

*2020 go away, tarry not another day
Life's too short to live this way,
Please 2021 come and save the day,
So we can all get out and play!*

JLG

Not much to report this month. Things are pretty still in January and this year is a real corker on that note. Hopefully, we will be getting back to normal soon. We here at the News Letter will do our best to keep you posted on upcoming Club schedules as we leave 2020, and hopefully COVID, behind.

The Lodge will be keeping the membership updated on when we will be holding our Annual Elks Memorial Service for our absent members who have passed during the prior year. Our Lodge had four members pass away during 2020: Alan Walter, Alan Ott, Jim Ellis, and Bob Carlson. The date of this service will be determined by the state's COVID restrictions.

The Lodge is also hoping to have an Initiation Ceremony for several new members who have been waiting quite a while to officially become Elks. We will notify the membership as soon as a date and time is set for this ceremony, which will happen as soon as we get clarity from the state about COVID restrictions.

And now a message from ER Andy Holub:

Happy New Year members,

I'm hoping all of you have had a safe, happy, and healthy holiday season, despite the difficulties we have all faced this past year. I for one am glad to put 2020 into the rearview mirror, and look for better days as we move forward into 2021. Under current restrictions, our club remains closed until Jan. 15. Should this date not be extended, I look forward to reopening on Friday Jan. 15. Cross your fingers. Monday Jan. 18 is the 3rd Monday, so we would then hold our first meeting in a while at 6 pm, and then resume our regular meeting schedule in February. Our District meeting is scheduled for Sat. Jan 23 via Zoom. I will be contacting the officers that need to participate with a link when it becomes available.

Despite our closure, we've been able to accomplish some great things in our community this past month. Using our grant money from the Elks National Foundation, we contributed \$2500 to the local Toys 4 Tots organization, run by the Marine Corps League in Manistique, and also \$2000 for a Feeding America truck, administered through Good Neighbors locally. The timing of the grants was perfect, and allowed us to make a difference here in our community just before the holidays. I hope you have seen the photos in the Pioneer-Tribune these past few weeks of the presentations of these checks, and know that you, our members, have made possible these timely donations to our community when it's needed the most.

We were also able to complete our Project Dictionary, in which we distributed dictionaries, drug awareness literature. and copies of the US Constitution to all the 3rd grade students at Emerald Elementary, St. Francis de Sales, and Big Bay de Noc Schools. If you haven't already, check out the Facebook pages for Emerald and St. Francis, scrolling back to around Dec. 8. We weren't able to visit the classrooms this time, but I had the privilege of "visiting" the class at St. Francis from my home via Zoom. I thoroughly enjoyed interacting with those bright, inquisitive kids!

Our takeout fish fry will resume next week, Jan. 8, after the holiday break. We have done very well in the 3 weeks preceding the holiday break. We're grateful for the support of our members and the community at large, and look to build on this success moving forward. One small change, as noted in our ad in the Advisor - we ask that dinner orders be called in by 7:30 pm. Our busy time is early, and we get very few orders as the evening progresses, so we aren't causing any hardship for anyone. And again, many thanks to Tony and Cheryl Tennyson, who have been manning our fish fry during the shutdown. And, thanks to MaryAnn and her kitchen staff as well - they cook up some very tasty meals!

Some leftover unfinished business from 2020, the Year of the COVID. We are long overdue on initiating our new members, and also, we were not able to conduct our annual Memorial Service last month. To us Elks, these ceremonies are important, and will be scheduled as soon as it is safe and legal to do so. Stay tuned.

One last item - our lodge year ends on March 31, 2021. Our by-laws state that we are to elect new officers in February, now only a month away. We will have at least two chairs open, and the incoming ER may need to appoint other officers as well. It's not too early to start thinking about this, and it is an opportunity to serve your lodge. It is a rewarding experience, and an opportunity to make a difference in your lodge. I ask all of you to consider volunteering to run for, or be willing to be appointed to an office. Let me or any other current officer know if you are willing to serve. We have a dedicated and capable group of officers serving now, but we really need to bring in some new faces. Just food for thought - more on this next month.

Take care, hope to see you soon. There is light at the end of the tunnel!

Your ER,

Andy Holub

Perhaps it's also time to ponder the upcoming events for the Club year:

The Chili Cook Off should be coming up at the beginning of March. Hopefully that very important and fun event for the Club will be able to happen as normal but that is currently up in the air due to COVID restrictions. We will keep everybody posted on the plans and details as they get figured out.

Perhaps this is a good time to 'Think Spring' and make some plans for getting out to the Club:

Volunteers are always needed for the Chicken BBQ's, think about joining the "indoor" or "outdoor" crews for an hour or two. No need to commit to all day, or to all the events. Any amount of help at any time will be appreciated.

Happy New Year to All!!
(Really) Hope to see you at the Lodge!!

Sincerely,

Jeff Gunnis

Editor

Jim Gaffney

Senior Field Reporter