with the Elks taught me compassion."

The deadline to apply for Legacy Awards is January 31 at 11:59 a.m. CST. Visit enf.elks.org/LEG to learn more.

We can't wait for you to meet the 2020 class of Elks scholars!

STATE NEWS

AMERICANISM

Finish strong and prepare for next lodge year

By Jay Erickson

MEA State Americanism Chair

Happy New Year to all fellow Elks, and your friends and families. As the new calendar year begins, the lodge year begins to come to a close. Still, we have quite a bit left to accomplish in these next months. All lodges should have received and judged their Americanism essay and coloring contest entries by the time you receive this newsletter. Please remember to submit your top three entries in each category to your District Americanism chair by January 31st. Those District chairs will have their top three entries to me by February 28th, and I will have them to the Contest Administrator in March. I look forward to seeing the care and detail our state's children put into their coloring, and what our youth have to say about freedom of speech and its impact on their lives.

Before the next newsletter and spring convention, each lodge will have elected the next year's officers, and they will have appointed committee chairs. During this process, I encourage you to identify those members with genuine pride in our nation and a drive to share that pride in your communities. Since this is also the time to set the next year's lodge budget, please make sure to include patriotic initiatives in your planning. Flags, promotional materials and displays are available on the Grand Lodge website in the Americanism Manual Supplement, found in the Fraternal Committee Dashboard. Here you can order flags, stands, Heritage Corner materials and "Honor Our Flag" decals. This site does not carry the stick flags passed out in Memorial and Fourth of July parades, but you can find those for less than \$20 per 100 flags at sites such as united-states-flag.com, or similar online stores. Please consider including such materials in your community involvement budget, as well as planning what events you will support in the upcoming year. Also in the interest of planning, Flag Day will be upon us before we realize. Consider contacting your area Scout troops to participate in the ceremony, carrying in flags for presentation during the reading of the history.

Besides promoting patriotic feelings and displays, the Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee also promotes exercising the rights the founders of this nation won for us; rights our military vigilantly defends every day. Foremost among those rights is the right to choose our own government. "Get out and Vote" programs also feature prominently in the Americanism manual. I will not use this platform to promote any party, candidate or ideology, but I will use it to encourage you to make full use of your right to vote. 2020 is an election year, and this process will begin on March 10th, in the Presidential Primary. Michigan holds an open primary, where you need not have a registered party affiliation to vote. You must simply select in which party's primary you wish to vote at the time of casting your ballot. The surest way to get a candidate you like in November is to make your voice heard in March. In 2016 we saw the highest percentage of the voting age population turning out for a primary election in four decades, with 33.2% of eligible citizens participating. I encourage Elks to lead the way to the polls, proving that we love our country by exercising the freedom that makes this the greatest nation on Earth.

RITUAL

Teams should be well into practice mode

By Bruce A Stark

State Ritual Chairman

As the calendar New Year begins and the Elks year winds down, we look forward to Ritual Season. By now, your teams should be well into practice mode if you're planning on competing this year.

If not don't worry. There's still time. You can start now and be ready in time for a District Contest. And even if you choose not to compete the benefit to your Officers practicing and working toward a better Initiation ceremony will help your Lodge in the long run.

Let your District Vice President and your District Ritual chairman

know if you're planning on entering a team this year so we can plan for Judges and District contests.

Added to the Grand Lodge Ritual Contest this year is the 11 O'clock Toast Competition. There has State and District competitions in the past but this is the first year there will be a Grand Lodge Competition. As always there will be 2 people per District invited to the State competition but the winner of the State competition will be invited to enter the Grand Lodge competition in July. The contest is open to current ER's as well as all PER's. Contact your District Vice President or your District Ritual Chairman to find out how to enter

a District 11 O'clock Toast Contest.

As in the past we will have a Flag Presentation contest at the State level but this will not be available at the Grand Lodge level.... Yet. Maybe in the future.

Remember that making your Officer Team a better Ritual Team not only strengthens your Officer core but also increases the impressiveness of your imitation to your new members and could increase the membership at your Lodge. Working together we all gain.

I look forward to seeing you all at District Contests as well as the State Convention so I encourage you to start now if you haven't started already.

Ritual Contest

By Rhea Elliott

Jackson Lodge #113

Your left knee starts to tremble, your eyelid starts to twitch.
And somewhere near your elbow, you have an awful itch.
Your mind takes off to wander across the land and sea;
You think of all the places, you sure would rather be.
Water trickles down your arm and off your finger tips.
Your tongue is a piece of rubber between two burning lips.
The esquire is approaching. My God, he's coming here!
You begin to doubt the wisdom of that final glass of beer.
For now you have a feeling, somewhere down below.
You really aren't quite certain, but you think you have to go.
The moment has arrived, they are standing at your place.
You somehow struggle to your feet, a smile upon your face.
You feel all eyes upon you, the practice hours tell.
You start the word "My Brother" and your voice begins to swell.
Suddenly it's over, the job you've had is done;
The only thing remaining, is if you've lost or won.
And as you leave that contest room, forgotten is the fear,
For you know deep down that win or lose, you'll be back next year.

Planning for 2020: Elks National 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.

January

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

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

■ Start planning for the National Alcohol Awareness Month in April.

■ Do not forget to send Frank Burr information about major DAP projects you are doing

■ This is a reminder that your quarterly reports are due on August 1, November 1, February 1 and May 1.

STATE NEWS

63rd annual fall convention

Frankenmuth, Michigan, October 18-20, 2019



STATE NEWS

BUSINESS PRACTICES

Abide by obligation and the words of each chair officer

By Dennis R. White
Business Practices State Chair

The goal of the business practices committee is at the lodge's request, evaluate the food and beverage service, to bring the operation within the Audit and Accounting Manuals suggested norm.

If you should happen to want to know the responsibilities of your officers please check Chapter 12 of 2018/2019 constitution and statutes booklet. This tells you what your responsibilities are "NOT YOUR JOB."

My interpretation of your job and the job of EVERY ELKS MEMBER is to abide by our obligation and the words of each chair officer.

1. Lecturing Knight = Brotherly Love – be quick to help the unfortunate – conform to our Golden Rule.

2. Loyal Knight = Be Just – the emblem is the Bible – remember your obligation – support the constitution and comply with the laws of the order and the by-laws.

3. Leading Knight = the emblem is the Flag of our country – Charity

4. Exalted Ruler = Fidelity – be TRUE – adhere to our obligation – be faithful.

5. I have left out 2 important factors until the end.

A. Do unto others as we would have them do unto us

B. The faults of our brothers we write upon the sand, their virtues upon tablets of love and memory

6. Make your members feel wanted, appreciated, important by asking for help. When you walk in the lodge say hi to everyone or at least acknowledge them.

May your lodge enjoy a very successful year and god bless you.

MEMBERSHIP

Make a final push

By Hugh Hall
MEA Membership Chairman

As we move into the last quarter of our Lodge Year, we need to make that final push to increase our membership and reinstate as many as we can.

There are a lot of candidates still waiting to be initiated let's do what we can to get them in.

When we look at the

delinquency, we are not too bad, we are trending below the state, with the state at 8.8% and Michigan at 7.8%, good job there.

We also need to focus on three Lodges that are struggling, Pontiac Waterford -126, Escanaba -68, Port Huron -55, and Manistique with only 1 new member initiated all year. So let's have a final run in the last quarter and be positive by year end.

Most Valuable Student Scholarship

By Jack McClelland
MVS Scholarship Chair

By this time all lodges have completed their judging of the applications available to their lodge and the winners sent on to the districts. At the time of this reading of the article the judging in the districts should be in progress or completed with the final date of January 6, 2020. The state judging will be held at the Bay City Lodge #88 on Saturday February 15, 2020 starting at 9am.

There will be fifteen total

Grand Lodge winners sent on to the Grand Lodge from Michigan, each one receiving at least \$1,000 for four years. The nationals first place boy and girl will receive \$12,500 for four years.

In addition to the national winners the Michigan Elks Association will award at least sixty one, one year \$1,000.00 scholarships.

There are also five Legacy scholarships available to qualifying applicants. Those application are available online and due January 31,2020.

Lodge Activities: Star Award

I can't stress enough please report on what your lodge is doing. So many times, the little things that your lodge does goes by the wayside. I am hoping every lodge has printed off a copy of the Star Lodge Program and a lot of items are already checked off and your lodge is still working on the list for the remainder of the year. So, when it comes to the end of the Elks year and it's time to submit the Star Award and the All-American Lodge Award, you'll already have the information done. Just a reminder to the lodges make sure the Star Lodge Award is turned into your District Chairman by March 15th, 2020. The All-American Lodge Award needs to be turned into your District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler by March 15th, 2020. It would be my honor to present every lodge in this state with a Star Award at our next convention.

LODGE NEWS



PORT HURON ELKS LODGE #343

Lodge's annual children's Christmas party featured

More than 50 children of Port Huron Elks Lodge #343 members enjoyed visiting with Santa Claus, having lunch and "Santa Gifts" along spending time with their parents, grandparents, guardians, aunts and uncles.

The children, ranging from infant to age 12, were kept busy making Christmas crafts and ornaments, face painting, dancing and a ring toss game all while waiting for Santa to arrive.

Volunteers who help put this event on every year include, Past Exalted Rulers Bob and Brenda Fritch, Steve and Tammy Peters, Greg and Sue Hudy and Scott and Karen Harris along with ER Bill and Brandi DeDell, Jim and Heather Feher, Jan Wylie, Kristy Dennis, Sienna Dennis, Courtney

Peters, Matt and Sarah Peters and of course David Crimmins (Santa) and his helper Kaylee Harris (Jingles).

Big thanks to the Lodge kitchen staff for the salads and desserts they provided. Thanks to all who purchased raffle tickets for the two bikes and the stuff with toys giant stocking. Winners were Anna Conley who won the Giant Stocking, Bud Green won the boys bike and Fred Reiter won the girls bike.

Thank you to ER Bill DeBell and Marine City Lumber Jack for the donation of the two youth bikes.

This annual event occurs on the 3rd Sunday in December from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm in the upper level banquet facility of our Elks Lodge.

STATE NEWS

MAJOR PROJECT

Touching the lives of hundreds of children

By Diane Dusendang
Major Project

On to our final quarter of our fraternal year!

Michigan Elks Association Major Project Commission thanks EACH Elk, Lady Elks and spouses for supporting our State Major Project.

Together, we have touched the lives of hundreds of children this year with individual Awards (Cases) and Camperships. The Camp Application packages were mailed in mid-November to 23 different camps, and are due back to the Major Project office January 15. At that time, we will also be preparing our draft budget for the 2020-2021 fraternal year, and of course hope to have a budget passed at the Annual Meeting of the Commission in March so that we are ready to roll on April 1st!

Our Coins 4 Kids fundraiser was a great success, and the Awards will be presented at the Spring Business meeting in May. Thank you for a fun time of raising funds AND awareness about Major Project.

We did surpass last years goal, and it just shows what working together can accomplish.

Our many thanks to PSP Peter Gadzinski and Past State Secretary Lou Roos for working so hard on creating and maintaining the "Special Endowment Fund" to help offset costs for down-state children to be able to attend Bay Cliff Health Camp (as well as special needs that may arise where funding is necessary). Last year, because of the generosity of 10 Elks, over \$5,000 was raised, earmarked and \$4,000 was utilized to help 4 children the opportunity to attend Bay Cliff (which costs

in excess of \$6,000 for the 7 week therapy camp). Recently, a small mailing was done, thanking past donors, as well as seeking new donors, to build the fund back up. If you are interested in knowing more, or donating specifically to the Special Endowment Fund, please feel free to contact Pete Gadzinski or Diane Dusendang. Any donation can be made by a Lodge or a member with a note on the memo line of "Special Endowment Fund" and those funds will be earmarked for that use.

Finally, education is the key to our continued mission of helping special needs children. The Commission has voted to put our "show on the road" again. As you may recall, in the early spring of 2017, we coordinated Major Project workshops and invited members and Lady Elks to attend a 2 hour session at various lodges around the state. These were a great success, with lots of information, questions and answers, fundraising ideas, learning how to find a case, the difference between a "case" and "camps", the history of our Major Project and more. With new members constantly joining, this is a GREAT opportunity to ignite a spark within your lodge. Remember, when members are passionate about something, they are more engaged in the success of your lodge. Our charities DO just that! It is a quiet benefit of being an Elk; the chance to make a difference in your community, strengthen your lodge and feel the PRIDE of a job well done. I look forward to seeing old and new faces soon as we "hit the road" to educate, enthuse and energize our membership!

ACCIDENT PREVENTION

Report from the chairman

By Al Perry
Chairman

Here's the Michigan Elks Association accident prevention report.

Claims

There have been no further reported claims to me other than the five previous mentioned in my last report. If you think that you have a claim, please make sure you contact me or our Grand Lodge Risk Manager Brian P. O'Neill and we will assist you with your determination.

Lodge rental agreements

I wanted to touch on this because I have found that most Lodges are not properly protecting themselves from liability. The following bullet points, issued by Risk Manager Brian O'Neill, clearly spell out what is required for a proper Lodge rental agreement.

The following should be included in all rental agreements:

- Conform to the Order's Statutes regarding closed door requirements.
- Follow pages 10-11 of the 2019/2020 Master Liability Program booklet.
- Include a provision for an indemnity agreement;
- Require a certificate of insurance naming the Lodge as additional insured.
- Describe the area to be rented,

indicate any restrictions on use.

- State all rental fees and a clearly defined cancellation policy.

- Service of alcohol will be controlled by the Lodge, no outside alcohol is allowed.

- The self-service of alcohol, including the use of pitchers and self-service kegs is not allowed.

- The Lodge will follow all legal requirements regarding the service of alcoholic beverages.

- The Lodge will reserve the right to refuse service to anyone at the discretion of the servers.

- The renter's clean-up responsibilities/requirements should be clearly indicated.

- The Lodge must not sign an agreement assuming responsibility for hired security personnel.

- The Lodge has the right to stop inappropriate behavior and shut the event down entirely.

Holiday food safety

- Be aware of who is using your kitchen to prepare food.

- Avoid using food that was prepared outside the Lodge and you should never allow anyone renting to being in food that was not prepared by a licensed establishment.

- Caterers must provide proof of insurance and they should add the Lodge as an additional insured.

Winter preparation

- Be aware of drifting snow block-

ing vents on roof furnaces.

- Try to use flat mats inside entry doors to catch the snow and salt.

- Check you lot and sidewalk lighting to make sure it is adequate.

- For those of you who are using the same Christmas lights annually, please inspect them for frayed wires and loose plugs before installation.

- Be careful using extension cords in an around the Lodge that may create tripping hazards.

Repair work at lodges

- The Lodge should never take on the role of general contractor. That doesn't mean that you can't obtain bids and schedule work, it simply means that we should not act as a project manager or coordinator for liability purposes.

- You must obtain proof of insurance and a written contract from every contractor you hire.

- Avoid using any volunteers for Lodge repairs or construction due to liability.

General inspections

- Your Accident Prevention Committee Chair must be filling out the monthly inspection form and producing said forms to the District Deputy during inspection

This concludes my report. If you have any questions, please give me a call.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Record your lodge accomplishments

By Don Smith
Government Relations Chair

Happy New Year!

I hope everyone had a great holiday season and all the Michigan lodges were busy with their charitable work.

Lodges held events for veterans and kids and participated in holiday parades.

It is a peak time for us. Did you complete your charitable records for these events?

Please remember to report all time, mileage, donations, and money spent toward charitable activities during the past holiday season. This also includes any lodge meetings where event planning or wrap-up discussions were held. We have three months left to complete our charitable records. Look at everything your lodge did for the year and make sure it is recorded. Let's end the 2019/2020 year on a high note.

LODGE NEWS



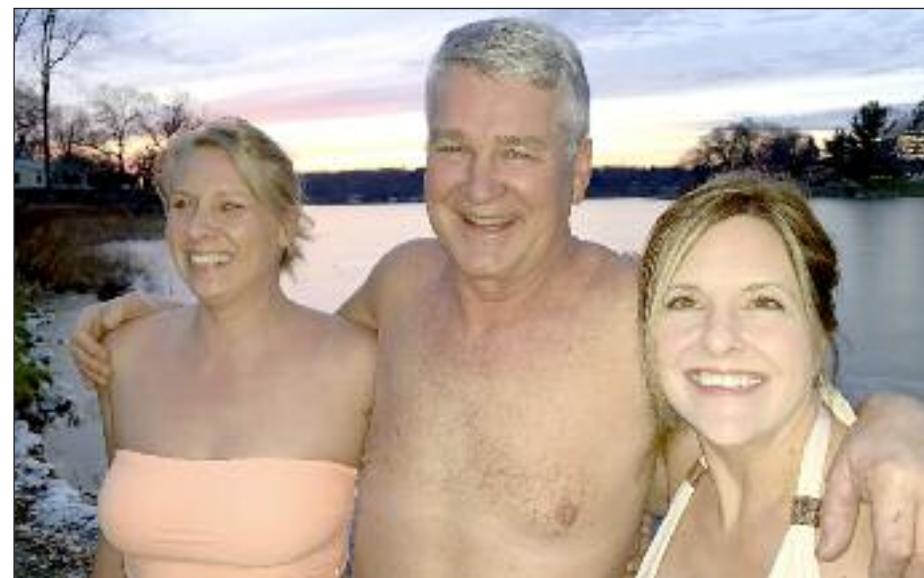
Lodge receives two proclamations

Port Huron Elks Lodge #343 was presented two Port Huron City Proclamations during this past year. Mayor, Pauline M. Repp presented Lodge #343 with a plaque recognizing our 123 years of existence and support for local charities and organizations in our community. Mayor Repp also recognized Lodge #343 for our continued support and youth activities we bring into the community throughout the year with a plaque for Youth week.



Special-needs Christmas party

Port Huron Elk Lodge #343 held its annual "Special Needs Christmas Party" December 8. We were able to host eight group homes and entertain over 60 clients and support staff with music, dancing, beverages, snacks, pizza and cake all while waiting for Santa and his helpers to arrive to hand out early Christmas presents. Long time Lodge #343 member David Crimmins (Santa) paid a special visit to those in attendance with support from his helpers Kaylee Harris (Jingles), Daniel J. Moore, Caroline Moore and Liberty Proctor. Elk #343 member Sandy Korich provided the committee a great deal on his Jets pizzas while Kevin Batchelder provided the Christmas music. Event Hosts Butch & Judy Hills and David & Rose Howard, Committee Co-Chairs were assisted by Otis Watson, Jeffrey & Lori Malinowski and PER, Scott R. Harris. This annual event was once again a huge success and enjoyed by all in attendance. Next year's event will take place on December 13, 2020.



Going 'Polar' for benefit

On December 13, Tri-Township Fire chopped a hole in the ice on Omena Lake for the Sturgis Elks Lodge #1381 "Polar Bear Plunge." Lodge members took a plunge to raise more than \$1,000 for Elks Major Projects to benefit special needs children in the State of Michigan. Among those plunging were Elizabeth Lidster, Ron Zimmerman and Kristina Eaton.

LODGE NEWS



Books for youth

At the Negaunee Elks Lodge #1116 annual pumpkin patch, the lodge signed up 30 children ages 1-5 to receive a book a month through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program. The program is designed to improve literacy in children from economically disadvantaged homes. ENF has provided \$2,000 grant to start the program. The Imagination Library is one of seven new programs covered by the new Opportunity Grant. Negaunee Elks total grants received this year from ENF now total \$9,500.

PORT HURON ELKS LODGE #343

15th straight blood drive held

Port Huron Elks Lodge #343 sponsored its 15th consecutive blood drive on October 21, 2019, at our facility.

Lodge #343 sponsorship has helped the Red Cross correct over 675 pints of blood since our 1st blood drive which took place on January 7, 2013.

Our most recent Blood Drive results were 53 presented (arrived to donate), 50 pints collected (with 5 double reds = 8 pints), only 6 were deferred with our original goal being 38 pints to collect. We far out exceeded that goal by 131%. Thank you all for helping to save lives by helping others, and sharing the "Gift of Life!"



Port Huron Elks Lodge member Cam May gets her blood pressure checked prior to donating as Red Cross Volunteer Katy assist while getting everything ready.

PORT HURON ELKS LODGE #343

'Pumpkin Patch' held for special-needs children

Port Huron Elks Lodge #343 and other local non-profit organizations, Knights of Columbus and PH Business Network International along with the RESA Staff & Educators worked together for the good of our community while participating in our annual Elks Pumpkin Patch at the Woodland Developmental Facility in St. Clair County.

Ten Elks members and five other volunteers helped set up the Pumpkin Patch Street and handed out treats to the special needs children and adults as they passed thru the Elks Lodge #343 Pumpkin Patch.

Elks Members and Local Volunteers who participated:

1. Paul Torres, PER – Committee Chairman
2. Joseph Barbe, PER
3. Scott R. Harris, PER
4. Gregory C. Hudy, PER
5. Steven M. Peters, PER
6. Mary Fran Deachin
7. Daniel Gilbert
8. Otis Watson
9. Karl Gibbs
10. Fran Torres
11. Jim Turpin
12. Pete Cervini
13. Brett Pulte
14. Stephanie Laubach
15. Chris Stevens
16. RESA Staff & Educators



Ferndale, Warren-Sterling Heights collaborate for 38th annual Pumpkin Patch

On October 29, our lodges provided Halloween treats for 300 special needs children.

Each child received a bag of goodies including apple, candy, cookies, chips and a small pumpkin. Pictured above L to R, Sandy Catanese Exalted Ruler, Jennifer Kurtz Esteem Loyal Knight, Shane

Queentry-Lowell P.E.R. Trustee, Bovenchen School Principal Cathy Sulkowski, Assistant Principal Kristine Pilon, Chuck Pankey- Fanning Exalted Ruler, Ann Alexie Esteem Leading Knight, Tara Bammel Member, Jim Connolly Pumpkin Patch Chairman.

LODGE NEWS



Jerry Alexie, Stephanie Alexie, Joan Rowland, Chuck Oatten, Jim Rowland, Robert Duitsman, Beth Duitsman, James Deamud, Nancy Hicks and Ron Hicks. Kneeling are Debb Oatten and Tina Deamud. This photo was taken September 17 as the GER, Robert Duitsman and his wife and the Michigan State MEA officers were headed to Frankenmuth for Convention.

ALMA ELKS #1400

‘Field of Honor’ a major success

The amount of flags in the Michigan Elks Field of Honor at Alma Lodge increased by 112 this year to 288 from 176 in 2018. This is the most flags in the 15 year history of the Field. This was due mainly by inviting all the Lodges in Michigan to participate in the renamed Michigan Elks Field of Honor at Alma Lodge. Sixteen Lodges were represented with a flag honoring their Lodge. Ferndale Lodge purchased a flag in honor of 10 of their members who were veterans.

This year’s Field was dedicated on September 8th because the Grand Exalted Ruler, Robert Duitsman and wife Beth would be visiting the Alma Lodge on September 16 on their way to the Elk State Convention in Frankenmuth, MI. Next year’s Field of Honor will be dedicated on Sunday May 3, 2020 at 2pm.

When the Michigan Elks Field of Honor is dedicated on May 3 we expect the number of flags to increase again.

The members of Alma Lodge #1400 invite all Michigan Elk Lodges to have a flag represented in the Field to show Elk’s dedication to Americanism, Veterans and those who are loved by displaying these flags in honor or in memory of these people. The flags do not need to be for those who have served our country or who are currently serving.

They are also for those who are loved or have touched our hearts in a special way.

We request that every Lodge petition their members for \$20 to have a flag honoring their Lodge in the Michigan Elks Field of Honor at Alma. This will be the 16th year for the Field of Honor. When the Field is dismantled on June 14th each flag, pole and tag will be the property of the purchaser. The order form can be found online at mielks.com under Americanism or by contacting Randy Boudreau at rand1b@yahoo.com or 989-506-6332.

Please put May 3, 2020 on your calendar to attend the dedication of the Field. The events of the day include the Forgotten Eagles bringing in the Military field flags and the Military anthems will be played as the Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, National Guard, We Support our Troops, Fire, Police, EMT and MIA/POW flags are placed in the Field. There will be Military, Fire and Police vehicles on site and the Alma VFW Color Guard will perform the 21 gun salute and taps. During the finale, all present will hold hands as God Bless the USA is played. It is truly an indescribable event that will sincerely deeply touch you.

Flags will continue to be \$25 for individuals and \$20 for flags honoring a Lodge.

Alma Lodge looks forward to seeing you at the Dedication of the Michigan Elks Field of Honor at Alma Lodge #1400 on May 3, 2020 at 2pm. God Bless America!



Traverse City Lodge hosted a free dinner buffet for veterans and active duty personnel.

TRAVERSE CITY ELKS LODGE #323

Traverse City hosts veterans

On November 3, Traverse City Lodge #323 hosted its third annual free dinner buffet for all area veterans and active duty personnel at the Lodge.

The meal was supported by 57 adult member/spouse/friend volunteers.

The Lodge’s chef volunteered his time to cook the meal and the Club Manager volunteered her time to train and supervise the volunteers.

The class of an eighth grade teacher from West Middle School, herself an Elk and volunteer, made Thank You cards and 18 of her students volunteered to pass them out to the Veteran’s as they enjoyed their meal. They also made a large banner which was left hanging in the Lodge for the Veteran’s Day

festivities on November 11.

The Lodge served 191 Veteran’s and 151 non-veteran meals in four hours. Aside from the Thank You cards, another hit with the Vets was a ‘Service Tree’ for which each Veteran wrote his/her name on a leaf and then ‘hung’ it on his service branch on the tree. There was one leaf set off to the side of the tree which belonged to an Army vet and former Secret Service agent.

The Michigan Elks Association Veteran’s Committee assisted with the cost of the meal of salad, rolls, mashed potatoes, green beans, braised beef, baked chicken, and homemade apple and cherry crisp. One of the volunteers also donated three large tubs of Moomer’s Ice Cream.

TRAVERSE CITY LODGE #323

Helping the homeless

Starting several years back, Gary Horn, a PER from our Lodge, came to a meeting and had an idea how we as a Lodge could help the homeless in our community. He is a member of a local church that is equipped with a large locker room. The church had been letting the homeless bath at their facility but was looking for help in the product department. Gary’s idea was to place a basket in the foyer of our lodge and have our membership donate toiletries to help.

As it turns out, this has been and continues to be a great program for our Lodge. We have had members purchase items and place them in the basket, but the biggest donations come from those who travel occasionally. As we all know, when you travel and you get your room there are usually complimentary

toiletries for you to use, but we all usually take our own. So, we throw those in our bag and bring them back to the Lodge and put them in the basket. Also, what works, when you go to the dentist and you get the gift pack of a new toothbrush and other goodies, bring those in too, and put them in the basket. The basket gets emptied about two to three times a month and has been very helpful to this cause. This is something that we also tell our incoming members about at our Orientation. It gives them an easy way to get involved right of the bat.

I think that this could be something that every Lodge in our State could work with at little cost to your Lodge. I’m sure that there is a facility in your community that could help also.