



CT ELKS ASSOCIATION

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PHILLIP R. STENDER, PDD, *Secretary*
DAVID R. CARR, PGER, *State Sponsor Head*
ROBERT MAGOWAN, PER, *Public Relations Chair*



<https://ctelks.org/>

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CIRCULATION 21,000

Steve Maheu and Jennifer Maheu, Publishers

A 5 Star GL Award Publication

State President's Message by SP David J. Acanfora, PDD

On behalf of over 21,000 Elks of Connecticut, it is my pleasure to share with you our state association newsletter. Here you will find information regarding our state association, our 31 local Lodges and how we are promoting our local, Connecticut Elks Association and Grand Lodge programs.

Although Connecticut is small geographically, we are large in commitment to serving our communities through local charitable works, state association sponsored programs and involvement with all Grand Lodge programs. It is with great pride to hear Connecticut recognized at a Grand Lodge convention for achievement of program excellence. Connecticut has won many state association awards and Grand Lodge awards over the years and we strive every day to continue down that path. We are extremely proud of the fact that Connecticut has had an annual gain in membership for the past 4 consecutive years!

It is also noteworthy that Connecticut is home to eighteen Lodges that are over 100 years old including our "Mother Lodge," Hartford No. 19, the first building constructed in Connecticut solely for use as an Elks Lodge in 1903.

My home lodge is located in Bridgeport, known as the Park City for its many picturesque parks of all sizes and shapes. Bridgeport Lodge #36 was instituted in 1885 and has served Elksdom for the last 133 years. An old industrial city, Bridgeport was known for manufacturing everything from toys to submarines. Like most

former industrial cities, Bridgeport is in a rebuilding stage with many exciting attractions planned for the future. Please except my invitation to visit Bridgeport and any of our friendly lodges while traveling to Connecticut.

Connecticut has played a pivotal role in Elksdom over the years. In 1927 at Meriden Lodge No. 35, the endorsed candidate for GER John F. Malley first proposed the creation of the Elks National Foundation, our philanthropic fund. This charitable trust will give away over \$25 million dollars in scholarships this year, and helps us to support the many community programs of our local Lodges.

The Elks of Connecticut developed and implemented our national soccer shoot program, the brainchild of Grand Trustee Robert W. Hansen and Past Grand Loyal Knight Francis A. Joyce, both members of New Britain No. 957. This program teaches youths of all athletic skill levels the values of good sportsmanship, allowing them to compete, connect and succeed.

The Connecticut Children's Medical Center and their "Safe Kids Program" is our state major project. For over 60 years we have enjoyed our relationship with the CCMC, assisting them with keeping children safer through education and the use of bicycle helmets, child car seats, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Our annual

donation of \$100,000 funds the efforts to reduce the number of children hospitalized each year. Since its first donation, the Elks of Connecticut have made nearly five million dollars in donations to CCMC!

Our association is also proud of our affiliation with Connecticut Special Olympics and the Holiday Classic during the month of November. We serve as the title sponsor bringing

over 100 Elks volunteers to assist these special athletes during the volleyball, powerlifting, bowling and basketball competition events. We continue to grow with the Special Olympics program and have expanded our participation into the annual Skills Competition held in the town of Hamden each year during the month of June.

The Connecticut Elks Association Charities Inc. 501(c) 3 program was established in 2015 to assist in furthering the fundraising needed to promote the Association's charitable works. This program has been a pleasant success from its inception through today.

During my 38 years as an Elk, I am proud to have had the opportunity to serve the community through the various programs of the Elks. Since my initiation into the Order in 1980, I have served as a lodge officer, state chairman, state officer, District Deputy and now State President. It is an honor



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"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words but to live by them."

- President John F. Kennedy

for me to serve the Connecticut Elks Association as President and represent our members.

As Elks, we are known as an organization that cares and shares. Most impressive about this is that we accomplish caring and sharing through the virtue of Charity and volunteering our time and resources to achieve the goals of our great Order. The success of any association depends on the involvement of its members. Connecticut Elks have always gone above and beyond to continually move our programs in a positive

direction. Our motto for this year is: "Elks, Assisting Communities through Charity". I am confident that from the arm of Charity, Connecticut Elks will continue to exhibit the caring and sharing excellence that the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks is known for.

Fraternally,

**David J. Acanfora, PDD
State President**

PGER David R. Carr's Placemat Program
You can find your set of GL Placemats on ELKS.ORG/ Grand Lodge/ Committees/Fraternal Committee/Forms&Downloads. They can be used at your next event, breakfast, dinner, and more to promote your Lodge and Elkdom. Download them today!

Connecticut Elks Association Receives "Top Growth State" Award for 2018!

The number of Connecticut Elks grew by 206 members in the 2017-2018 lodge year and will be recognized at Grand Lodge with the "Top Growth State" award. Congratulations to all 31 Elks lodges in the State of Connecticut for their hard work in recruiting and retaining Elks!

TOP GROWTH STATES		
1 st Place	New Jersey	+891
2 nd Place	Arizona	+606
3 rd Place	California/Hawaii	+548
4 th	Missouri	+424
5 th	MD/DE/DC	+236
6 th	Connecticut	+206
7 th	Nevada	+131
8 th	Rhode Island	+130
9 th	New Hampshire	+104
10 th	Tennessee	+86
11 th	Maine	+68
12 th	Mississippi	+54
13 th	Idaho	+45
14 th	Utah	+43
15 th	Washington	+13

It is the intent of the State Public Relations Committee to publish this newsletter quarterly. All Grand Lodge & State Officers, committee persons & local Lodges are encouraged to submit any articles & information to the State or District Public Relations Chair. Chair: Robert Macgowan, PER macgowanbob@me.com; Central: Kathleen Ackerman, PDD kackerman56@comcast.net; Coastal: Sheila Parizo, sparizo@sbcglobal.net; East: John Espada, PER trustee2163@tvconnect.net; Northwest: Steve Maheu, stemahart@gmail.com

2017-18 CT ELKS ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

<i>State President,</i> David J. Acanfora, PDD	<i>Vice President Northwest,</i> James Sabio, PGLC, PDD	<i>Trustee East,</i> Joseph Mingoia, PDD	<i>Tiler,</i> Pete Nelson, PDD
<i>Vice President Coastal,</i> James Money, PDD	<i>Vice President East,</i> Michael R. Stewart, PDD	<i>Trustee at Large,</i> John P. Simko, PDD	<i>Sergeant at Arms,</i> Darren Lawlor, PER
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	<i>Treasurer,</i> Matthew C. Frankel, PDD	<i>Trustee Northwest,</i> James Coley, PDD	<i>Organist,</i> Joseph Trovarelli, Jr., PDD
	<i>Trustee Coastal,</i> Edward Baranyai, PDD	<i>Chaplain,</i> Kathleen Acerman, PDD	

A MESSAGE FROM GRAND EXALTED RULER

GER, MICHAEL T. LUHR

A new Elks year means a new donation goal



I am gratified and humbled to have been chosen as the National President of an organization that does so much for communities all across this great land. The hard work of every Local Lodge

Member is what makes our charitable work possible, which is why I chose the theme "Working Together to Make a Difference" for this exciting new Elks year.

As Elks, we are all working toward a common goal, whether it be Lodge Members giving back to their communities, strengthening a charitable organization through a State Association's Major Project, or enriching a life because of a Grand Lodge Program. These are the ways we truly make a difference in people's lives.

This year, I have set the ENF donation goal at \$4.75 per Member. I encourage everyone to donate. When you give back to the ENF, Lodges throughout the country are able to take advantage of the numerous charitable opportunities it provides. The difference your Lodge can make in your community is more than doubled by taking advantage of these

incredible opportunities.

I also encourage you to take a hard look at the programs and contributions your Local Lodge makes to your community. Is your community aware of the impact your Lodge makes on the lives of people living in your town? Are your contributions meeting your goals? Are you making the most of the ENF grants offered through Grand Lodge?

The Elks provide the perfect opportunity to get involved in projects that benefit the community while enjoying the personal rewards that come from unselfishly giving back. Best of all, we reap the rewards of benevolence while enjoying the camaraderie of our families and closest friends. Make sure that both current and prospective Members are aware of the good work you're doing in your community. Provide them with a well-maintained, inviting, and fun place to socialize. Not only will your Lodge grow, but you'll also find more people eager to volunteer.

Barb and I are looking forward to our travels across the United States to see the great work you're doing in your Local Lodges and State Associations. Most of all, we are looking forward to meeting all of the amazing Elks who are so dedicated to our grand organization. Hope to see you soon.

Enfield Elks Support Backpack Drive

Members of Enfield Elks Lodge 2222 and family helpers display backpacks purchased for the annual back-to-school drive conducted by Educational Resources for Children in August. With the help of a \$1,500 Anniversary Grant from the ENF Community Investment Program, the Enfield Lodge was able to purchase 82 backpacks and \$500 worth of school supplies for underprivileged children in grades K-12 to help them succeed on the first day of school.

Educational Resources for Children (ERfC) is a private, community based non-profit agency in Enfield that provides after-school and summertime academic, enrichment and recreational activities for Enfield children and their families. ERfC distributed nearly 1,000 backpacks filled with school supplies at the conclusion of this year's "Summer Lunch" program.

2017-18 GRAND LODGE OFFICERS & COMMITTEEMEN

State Sponsor Head,
Hon. David R. Carr,
PGER

Grand Trustee
Hon. Robert W. Hansen,
PGIG, PGLCC, PSP, PDD

Special Deputy GER,
Richard M. Palanzo,
PGLCC, PSP, PDD

*Grand Lodge
Committeeman Auditing
& Accounting,*
William J. Chinn, Jr.,
PSP, PDD

*District Deputy GER
Central District*
Rick Martyn, DDGER

*District Deputy GER
Coastal District*
Jim Patchell, DDGER

*District Deputy GER
East District,*
Lisa Berthume, DDGER

*District Deputy GER
Northwest District*
Donald Woscyna,
DDGER, PDD

CTELKS Association is on



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With over 20,000 Elks in
Connecticut, let's increase
our numbers! **FIND US AT**
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Now Open!
Connecticut Elks Online Store

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Or scan this QR Code

All proceeds benefit CCMC
Our State Major Project

ENF GRANTS GOING TO SPECIAL OLYMPICS & VETERANS

SUBMITTED BY DANIELSON ELKS LODGE 1706

This year the Danielson Elks applied for and was awarded \$7,500 from ENF to be used to give back to the community. Three community causes were supported by the grant, Special Olympics and a Veterans in Nursing Homes Project.

The grant was used to support two local Special Olympics organizations, Quinnebaug and Team Plainfield. The grant money was donated for sports equipment, a pizza party after this year's Special Olympics Talent Show held at the lodge and for a Block Party hosted in the parking lot of the Danielson Elks Lodge.

The block party was a first time event and a huge success. Over 100 members from Quinnebaug and Plainfield Special Olympics attended the event. Activities included a DJ, dancing, photo booth and lawn games.

Twenty Four volunteers from the Danielson Elks Lodge organized the event and ran all the activities. They also cooked and served a delicious barbecue and thoroughly enjoyed entertaining and interacting with the kids! This was a true team effort and fun was had by all.

The lodge officers would like to thank all the volunteers for their efforts and willingness to give back to our community in such an impactful and fun way. They also want to give special thanks to Diane Wimmer who applied for the grant and was the chairperson for the block party.

In September, The Danielson Elks Lodge provided forty veterans from four local nursing homes with health and hygiene supplies. Items were delivered to Westview, Davis Park, Pierce and Villa Maria Nursing Homes.



Left to Right: Jessica Ewud, Executive Director, Save-A-Suit; Michael Cummings, Exalted Ruler; Rich and Susie Sterzinger, Chairpersons of the Veterans Committee.

The Danbury Elks Lodge has partnered with Save-A-Suit in Bethel, Connecticut. The partnership is tasked with collecting suits for veterans in local communities.

Many men and women returning home after deployment, seek civilian employment and are in need of suits and business attire for job interviews.

The Elks are committed to their mission "So as long as there are veterans the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them."

Save-A-Suit is a non-profit organization, who provides our former military and college graduates with professional business attire and the confidence needed to succeed.

The Danbury Elks membership teamed up and collected over 200 suits, 100 shirts and additional clothing items. Collections will continue.



The Waterbury Elks Lodge donated smoke and CO2 detectors at the Police of Waterbury.

Pictured left to right: Eugene, Exalted Ruler; Linda, wife of Eugene; George Reis, officer.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS VENUE CHANGE

BY FRANK "CHEECH" DeFAZIO, PDD - CEA SPECIAL OLYMPICS CHAIRMAN



The Special Olympic Volleyball Event has found a new home. The event will be held at the Hamden Hall Country Day School Athletic Complex located at 125 Skiff Street, Hamden, CT 06514. The event will be held on Saturday, November 17th and Sunday, November 18th.

The event schedule will change from previous years. Registration will open at 7:30am on both days. The program will run from 9:00am to 4:00pm on both days. Opening

ceremony will be held 9:00am SHARP on Saturday morning. The teams that are playing Saturday will be given their medals at the completion of their games. The teams that are playing Sunday will be given their medals at the completion of their games.

This is a new venue for the games this year so we will have to make adjustments. As Connecticut Elks we can adjust to any situation. As always we need volunteers. Exalted Rulers, the CEA S.O. District Chairpersons will be contacting you for scheduling volunteers for Saturday and Sunday mornings or afternoons. Work with them and we will make this another great event for the Special Olympics and the Connecticut Elks Association and the teams that are participating.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Frank "Cheech" DeFazio, PDD, CEA Special Olympic Chairman.

STATE TEN PIN BOWLING TOURNAMENT

CONNECTICUT ELKS ASSOCIATION 11TH ANNUAL EVENT

The Connecticut Elks Association will be holding their 11th annual bowling tournament on Sunday, February 24, 2019 at Apple Valley Bowling in Plantsville, Connecticut.

The event benefits a state major project, The Connecticut Children's Medical Center under the Connecticut Elks Association Charities, Inc.

The Connecticut Elks Association Charities, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3). Together we can continue our support and goals for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center Safe Kids Program by registering as a team or reaching out to our lodges and local corporations to consider sponsoring a lane for \$50.00 (per lane).

Registration for the event will begin at 10:00 a.m. until 10:45 a.m. and bowling competition will begin at 11:00 a.m.

Four person teams, which can include, men, women or both. You can have mixed Lodges bowl as a team and no handicaps. If you don't have a team, send in your registration and you will be assigned to a team. High 3 game total will be awarded champions.

An awards dinner will be served following the bowling tournament at Bristol Lodge.

Cost per person in advance is \$30, at the door \$35 and \$7 per person for lunch. All registrations and fees are due by February 17, 2019.

Please make checks payable to CT Elks Association Charities, Inc. Please send to Louise Lee, PER Willimantic Lodge #1311, P.O. Box 102, CT 06226.

If you have any questions, please contact Louise at (860) 377-8658 or email louiselee06239@gmail.com.

To access the application and registration form visit the [Connecticut Association website](#).

Derby Lodge #571 Receives Award

The St. Mary/St. Michael Christian and Compassion Award was presented to Derby Elks Lodge 571.

This award is in recognition of service to our community and schools, embodying the spirit of generosity, kindness, and goodwill. Sheila Parizo, Secretary

Rockville Lodge #359 Community Support



Left to Right: 3rd Row: Brittany Sewell (mother), Dot Witzenzellner, Tiler; Joan Adams, Treasurer (Picture taken by Claire Decker, Secretary, ENF Chairperson)

The Rockville Elks Lodge utilized the Beacon Grant from the Elks National Foundation to purchase backpacks and supplies for kindergarten students this year.

Over 200 backpacks and supplies were delivered to three Rockville schools.

ELKS NATIONAL DRUG AWARENESS



Spokesman Ray Lozano talks about the physiology of addictions

Manchester Lodge hosted the H. O. P. E. Initiative fundraiser in partnership with the Rotary Club of Manchester and H. O. P. E. of Manchester. The event helped raise over \$32,000 for the Manchester Police Department to purchase Narcan, the life-saving antidote to opiod and heroin overdoses, and to assist addicted residents into treatment rather than arrest. The program is the

first of it's kind in Connecticut, and the Manchester model is being adopted by other police departments.

The Lodge in conjunction with Rotary Club of Manchester also hosted an educational seminar featuring H. O. P. E. of Manchester Co-founders Chief Marc Montminy and Sarah Howroyd and Elks National Drug Awareness Spokesman, Ray Lazano. The Rotary District Governor nominee Marc Glass recorded the session and will make the video available to Elks Lodges and Rotary Clubs across the country.



Left to Right Marc Glass, Rotary, co-founder H. O. P. E. of Manchester, Police Chief Marc Montminy, Dave Mangs Rotary, Elks Drug Awareness National Spokesman Ray Lozano, Sarah Howroyd co-founder H.O.P.E., Gerry Gallo Manchester Lodge H. O. P. E liaison, Lisa Berthiaume, DDGER Manchester Lodge, Robert Ferone CT State DAP Chairman.

2018 ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST RESULTS

We are pleased to announce the results of the 2018 Elks National Foundation Scholarship Contest!

The following students were presented with the Grand Lodge Award for \$1,000 per year minimum for four years with the possibility of receiving greater amounts depending on National ranking. The top male and female student in the country has the opportunity to receive \$15,000 per year minimum for four years:

- Wen Ting Zheng, Waterbury
- Abby Wang, Groton
- Corey McCarthy, Glastonbury
- Alexandra Minutillo, Branford
- Nailah Huq, Derby
- Michael Lachnicht, Hartford
- Olivia Lemieux, Torrington
- James Pease, Stamford
- Nikhil Rao, Stamford

Special Awards are in memory of distinguished Elks who have passed. Along with a Special Award from the Connecticut Past Exalted Rulers Association. Award recipients were:

- Wen Ting Zheng, in memory of Francis Joyce, Waterbury
- Corey McCarthy, in memory of Thaddeus Pawloski, Glastonbury
- Michael Lachnicht, in memory of Frank Sotor, Hartford
- Ben Wierzbicki, in memory of

William Rowe, Naugatuck

- David Hanna, State PER Association, Waterbury

Additional recipients, who will all be receiving \$1,500 towards their college tuition are:

- John Blatt, Bridgeport
- Jessica Dupont, Bristol
- Liam Ford, Danbury
- Stephen Wetherell, Danielson
- Thomas Clark, Enfield
- Lauren Newton, Hamden
- Dhruv Darji, Manchester
- Brooke Aqro, Meriden
- Brielle Cayer, Middletown
- Sam Nassar, Milford
- Ben Wierzbicki, Naugatuck
- Tyler Swartout, New Britain
- Yaakow Gottlieb, New Haven
- John Burnett, New London
- Samantha Gisleson, Putnam
- Andrew Kohl, Rockville
- Evan Bender, Southington
- Mary Naccarato, Wallingford
- Katharine Ryan, Westbrook
- Ian Cooke, West Haven
- Matthew Emmanuel, Wethersfield / RH
- Madison Geiger, Willimantic
- Ciara Hale, Winsted

Elks National Foundation (ENF) Fundraiser

Hosted by Meriden Elks Lodge 35

Meriden Elks Lodge #35 will be hosting their 3rd Annual Comedy night, "Mayhem at the Elks" on Saturday, November 17th featuring three acclaimed comedians!

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. with a cash bar. Bring your own appetizers and dinner and enjoy the show starting at 8:00 p.m. \$20.00 per person.

Your host will be the talented Mark Brennan bringing Seymour Swan, Tim Krompner and Darren Rivera. All will surely get you laughing!

Exciting and fun Raffles will also take place!

Reserve your table of ten or your ticket by contacting Michele Stocking, PER at mstocking714@gmail.com.

Southington Lodge Halloween Party for CCMC

The Southington Lodge will be holding a Halloween party supporting CCMC!

Monetary or wish list donations will be collected at the event on October 27th. There will be raffle prizes, music and more for only \$10 per person.

Wish list items most needed are lego kits, infant toys, toddler toys, action figures and crayola brand art supplies.

Donations will support infants and toddlers, preschoolers, school age children and teens!

GER Michael T. Luhr Visits Connecticut!



State Sponsor David R. Carr PGER, Penny Carr, GER Michael T. Luhr, Barbara Luhr, and Connecticut State President David Acanfora PDD are pictured at the Connecticut Children's Medical Center.



GER Michael T. Luhr, Barbara Luhr, and Connecticut State President David Acanfora PDD are pictured at the Hartford Elks Lodge.

STATE MAJOR PROJECT BOOTH AT NATIONAL CONVENTION

By PETER G. NELSON, PDD

State Major Projects Booth Wins 5 Star Recognition Award for Second Year in a Row!

Once again the State Major Projects Booth received a Five Star Recognitions Award for its display and information that was shared with other convention attendees. This year's booth was streamlined thanks to the two pull-ups that were made possible by CCMC and poster boards from Donna Wallace which helped to make set up of the booth quite a bit easier this year as opposed to last year.

We the committee, consisting of Brenda Williams SEY, Pete Nelson PDD, Luis Rivera director Safe Kids, and Donna Wallace Jr. PSP, were able to set up the booth in just over an hour as opposed to the five plus hours it took last year. We took the advisement of the committee judges from last year and incorporated their suggestions into this year's booth making them quite pleased with our display and all the information we had to share with them, as were all of the attendees. In case you did not get to the booth to see it, there were informative pamphlets for people to take with information regarding our involvement with the Safe Kids program, wrist bands with the logo "CT Elks Association Keeping Kids Safe", and pencils that change color with the logo on them. Luis manned the "Spin the Wheel" game in which participants donated a dollar, spun the wheel, and answered a question to win a CCMC bandaid pin. This game was very popular helping us to raise \$540 that will go to the CCMC program. There were bike helmets, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and other informative displays.

The booth was more successful this year because of all the inquiries we got this year as opposed to last year and there was a lot more networking with the other states at the convention this year. There were

many states asking us about our program. Noticeably California, and Laz Saures the marketing manager/web administrator for the Florida Elks. We were even approached by South Dakota and Missouri about how to get a booth at the G. L. convention.

Our many thanks to those who gave up some of their free time to help us man the booth and spread the word. Bobby Brown PER, Louise Lee PER, Joann & Turner Donnel PERs, Rick Berthiaume PER, Seth Miller PER, Justin Fedler ER, Amy Lawler, Debbi Duarte, Diane Terry, Cindy Young and Kim Simmons ER. Their feedback about working the booth was very positive and upbeat. Many are already looking forward to St. Louis. Your being there made it a lot more of an enjoyable and enriching time.

As for next year, yes we have been asked and have accepted the challenge to try (no we will) get the CT Elks Association and "Safe Kids" another five stars!

If you would like to volunteer an hour or two or three next year don't wait. Contact me at pgnpdd1893@gmail.com or

call me at (860)508-8813. I have a couple of volunteers already, but the more help we have, the more enjoyable the time at the booth. Come on and join us, look for the bright volunteer shirts and enthusiastic attitudes, meet and talk to Elks from Connecticut to California, Hawaii to Maine, and every state in between.



ESSAY CONTEST PROMOTES AMERICAN PRIDE

By DAVID P. CIOE, GRAND LODGE COMMITTEE MEMBER

The Grand Lodge once again is pleased to offer the national Americanism Essay Contest to fifth and sixth graders for Division I and seventh and eighth graders for Division II. Members of the Fraternal Committee have selected the theme, "What Makes You Proud Of America?"

This very important patriotic contest gives children the chance to express their pride in America. Fostering our youth's appreciation and respect for patriotism is central for them to understand our country's heritage. Our youth learn the symbols that represent what this country stands for, and can get a deep appreciation for the individuals who sacrifice everything so we all can enjoy our freedom. Elks enthusiastically endorse this program because patriotism is one of the BPOE's cornerstones.

Students across our great country are in school to study and learn, and to grow into our future leaders. Lodges should contact local school districts, private

schools, home schools, charter schools, and teachers to provide them with the new Americanism Essay Contest to add to their curriculums.

Information was given out on this contest and others at the National Convention in July. All DDGERs and ERs should have thumb drives with instructions, forms, and other information. If you do not have your thumb drive, contact your DDGER immediately to get one or to have the zip files e-mailed to you.

Plaques will be awarded by the Grand Lodge for first, second, and third place for winning essays in Division I and Division II. Winners will be announced at the Grand Lodge Session in St. Louis, MO, June 30-July 3, 2019.

Essays must be submitted to Local Lodges by December 15.

Your action now will impact and shape the youth of our country, which affects all of our futures.

ELKS NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION

By RICK GATHEN, MEMBERSHIP AND MARKETING MANAGER

“November is Elks Veterans Remembrance Month”

Chicago, IL, October 11, 2018: An estimated twenty-two million veterans live in our communities. The Elks National President, Michael T. Luhr, has proclaimed November to be Veterans Remembrance Month as a way to encourage us to reach out to local Veterans and offer your support.

This November and every month of the year, Elks will serve thousands of Veterans across the country. Elks volunteer at more than 330 VA Medical Centers, State Veterans HOMes, clinics, transitional shelters and Veterans facilities where they plan activities, buy needed supplies, host meals and offer friendship. Elks help Veterans rehabilitate and thrive by supporting adaptive sports events, and providing therapy kits and wheelchair gloves to recovering Veterans.

More recently, Elks have pledged to help end

Veteran homelessness by pledging \$4 million dollars to assist Veterans experiencing homelessness. We've since helped thousands of Veterans exit or prevent homelessness. Our Elks Lodges are focal points for supporting local military members and Veterans and meeting their needs. Last year alone, the total value of Elks' contributions to our nation's Veterans was nearly \$47 million, and our members served more than 677,000 Veterans.

This Veterans Remembrance Month, we urge you to join the Elks in recognition of and service to the Veterans in your community. Let us also remember the words of Elk member and President John F. Kennedy who said, “As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words but to live by them.”

There are nearly 1,900 Elks Lodges across the country with a total membership of around 800,000. Elks members must be American citizens who are least 21 years of age and must believe in God.

PATRIOTISM RUNS DEEP IN NOVEMBER

By JAMES W. MARTSFIELD, GRAND LODGE COMMITTEE MEMBER

November is for V.E.T.S. It is when we honor our veterans, elect members of our legislative bodies, give thanks for all that we have, and recognize the families of the individuals who serve for our country.

V—Veterans Day. November is Veterans Remembrance Month and we as Elks remember our solemn pledge that “So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them.” Our Order is proud of the pledge to never forget the veterans in our hospitals. We also honor our servicemen and women whose sacrifices have preserved the freedoms we all enjoy. Let us also never forget the volunteers who donate their time to make our Elks Veterans Program so successful. Be sure to acknowledge and thank them.

E—Election Day. Tuesday, November 6 is Election Day. We as Elks have a duty to vote for candidates who share our dreams, morals, and love of our country. Let us all remember that there are not just blue or red states, but a red, white, and blue United States. Do you know your government officials? Do you set aside an evening where you honor your policemen and firefighters? Do you invite your local government officials to your Lodge whenever



possible? Have you considered holding a Legislative Day at your capital? After the election, do you send a congratulatory letter to the newly elected and re-elected legislators and local city and county officials? Along with your letter, don't forget to include a copy of your state and national survey of Volunteer, Youth, Charitable, and Community Service Programs report.

T—Thanksgiving Day. This day is a time to give thanks to our Creator for the blessings that have been bestowed on our families, the Elks, and America. It's time to thank our servicemen and women who are still in harm's way while protecting our freedom. May we be thankful this day, and every day, for the many blessings of family, the fellowship of friends, Lodge Members, and our beloved American heritage. Invite and welcome a veteran family to your Thanksgiving celebration.

S—Support Our Military Families. At tables across our nation, we will share our gratefulness for the service of our men and women in uniform and their families for the many sacrifices made to keep our nation safe. Our military families offer strength and encouragement to our service members while managing the household, caring for children, and putting the country and the military's mission in front of their own desires and dreams. The holidays can be very stressful for many of these families. Consider adopting a family and invite them to your Thanksgiving dinner or prepare and deliver dinner to a family. Let's not forget them during this holiday season.