Unmasking Autism:
How Florida Elks Children's Therapy Services is Making a Difference in the Lives of Patients with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Family Camp 2018

Walgreens-Florida Elks Community Toy Drop

Soccer Shoot Winners
It is very appropriate that we take a few minutes from our busy schedules to pause and consider the many opportunities we have had over the past year to promote our very successful Florida State Elks Association. Our Florida Elks Youth Camp Director, Nick Miller, reports that we completed the most successful summer camp to date with 2,335 campers enjoying our first-class camp. Our Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services continues to grow and expand under the guidance of Colleen Gallant, and we have just hired our 28th therapist who began Jan. 1. Our Harry-Anna Investment Fund continues its unprecedented growth under the direction of PSP Mike Phillips and our dedicated trustees. There can be no doubt that the Florida State Elks Association is the finest, most active and dedicated in the country. Please take a minute to congratulate yourselves for being a part of this; it is a source of pride that the Florida Elks do so much for so many.

I’d like to take just a minute to discuss a new program of Florida Elks’ monthly giving. Our Elks Association is promoting a program to assist in making a recurring monthly charitable donation to our major projects without the necessity of sitting down to write a check or donating at your lodge. Once you have signed up, your monthly gift will be automatically debited from your credit or debit card of choice. The monthly gifting will be automatic, and as they say, “just set it and forget it.” Any amount you can give is appreciated and of course is used for all our charitable endeavors through the Harry-Anna Trust Fund, and you can have the pride of participating without having to deal with it throughout the year. You will feel great knowing you are doing your part to help your Elks Association grow and prosper and help those who need our assistance, including the many children who depend on us for their healthy quality of life. For detailed information, please visit our website, floridaelks.org.

In February, we will have the honor of having our Grand Exalted Ruler and First Lady, Mike and Barbara Luhr, visit the Sunshine State and our many enthusiastic Florida Elks. Our distinguished visitors will be met by the official party at the Jacksonville Airport Wed., Feb. 6, and after showing off our world-famous ancient city, St. Augustine, they will arrive at the Florida Elks Youth Camp Thursday afternoon. On Friday night, we will be entertained by the great performers of Re-Creation, and on Saturday morning, we will enjoy a special message by GER Mike. Please be sure to greet Mike and Barb; they are down-to-earth folks from Alaska who are doing a wonderful job of spreading the message of Elkdom: Elks Care – Elks Share. You will be impressed with them, and I know they will be impressed with us!

Mike and Sandra, Bob, and Claudia and I wish for each of you a happy and healthy 2019. As always, thank you for your enthusiasm, dedication and assistance in the Florida Elks’ many ongoing charitable projects.

C. Valentine Bates, PGER
State Sponsor
Florida State Elks Association

2019 Officer Training Seminar
March 15-17, 2019
Orlando World Center Marriott
8701 World Center Drive, Orlando, FL 32821

All members are encouraged to attend, especially 2019 candidates for Exalted Ruler, Secretary, Leading Knight and Treasurer.

Attendance is also encouraged for Secretary and Treasurer Office Assistants, Board of Director Members, Trustees, and House Committee Members.
Florida Elks Magazine   Winter 2019

State Sponsor...................... p. 01
State President..................... p. 03
COO/State Secretary.......... p. 04
FLOE President.................... p. 05
FEYC Director...................... p. 06
2018 Family Camp............... p. 07
Walgreens-Elks Toy Drop..... p. 09
2018 Holiday Classic.......... p. 11
2018 Soccer Shoot.............. p. 12
Cover Story: Autism.......... p. 13
BPOE History...................... p. 18
CIP: Lodge #1727.............. p. 19
Business Practices............... p. 20
District News...................... p. 21
Veterans / Military........... p. 33
Planning Calendar........... p. 38

Florida Elks Magazine is the official publication of the Florida State Elks Association, a fraternal organization.

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Florida Elks Magazine is published quarterly by the Florida State Elks Association Inc.
P.O. Box 49, Umatilla, FL 32784-0049
800-523-1673

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To find out more about the Florida Elks, please visit our website: floridaelks.org.

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

To share lodge news between Florida Elks Magazine issues, please email articles and photos to rachael@floridaelks.org. They will be posted to the Florida Elks News Online section of the state website and to the state Facebook page: Facebook.com/floridaelks.

In loving memory of Wimberly Wolfe, Florida Elks’ longtime production and distribution vendor – he will be missed.
Once again, we have enjoyed all our visits since my last message.

We started by traveling to the South Southwest District. We were greeted by DVP Dick Conley and his wife, Dianne. Friday night we went to Cape Coral Lodge’s beautiful new building and enjoyed a great meal and their warm hospitality. On Saturday we toured one of Fort Myers’ treasures, the Edison Ford Museum. It was very informative and was enjoyed by all who attended. We traveled to Fort Myers Lodge for a delicious and relaxing lunch. Saturday evening’s wonderful dinner was at Bonita Springs-Estero Lodge.

Our next visit was to the Northwest District where our hosts were DVP Annie Moore and Gary Pelham. Friday evening dinner at Crestview Lodge was awesome. The baseball theme at the dinner was fun with great decorations that were a nice touch. After a fabulous breakfast at Twin Cities Lodge, we were treated to a very educational and informative tour of the Air Force Armament Museum. Saturday evening’s dinner at Fort Walton Lodge was delightful. I will always treasure my personalized baseball bat. It was great to have PSP Jimmy Coggins and Sonja join us for dinner.

Next we attended the East Central District where we were greeted by DVP Jeff Rumler and Cristin and a host of district members. We went to Edgewater-New Smyrna Beach Lodge for dinner Friday night where we celebrated my birthday in style. After breakfast Saturday morning, we went to the DeLand Naval Air Museum for a guided tour and then we went to the Stockyard for a wonderful lunch. Saturday evening’s dinner at Sanford Lodge was terrific. We were pleased to have our daughter, Kim Chapman, and grandchildren, Michael and Alexis, attend this evening.

Our midyear convention at Plantation on Crystal River brought us up to date with reports from all our state committees. Also at our convention, the Past State Presidents endorsed Tom Ludwick and Joyce as President and First Lady for 2019-2020, and Rudy Masi and Dolly were endorsed as the VPAL and Second Lady. Congratulations to both couples!

The final state visit for this message was to the Southeast Central District where our host was DVP Michael Schodlbauer and Mary. Friday night dinner was hosted by Vero Beach Lodge. The meal was great, and the baseball theme and decorations were over-the-top fabulous. On Saturday, our guided tour of Historic Dodgertown was a pleasant surprise. I didn’t know it even existed. We then went to the Walking Tree Brewery for a delicious lunch with homemade desserts. Saturday evening dinner was wonderful at Sebastian Lodge.

Sally and I were invited guests to the Mississippi State Elks Association mid-winter conference where they hosted our Grand Exalted Ruler, Michael T. Luhr, and his wife, Barbara, on his official visit to Mississippi. The southern hospitality and warm greetings of the officers and members were kind and appreciated. We had an interesting tour of Keesler Air Force Base and learned about the hurricane hunters’ flights during storms.

Through our visits, it is evident that the lodges are working to “Make the Best Better.” I want to continue to encourage everyone to grow your membership, involve new members, make your Harry-Anna Trust Fund goal, apply for and receive all grants, and participate in community activities and projects.

Again, it is a privilege and honor to represent you as the president of the Florida State Elks Association. Thank you for your support and the kindness shown to us.

Sally and I are looking forward to seeing all of you at the February quarterly in Umatilla, Fla., at the Florida Elks Youth Camp.

May God bless our troops, the Florida State Elks Association and America.

Frank Malatesta, State President
Florida State Elks Association

Get in the Game at the Florida Elks Youth Camp!

State
Hoop Shoot
Feb. 16, 2019

Stay Connected
www.FloridaElks.org    Facebook    Instagram
Are we Taking Unnecessary Risks with our Private Club Status?

Economic pressures on our lodges are causing some to stray dangerously from our longstanding governing principles and already those actions are increasing state and federal scrutiny on our lodge business practices. These aberrations are concerning and might one day lead to disciplinary action by the Grand Lodge or even worse, the loss of the lodge’s charter.

Many years have passed since the Elks founding in 1885 and our governance has been upheld ever since. To many, the rules by which we operate our lodges seem outdated, and that has made it easy for the uninformed to steer the lodge down a dangerous path. Observed and followed, the Grand Lodge model has withstood the test of time and will continue to because of its strong foundation and the order’s willingness to adapt to social change.

As federal and state economies come under pressure, so, too, are the operations of entities exempt from their taxation. Already many of our lodges are being audited by the IRS looking mostly at taxable, unrelated (to our charitable cause) business income. The Florida Division of Alcohol Beverages and Tobacco (ABT) is also stepping up its visits to our lodges reviewing our gaming and making sure we are serving only members as our licenses require.

The basic principles we hold most dear as Elks are our freedom of association and our right to choose our members. We are afforded this because we operate our lodges as bona fide private clubs exempt from public accommodation statutes. When we stray from this all-important tenet, we are asking for trouble. The order must pay strict attention to this and the compliance of its lodges. Thus, each lodge is subjected to an annual inspection by the District Deputy and a review of the lodge’s finances. Stray too much and the Grand Lodge will have no choice but to suspend or revoke the lodge’s charter. Observe basic rules and fear nothing!

Today’s private club must meet a legal standard albeit one with unestablished parameters. It is no longer just an inference assumed by our conduct or its characteristics. A private club is an organization: 1. Formed because of a common associational interest among the members; 2. Which carefully screens applicants for membership and selects new members with reference to the common intimacy of association; 3. Which limits the facilities or services of the organization strictly to members and bona fide guests; 4. Which is controlled by the membership in general meetings; 5. Which limits its membership to a number small enough to allow full membership participation and to ensure that all members share the common associational bond; 6. Which is nonprofit and operated solely for the benefit of the members; and 7. Whose publicity, if any, is directed only to members for their information.

For the most part, the Elks meet this standard hands-down. Our vulnerability comes with number three. If the practice of renting our private facilities to the public becomes commonplace, we risk losing our status as a private club. We must not allow the actions of the uninformed to move the lodge toward open access. The members are the owners of the lodge, not our customers.

Many question the reason for the portion of our obligation where we agree to not use our membership in the order for business or commercial purposes. This is an important component of private club status. There is no denying that business is conducted and that professional contacts are initiated and renewed at private clubs. We become public when these benefits are given to business entities and to persons other than our own members. When we allow this to go on in our lodges, we lose our ability to deny access to the public. Even when it is a member’s business or organization, that member is now receiving an unfair advantage and creating a conflict of interest. Bona fide hall rentals are the only way to do this correctly and should be the practice of every lodge. Simply adopting an event as a lodge activity still creates the perception of unfair advantage for the members and the business or charity receiving the access. This is not the practice of a private club. Think of the operation of the private club as extensions of members’ homes, not extensions of their businesses.

A second area where we must be vigilant is maintaining selectivity when choosing our members. If we will but follow the formal membership procedures provided us by the order, we meet all standards of compliance. It’s when we stray that we become vulnerable.

Prospective members must be U.S. citizens, believe in God and live within the jurisdictional limits of the local lodge where eligible for membership. Applicants must answer various questions about their backgrounds and be sponsored by a member in good standing. The lodge secretary submits the application to the membership and the Exalted Ruler refers it to a standing investigating committee composed of members of the lodge. As part of the investigative process, the applicant is required to appear before the committee. The report of the committee is presented to the membership at a regular meeting, and the entire membership is notified that the applicant will be considered at the next meeting. Three negative votes bar the applicant.

Our desperation of late to stem our membership losses has us taking risks we probably shouldn’t be taking.

• Membership drives and signs should seek to only elicit interest in the club, not to promise membership.

• As our member rosters decline, we must be careful to not just initiate to make up for losses.

• Emphasis on awards for recruiting new members should be limited. An unselective, energetic sale of memberships will undoubtedly place us into a public business classification.

• Every prospective member must be known by and sponsored by an existing member. The bartender simply handing an application to the secretary with some member signatures on it is not good practice.

• Dues and fees are a necessity of a private club and as such should be carefully discounted if at all.

Times are challenging for fraternal membership organizations, but none is poised to endure the winds of change better than the Order of Elks.

Join the conversation. Log in and post your comments at https://floridaelks.org/carls-corner.

Carl Seibert, COO/State Secretary
Florida State Elks Association
Our first meeting of the new FLOE year took place at the Elks midyear convention held at Plantation on Crystal River Nov. 10, and it was a great start to our new year. I thank all those who attended.

The ladies activity this year was organized by Vice President, Adella Ashton, who did an amazing job by bringing in Frank Joliff, a Vietnam veteran who entertained us with comedy, magic and stories about his time in Vietnam. Everyone who came was very glad they did! Thank you so much, Adella, for all your hard work and preparation for this event.

Immediate Past State President, Mary McCoy, and her committee chairladies gave their reports for the 55th annual FLOE conference which was held Sept. 20-22 at Sheraton Lake Buena Vista Resort. You did a great job, PSP Mary! The food was wonderful, and the Vegas revue Friday night was a blast! On Saturday, FLOE’s 2017-2018 Chaplain, Melaney McHale, presented PSP Mary with her prayer book. A great time was had by all who were able to attend. It was wonderful to see our FLOE friends from all over the state. PSP Mary’s motto was “Stick your Neck out for a Child,” and she and her chairladies did just that to ensure we had a great FLOE year.

A big thank you goes to all the officers, advisory members and delegates who have agreed to chair a committee for the upcoming year. I am looking forward to working with you! We still have district delegate positions open and would love to have them all filled! Please consider joining us as we continue the great works we do as FLOE.

We are already preparing for the FLOE luncheon and Chinese auction to be held at the Florida State Elks Association convention at Orlando World Center Marriott May 24. FLOE’s hospitality room will be open Thursday and Friday evenings and will be serving pecan blue frozen cocktails. We love getting to talk to old friends and making new ones as we promote FLOE. Many people are already members of FLOE and don’t even know it since there are no dues. Please stop by and get to know more about us! The Chinese auction will be set up as soon as possible and will be in the main hallway of the meeting area. This is one of our large fundraisers for FLOE and we are very glad to be continuing this tradition again this year. We always have a wide array of items from which to choose. This activity is enjoyed by all who participate. The winners will be drawn during our luncheon May 24. Make sure you stop by and see the prizes and buy your tickets.

The 2018-2019 nominating and bylaw committees will meet prior to the February 2019 FLOE meeting and their reports will be presented at the February FLOE meeting. The election of new officers will be held at the May 2019 FLOE meeting. The bylaws are revised every three years with changes considered in the interim by a two-thirds majority vote at the next scheduled conference.

Soon we will all be enjoying the FSEA February quarterly meeting at the Florida Elks Youth Camp. I am eagerly anticipating the meet and greet luncheon for the Grand Exalted Ruler’s wife. It is always a great time of fellowship with beautiful decorations and a wonderful meal. I look forward to seeing you all at our next meeting which will be at the Florida Elks Youth Camp Saturday, Feb. 9, at 9 a.m. in conjunction with the FSEA February quarterly meeting.

I and my committees are working hard to ensure we have a great year and increase our donations to the Florida Elks charities. My goal going through this year is to promote FLOE and our activities. One way I will be doing this is in addition to all our other fundraisers, I will have some FUNdraising during the Friday night entertainment at our next FLOE convention. I don't want to give out too many secrets yet, but I guarantee it will be a new and very fun activity that has never been done before at FLOE. The convention will be Sept. 19-21 at the Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort right by the boardwalk. Please mark your calendars to attend. There is one meeting on Saturday morning that is only open to FLOE members, all Elks and guests. If you have never attended a FLOE convention, you are missing out on a great time.

The 365 Club is always willing to accept donations as well. The idea of this club is that if every person saves just a penny a day and then donates $3.65 per year, a staggering amount can be earned overall. This project is why I chose copper as one of my colors since it exemplifies that every penny we earn to help veterans and children is important. Donations may be sent directly to Marlene Evans, FLOE Treasurer. Click on the FLOE tab on the Florida Elks website for the address. I also chose the color aqua to represent the beautiful waters of Florida. My symbol for the year is the peacock which symbolizes new life which is what we do when we help children and veterans, thereby causing changes that dramatically affect and improve their life. My flower, the water lily, stands for optimism.

Please join FLOE and me as we work together to “Brighten the Life of a Child.”

Felicia Vuletich, 2018-2019 President
Florida Ladies of Elks
Happy New Year to everyone. 2018 was an amazing year for Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services.

My idea for this article is to give you a rundown on the past year at FECTS, but before I do, I would like to recognize Deborah Hall, our administrative assistant. She started with FSEA Sept. 11, 1987. I can assure you that after the past year and a half, FSEA hit the jackpot with Deborah. She is one of the most dedicated professionals I have had the pleasure to work with over the last 40-plus years. She gives 110% all the time. She is the most organized assistant ever and I am grateful every day that she was with FECTS when I started May 15, 2017. Deborah Hall, thank you for your many years of service and especially for all you do for us at FECTS. State President Frank Malatesta’s motto this year is “Make the Best Better,” and I can assure you that she makes us all at FECTS better. So, to all you Elks, next time you see Deborah, please tell her how much we all appreciate the job she does for us.

Now, here is the year in review! We started off the year with our annual conference here at the Florida Elks Youth Camp. Brian and Mary Kay Burns along with their crew prepared an amazing barbecue the first night. We had great speakers and the conference was a huge success. It was at this conference that we chose Jackson Barth as our first CHAMP. Wow, what a year it has been for Jackson. We have been to so many of our Elk functions this year and Jackson has enjoyed meeting so many of our Elks. Jackson’s parents are so grateful for the Elks and all they have done to bring their shy little guy out of his shell. They tell me that he has come a long way and really enjoys being around the Elks.

In March, we were off to the officer training seminar and what an experience that was for me. I didn’t realize when I took this job that it meant being a presenter at officer training. Somehow I survived and will be at officer training again in 2019.

We finished the last couple state president visits with Carl Gerace and his lovely wife, Cathy. It was an awesome year of travel with them and with VPAL Frank and Sally Malatesta. The therapists did an incredible job of speaking at each one of these events and they made me even more proud of them and the job they do for the children of Florida.

In May, we attended the state convention and Frank Malatesta was installed as our state president. Paula Tarver was our speaker at the major projects luncheon and she made an excellent presentation. In June, we were on the road again. One of the perks of this job is that while traveling with the state president to all the district visits, you get to meet so many amazing and wonderful Elks, and don’t forget the ladies organizations. I love meeting every one of you and I am so grateful for all you do for Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services.

In July, we were off to San Antonio and the national convention. While we were there, we sold chances on a couple items and raised in excess of $5,000 for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. Since this was the 150th anniversary for the Elks, it made this convention even more special.

The state president’s visits continued after convention. I have covered some miles over the last year and a half and I enjoyed every minute of it. I especially love hearing everyone’s stories about therapy services and how it has impacted their life or someone close to them. Each time a therapist speaks, you can see on our members’ faces how much they appreciate what the therapists do in the name of Florida Elks.

In November, we attended the midyear convention at the Plantation on Crystal River. We were pleased to have Jackson and his family join us for the Saturday evening picnic along with his therapist, Nikki McAnary. Tressy Guadagno gave an excellent presentation and we had a question-and-answer session.

We had two therapists start working with us near the end of the year, Tina Morris is in the South Southeast and South districts. Janet Bryant is in the Northeast District. Our newest therapist, Pearl Johnson, will start Jan. 2, bringing the total therapists to 28. She will be in the North Central, Central and Southwest Central districts. We continue to work hard here at FECTS to treat as many children as we can. Since we have three new therapists, it will take a little time to get their caseload up to our standards, but once everyone is on board, I’m sure you will be pleased with the number of children we will be able to treat.

This past year was a little difficult because we lost a few experienced therapists and had to hire new therapists. It will always take a new therapist a little time to become familiar with all the resources in the area. Since January 2018, we have hired six new therapists, two of which were new positions and four of which were replacements. So, give us a little time to get everyone up to speed and know that we are working hard so that our Elks can continue to be proud of this amazing program.

I would like to once again thank each of you for your support. We know that without you, the Elks and ladies organizations, we do not exist.

On behalf of Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services, thank you for allowing me to serve as the Director and for the confidence you have shown in our team of therapists. We are all looking forward to an even better 2019!

Colleen Gallant, Director
Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services
Happy New Year from your Florida Elks Youth Camp! We hope you’re as excited for 2019 as we are. Registration for summer camp 2019 is open! As with last year, all applications will be completed online. So, spread the word to your families and campers. To register, go to www.floridaelks.org/camp and click “Sign up for Camp!”

Every lodge will again be granted six scholarships. Each scholarship provides a free week of camp to one camper, and we hope that you will use them to make an impact on a child or family in your community. Please remember that each lodge can and should send more than six campers! If the camper’s family or your charity account can afford it, the cost is $180 for each camper beyond your first six. If neither the camper’s family nor the lodge has the money, please send them anyway! We’ll find an Elk somewhere to cover the cost. Dates for this summer’s sessions are:

- **Week 1** June 9-15
- **Week 2** June 16-22
- **Week 3** June 23-29
- **Week 4** June 30-July 6
- **Week 5** July 7-13
- **Week 6** July 14-20
- **Week 7** July 21-27

*Military Week: Dependents of veterans and/or active military attend for free!

There is no cut-off date for registration, but it will be first come, first served.

Last year, we reached our capacity by April 15, and I expect to fill up even faster this year, so please, don’t wait!

If you have any questions regarding camper registration, please contact our registrar, Jen Miller, at the camp. You can reach her by email at jen@feyc.org or by phone at 352-431-8701.

We’re only two months from the end of the Elk year, and as your lodges look at results for this year and the budget for next year, I’d ask that you please appeal to your lodge board of directors to consider directing charity money toward your state projects — the camp and therapy services. I know that many lodges annually underestimate how well their charity accounts will do and end up carrying over larger and larger sums to the next year. I know of lodges that carry over upwards of $30,000 and $40,000 each year, and while it’s wonderful to see our charity accounts swell, it’s all useless if it’s not spent on charity. Worse, it will actually lose value each year if it’s not invested appropriately as it will be in your Harry-Anna Investment Fund.

So, if we have additional money that must be spent on charity, what better charities to support than our own? We have a thriving youth camp that caters to over 20,000 children a year. We have therapists who treat over 500 children a week! These are projects that make real-world differences every single day. To help keep them running, continue to budget for your local charitable projects, but ask your lodge to direct surplus charity money back to our state projects. Reach out to your local therapist. See what additional tools or toys they need. Check on how many kids went to camp last year from your community and on how many are looking to go this coming summer. Then, send money to the Harry-Anna Investment Fund with a memo noting your project’s specific need.

If you need help determining who your local therapist is or how many kids went to camp from your area last year, please contact Colleen Gallant or me. We can give you details on the children being helped in your area and on what is needed to continue helping them.

This leads me into my second to last topic. One of the most prominent questions I receive from Elks is, “How do I know what kids are sponsored to attend camp from my area and how many of them need financial assistance?” Our online registration system can provide a wealth of information about our potential and enrolled campers. While you cannot access our system directly, we can provide it to you. If you’d like data on kids from your area, please email Jen Miller. She can set up a reminder to email you monthly reports on the kids who have requested to attend camp from your area. These reports show you who has used one of your six ENF camperships, which campers have not yet received an Elk sponsor, which campers are requesting financial assistance, how many campers are attending from your area, etc.

If families have trouble accessing a computer to complete a camper registration, please invite them to the lodge, a library or their school’s media center. Have a volunteer sit with them and work through the application. If you have questions or concerns, email Jen. She’s incredible at helping the non-tech-savvy navigate the process.

Finally, our next major camp event is the FSEA February quarterly meeting Feb. 7-9 and we’d love for you to be there! It’s a great opportunity to meet other Florida Elks and learn the latest about your major projects’ operations. This meeting will also be our Grand Exalted Ruler’s official visit to Florida. Grand Exalted Ruler, Michael T. Luhr, will be here throughout the event and will be addressing Florida Elks about your major projects’ operations. In addition, we’ll have great food and entertainment Friday night as Recreation takes the stage. While lodging at the camp is currently full, you can still make reservations at hotels in Eustis, Tavares, Mount Dora or Leesburg. If you’re coming, be sure to register at floridaelks.org.

Thank you for all you do as Elks!

Nick Miller, Director
Florida Elks Youth Camp
or nearly 15 years, the Florida Elks Youth Camp has hosted a weekend known as family camp for patients of Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services and their families. The families attend at no cost to them. The 2018 event took place Oct. 5-7 and hosted 36 patients, 58 of their siblings, 87 parents, 16 therapists and 14 OT/PT student volunteers. The student volunteers were from Florida Gulf Coast University, University of St. Augustine Miami campus, Daytona State College and University of Florida. Overseeing the event were four lifeguards, five ropes course facilitators and four counselors.

The families arrived Friday in time for dinner and then attended a costumed dance party in the gym. After Saturday’s breakfast, attendees took part in ropes course activities as well as arts and crafts. They soaked up pool time in addition to archery, coloring, time at the lake and in the gym, and leisure time. Following dinner, everyone enjoyed a campfire and then a movie in Lake View Pavilion.

Starting in 2017 to give the typically-abled siblings a more realistic summer camp experience, they are grouped separately from their families and paired with several counselors.

Family camp is a unique experience for families who have children with special needs in that it is one of the few places they can attend with their children and not feel the need to constantly apologize for or explain their children’s actions to others. This is because every family in attendance inherently understands the complexities of the day-to-day challenges faced by these families.

These weekends also act as mini vacations and offer the chance for families to bond. Andrea, a parent of a child with special needs as well as a typically-abled child, describes the weekend this way:

“Elks camp was awesome. It’s an opportunity to spend time with family and do a lot of different activities that we don’t have the chance to do otherwise: the ropes, the campfire or something as simple as walking in the dark holding a lamp between the trees. It’s really a weekend to make memories. My son told us, ‘this is the best day of my life!’ Since the moment we arrived, we felt welcomed. We love to be able to share more time with the therapists in a relaxed environment. All the staff and students were super kind and friendly; we could notice how volunteers were working hard. The students are great and kids love to have them around. My son was super exited to spend the whole day with the siblings group. The place is really beautiful and the cabins are comfortable. All the activities are super fun for everybody and it’s amazing to see how the staff helps all kids to enjoy the activities despite their problems.”

With feedback like this, there is little doubt that family camp enhances the lives of the families served by Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services. The Florida Elks Youth Camp staff provides these families an experience like no other and helps create precious memories for these families.
The Walgreens-Florida Elks Community Toy Drop: A Partnership Making an Outstanding Difference in the Lives of Children and Families for the Holidays

The second annual Walgreens-Florida Elks community toy drop began Nov. 1 and all donations were picked up Dec. 15 at all Area 10 and Area 12 Walgreens stores by Elks volunteers. Each participating lodge is assigned nearby stores for the pickups.

Last year through the Florida Elks’ partnership with Walgreens, over 2,000 toys with a value of almost $13,000 were donated to families in need. This year was even more successful; over 5,200 toys with a value of more than $46,000 were donated to over 3,000 families.

This year’s program saw involvement from 14 lodges in the West Central, Southwest and Southwest Central districts: Dunedin/Clearwater #1525, Holiday Isles #1912, Largo #2159, St. Petersburg #1224, Seminole #2519, Tampa #708, Tarpon Springs #1719, Bradenton #1511, Lakewood Ranch-Sarasota #2855, Manasota #2734, Palmetto #2449, Sarasota South #2495, Venice-Nokomis #1854 and Brandon #2383.

Numerous organizations were the grateful recipients of the donated toys including St. Petersburg and Largo police departments, Hillsborough and Pinellas county schools, Pinellas County Sheriff, CASA, The Kind Mouse, The Miracle League of Manasota, Anna Maria Oyster Bar, Toys for Foster Kids Project, St. Anthony’s Hospital, and Bags of Brotherly Love.

This year, Walgreens invited Dan Masi, Florida State Elks Association Development Director, and his wife, Casey, to the first Area 10 executive and management holiday breakfast held Dec. 18 at the Walgreens district office in Riverview, Fla. Jerry Telson, Walgreens director of pharmacy and retail operations, spoke to his team and was very passionate about his message of “reflecting and giving back,” which is what Walgreens and the Elks have come together to do. He was very positive with his team and told them to make sure their direction matched their intention. Through the managers of Area 10 stores, the Florida Elks were then presented with another supply of more than 500 toys as they were recognized for giving back and helping the community. Masi was given the opportunity to speak about the Florida Elks organization and its major projects, Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services and the Florida Elks Youth Camp.

The partnership between Walgreens and the Florida Elks has been a tremendous success. The goal is to continue to grow and expand into other districts, and the lodges are eager to continue their participation as well. By working together, Florida Elks and Walgreens have once again put smiles on the faces of many children and helped make the holidays much happier for them.
Brandon Lodge #2383 picked up 543 toys with an estimated value of $2,172 from 13 Walgreens stores. PERs, trustees and House Committee members felt like children themselves as they organized them by age appropriateness. Then came the decision-making process for how to distribute the toys.

In an instance of perfect timing, the lodge had just received a request from their adopted local school asking if the lodge could possibly help with Christmas gifts for nine children in need. Each trustee and house member took charge of filling a bag full of toys for one of the nine children.

Through Brandon Lodge’s Bags of Brotherly Love program which helps those in the community who are homeless, the lodge also partners with the local sheriff’s department. Bob Blair, Bags of Brotherly Love chairman, filled five large plastic bags full of toys which were given to some of their in-need families through their Sheriff’s Santa program.

The remainder of the toys were delivered to the Shriners to use for Christmas as well as to replenish their toy store. When children are brought to the hospital, the toy store is opened to the child to pick a toy of their choice. These toys filled a special need and brought smiles to faces of children which is reason enough that the lodge is ready to do this again next year!

St. Petersburg Lodge #1224 collected 567 toys from their local Walgreens stores with a value of $7,541. Additionally, special Christmas gifts were purchased for the tweens and teens on the lists using half the lodge’s Elks National Foundation Promise Grant ($1,511).

The Christmas toys and gifts were distributed to families in need through the following organizations: Cathedral of St. Peter, Children’s Village, Sallie House, CASA House, Campbell Park, Salvation Army, St. Anthony’s Hospital Foundation, Santa’s Angels, Lealman Fire Department toy shop for kids in the housing projects, The Kind Mouse and two Boley Centers for those who are homeless.

Brandon Lodge #2383 trustees and PERs Nickie Wells and Rick Weigand sort toys collected from Walgreens stores.

Reflection Letter from Walgreens Store Manager

by Wesley Shaw

Yesterday, I went to the Elks lodge with Dan and Casey to deliver the toys. You should have seen the shock on the face of the people working there. If you don’t know, most of the active members of the Elks are of an older generation. Their faces were lit up like a four-year-old’s on Christmas morning. I am talking about people as old as 80. “Does Santa know that we have put him out of business?!” They had lists of single local families and they were frantically going through the tables and tables of toys. “Judith, what is Fortnite? Do you think a 13-year-old would like this?” Big beauty (Denise) was getting praise, too, for her push to get cosmetics into the donations. “Wow! I want this item!”

“I will have to call so and so organization back; when they first came, we only let them take one toy per child. We didn’t know it would be like this!” They had lists of single local families and they were frantically going through the tables and tables of toys. “Judith, what is Fortnite? Do you think a 13-year-old would like this?” Big beauty (Denise) was getting praise, too, for her push to get cosmetics into the donations. “Wow! I want this item!”

They could not believe the generosity of the managers and leadership team in Area 10. Later, I witnessed people spreading the word around about how Walgreens is a true pillar of our community. They (we) talk the talk and walk the walk. How do you become America’s most loved...anything? This is exactly how, folks.

...I see the difference we are making. I have witnessed, on numerous occasions, our efforts going full circle from collection to donation to delivery to gratitude. I am so proud to be a part of the Area 10 team. Thank you...for spreading holiday cheer to the less fortunate.

Wesley Shaw
Walgreens Store Manager
The Florida State Elks Association along with Eustis High School held their third holiday classic basketball tournament Dec. 27-29 at the Florida Elks Youth Camp. The first tournament was held in 2015 with four teams (the 2016 event was cancelled because there were not four teams to participate). The mission of this yearly event is to bring attention to the Florida Elks and the support they give to their communities. It is a bracketed tournament sanctioned by the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA).

This year there were seven area high schools competing for the trophy. The participating schools were Eustis High School, Tavares High School, Liberty Christian Academy, South Lake High School, Lake Weir High School, South Sumter High School and Hudson High School. Each school was given 300 tickets to sell at their schools and in their communities with each school retaining all ticket sales for their athletic programs. Walk-in ticket sales were brisk and each spectator designated the school they wished to receive the ticket funds.

The games on Dec. 27 and Dec. 28 were single elimination with the two unbeaten teams having a 2 p.m. tip-off Dec. 29. The two teams competing for the championship title were South Sumter and Eustis high schools; Eustis took home the first-place trophy. Each school was presented a plaque by PSP Danny Tabor, and the first-place and second-place trophies were presented by State President Frank Malatesta. Concession sales were conducted by Elks volunteers with proceeds going to the Florida Elks Youth Camp. Each team and coaches were served dinner each night. Hudson High players, coaches and cheerleaders were served breakfast and lunch as well because they were the only team that stayed on property for the tournament.

Every part of the event went well and there were many compliments from school administrators, parents and grandparents, and spectators. Organizers hope to add an eighth team next year and to make it even more competitive. A long-term goal is to invite teams from out of state.

Camp Director, Nick Miller, and the entire camp staff are very much appreciated for hosting the event, feeding everyone and allowing the Florida Elks Youth Camp to be showcased.
## 2018-2019 SOCCER SHOOT WINNERS

### Under 8 Girls & Boys

<table>
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<th>Third Place</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hannah Willetts</td>
<td>Skylar Colas</td>
<td>McKenzie Lansford</td>
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<td>Eustis #1578</td>
<td>Clewiston #1853</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jaylen Colas</td>
<td>Tryston Sandoval</td>
<td>Samuel Barnier</td>
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### Under 10 Girls & Boys

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<td>Katheryn Rodriguez</td>
<td>Lauren Lancing</td>
<td>Ava Arnold</td>
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<td>Jupiter #2469</td>
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<td>Jose Valasco</td>
<td>Rossi Pfister</td>
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### Under 12 Girls & Boys (* denotes high point kicker)

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<tr>
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<td>Kayla Lancing*</td>
<td>Meagan Lawler</td>
<td>William Velasquez*</td>
<td>Ismael Gonzalez</td>
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<td>Joshua Yost</td>
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<td>Ashley Jeronimo</td>
<td>Cari Anthony</td>
<td>Jahir Diaz</td>
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<td>Devin Stock</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Angel Guerra</td>
<td>Malahki Sanders</td>
<td>Palm Coast #2709</td>
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*FLORIDA ELKS MAGAZINE*
**Unmasking Autism:**
How Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services is Making a Difference in the Lives of Patients with Autism Spectrum Disorder

*By Rachael King*

In today's world, most people know someone who either has or has been affected by autism spectrum disorder. The term is very commonly used but is not always clearly understood. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, “autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges. There is often nothing about how people with ASD look that sets them apart from other people, but people with ASD may communicate, interact, behave and learn in ways that are different from most other people. The learning, thinking and problem-solving abilities of people with ASD can range from gifted to severely challenged. Some people with ASD need a lot of help in their daily lives; others need less. A diagnosis of ASD now includes several conditions that used to be diagnosed separately: autistic disorder, pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS) and Asperger syndrome. These conditions are now all called autism spectrum disorder.”

The CDC reports that one in 59 children has autism spectrum disorder; it is also four times more common in boys than girls. Within the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services (FECTS) program that has 28 therapists treating 500 children weekly, a staggering amount of one in two patients has ASD. Paula Tarver, OTR/L, an occupational therapist with FECTS since the program’s inception in 1999, has seen her caseload of children with ASD grow from 5% in the beginning to 50% today.

Because this disorder has become so pervasive among FECTS patients, the theme of this year’s Harry-Anna Trust Gala of Hope is “Unmasking Autism.” The mission of this premier fundraising event for Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services is not only to raise funds for this project but also to do exactly what the name suggests – unmask autism spectrum disorder and raise awareness about it by teaching others what ASD is, putting a face on the disorder and showing how FECTS is successfully treating the symptoms of ASD.

**Early warning signs of sensory processing problems/autism spectrum in infancy:**
- Lack of cuddling behavior
- Failure to make eye contact
- Oversensitivity to sounds or touch
- Under-responsiveness to sounds (doesn’t turn and look for sound sources)
- Poor self-regulation of arousal states, irritability and colic
- Not reaching early milestones

**Early warning signs of sensory processing problems/autism spectrum in toddlers:**
- Poor eye contact
- Poor bonding and interacting with others outside of parents and siblings
- Motor, social, speech/language and self-care skills may be delayed
- They may lack normal curiosity about their environment, or, on the other hand, they may explore in a disorganized and destructive manner which does not lead to learning and mastery.
- Difficulty in figuring out basic whole body movements needed for climbing downstairs backwards, climbing onto a riding toy, or climbing up a ladder are bewildering and frightening chores. They may be afraid of movement experiences and not like to swing, bounce or spin on playground equipment.
- Self-stemming behaviors: hand-flapping; staring at ceiling fans, wheels on toys, etc.; head-banging; rocking; and lining up their toys
- Very picky eaters

FECTS therapists further unmask ASD as oftentimes they are the first to recognize children’s behaviors as ASD symptoms and must tell the parents that their child may have autism spectrum disorder. While therapists are not doctors and therefore cannot diagnose the children, they very much can and do identify specific symptoms which can then lead to treatment. Some families choose to then have their child evaluated by a doctor and receive an ASD diagnosis while other families don’t want the child to be officially diagnosed and choose instead just to treat the symptoms. Treatment methods are the same regardless of whether the child has the official diagnosis.

The symptoms that FECTS therapists recognize as possible signs of ASD relate to core deficits, and the earlier these deficits are caught, the easier it is to correct them. According to Tarver, “some children grow out of the diagnosis where others make good progress, but it takes years for them to get to the point where they are out of the spectrum. There are children who, even after trying everything, the child is still severely autistic. Although those cases are less common, they are very heartbreaking. If we address all the core deficits, the issues get better, and the child thrives in all areas developmentally. Some children go on to college and have great careers and others live with their parents or in a group home after they age out of public school. That is why they call it a spectrum disorder. Early detection with early intervention is the key to helping these children reach their full potential, whatever that may be. If the deficiencies are worked on, they get better and are completely corrected or are a minimal issue. Many of these kids will have some sensory issues that pop up from time to time, but if they learn how to deal with them so that they can function in society and are able to participate in group activities and make friends, I feel they are doing as well as 60% of the population.”

Also imperative for success is if the child and family follow through with the therapist’s plan of care as it relates to the core deficits. Parents who do not keep up with the care plan between the therapist’s weekly visits cannot expect to see much improvement in their child’s condition.

Addressing the core deficits of ASD is often compared to putting a puzzle together. Each deficit represents a puzzle piece; as each deficit is addressed, the more connected the puzzle becomes. The core deficits
are severe sensory processing disorder; emotional delays; speech delays; poor resilience; rigid inflexible thinking; difficulty functioning in dynamic interactions with others and preferring static, safe and consistent environments; episodic memory and appraisal deficiencies; poor play skills; and biological issues.

All occupational therapists are able to treat sensory processing disorder which includes regulation, modulation, discrimination, visual attention, auditory processing, mirror neuron efficiency, balance and coordination, strength and endurance, gross and fine motor skills, self-care skills, picky eating, explosive behavior, and ADD and ADHD, but Tarver has additional training in issues related to ASD, specifically relation development intervention (RDI) training which focuses on treatments of all core deficits.

Examining several of Tarver’s case studies including symptom descriptions and treatment methods should help make these abstract concepts of core deficits more concrete.

Argie was referred to FECTS by an early interventionist through the Early Steps Part C state program. Tarver treated him twice, once beginning in June 2013 when he was three years old and again starting in December 2014 when he was five years old. When he was initially evaluated at three years of age, Argie had significant auditory processing impairment and was developmentally delayed in fine motor skills, gross motor skills, self-care skills, language skills, and social and emotional skills. He had only a dozen words he used to communicate.

After the first 26 treatment sessions, he was able to speak in three-to-five-word sentences and sing nursery rhymes. He was able to dress himself with age-appropriate fasteners. He had caught up developmentally in fine motor skills and gross motor skills.

During Argie’s first admission, Tarver made his parents aware that he was at risk of having ASD based on the symptoms he was presenting. By the time he was evaluated again for the second admission, Argie had received the official ASD diagnosis by a doctor. Argie also had poor articulation and language was hard to understand. He had difficulty sequencing the order of events when telling a story, describing an event or repeating what someone had said. He contributed little to conversations and did not initiate them with children or adults. He had echolalia which means he would repeat what was said to him. He had developmental delays in episodic memory and appraisal skills which affected his social and emotional development. He was unable to analyze and develop a game plan for a situation.

Episodic memory, a core deficit, is when a child cannot reflect on past experiences or personal memories. For example, if you show a child a picture of his family at the zoo and ask him to tell you about the picture, he will answer without any emotional connection to it. Instead of relaying details of the fun they had at the zoo, he will simply state the names of the people in the picture and won’t remember details of the day. To improve episodic memory, Tarver has parents take pictures and videos of events and family gatherings and instructs the parents to talk about them with the child and remind them what happened. Eventually the child will remember after repeatedly exercising those memory muscles.

Appraisal skills are also a core deficit. Tarver explains that Argie was unable to analyze and develop a game plan for a situation. These skills are often described as shades of gray. For example, if a child is working on a puzzle and discovers that a piece is missing, they fall apart and refuse to complete the puzzle because it won’t be perfect instead of choosing to still enjoy working on the puzzle. If teens are baking and realize they don’t have enough chocolate chips to go in the chocolate chip cookies, they stop baking instead of altering the recipe with walnuts or cutting the recipe in half. As adults, if we oversleep and only have 30 minutes to get ready, we have to prioritize what we can go without in order to still get out the door on time. Instead of sitting down to eat breakfast, we opt to take a granola bar to eat at work. Instead of wearing something that requires ironing, we choose an outfit that doesn’t need ironing. If someone lacks appraisal skills, though, they would choose not to go to work instead. These appraisal skills can all improve by teaching that it is okay to operate in shades of gray.

Tarver spent two 26-week sessions with Argie using multiple techniques to improve his core deficits including:

- Multiple modality treatment approaches utilizing visual, auditory and tactile materials
- Sensory integration techniques
- Therapeutic listening – Tarver explains that “engineered headphones paired with modulated music tones in music force muscles in the middle ear to contract and relax, exercising them for the first time, and every time the muscle contracts, it stimulates the vestibular system. It’s like the engine in the brain where all the senses are regulated. When kids have sensory processing impairment, their vestibular system is immature and needs to be stimulated. When stimulated with music, activities and exercises, it matures it, and roadblocks to distortions come down and process more typically.” Then great gains are made in motor skills, talking (auditory processing), focus and attention.
After his therapy sessions with Tarver and Florida Elks Children's Therapy Services has made her want to cuddle or bond; aimlessly wandering around the room; crying; whining; and overly sensitive to smells, lights, busy environments, etc." Food helps children with deficits catch up quicker. She likens not changing a child's diet to swimming upstream; progress is much slower.

After his therapy sessions with Tarver along with his diet change, Argie's echolalia significantly decreased, he could hold reciprocal conversations, and he was able to describe family events and tell stories. He used his new appraisal skills to get himself ready for school in the mornings. He could balance on one foot and ride a bike independently.

Today, nine-year-old Argie is in third grade and is excelling academically and socially. He is a straight-A student, has many friends and plays on a traveling baseball team. To meet Argie now, you would never know he had been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

To help with Argie's ASD symptoms, Tarver also recommended that his parents implement a gluten-free and dairy-free diet for him. Argie's father was hesitant and did not do this during the first therapy admission into the program, but by the second admission, the diet was implemented with positive results. According to Tarver, "many parents and professionals do not understand how the food we eat can affect how our brain functions and the effect it has on our gut. The gut is our second brain and if we are consuming food that our body is sensitive to, it causes tiny holes in the intestinal lining and toxins leak out into our bloodstream and go into the brain. This is called leaky gut. Food sensitivities are different from food allergies because a person doesn't develop a rash or go into anaphylactic shock when the food is consumed. Instead, the food over time leads to permeation of the intestinal lining (leaky gut), causing various symptoms: poor focus/attention; poor eye contact; picky eaters; limited food choices; self-stemming behaviors like hand-flapping; OCD; echolalia; not wanting to cuddle or bond; aimlessly wandering around the room; crying; whining; and overly sensitive to smells, lights, busy environments, etc." Food helps children with deficits catch up quicker.

Abby was 12 when she began her 26 weekly therapy sessions with Tarver in January 2017, but she had struggled off and on since birth with a myriad of health problems. Abby was in distress during birth, endured oxygen deprivation and was born with a cone-shaped head which was reshaped just 20 minutes after birth instead of the more common practice of gently molding it over weeks or months. Despite all this, she was developing healthily until two years of age when she got chicken pox, was bitten by a brown recluse spider, got Rotavirus from a party and salmonella from a water park. She then shut down, had a personality change, regressed and became chronically ill. She was diagnosed with autism at age three but otherwise regained her health by the time she was six.

Fast forward to Abby at 12 years old. She was still dealing with many ASD symptoms noted in Tarver's case study: "Abby would get excessively dizzy or nauseated from swinging, spinning or riding in a car. She had difficulty sitting still and was a thrill seeker on the playground. She was noted to touch everything and couldn't keep her hands to herself. She had auditory processing issues and would avoid eye contact while listening, would quickly forget what had been said, and had difficulty sequencing the order of events when telling a story/describing an event/repeating what you have said. Abby had difficulty with motor planning and bilateral motor coordination. She was disorganized with self-help skills, ambidexterity/mixed hand dominance, had difficulty performing two different tasks at the same time, poor reading comprehension, and had major handwriting deficits. She tested at 7.7 years of age on the Test of Visual Motor Skills 3rd Edition. She was unable to print or write in cursive at an age-appropriate level. She tested at 7.6 years of age for visual sequential memory skills and 9.11 years of age for visual memory skills. She had emotional/social behaviors. Abby was noted to have poor sleep/wake cycles, had poor eye contact, preferred to play with younger children, and needed more protection from life than peers. She would come on too strong and miss social cues."

To help treat this multitude of ASD effects, Tarver again used therapeutic listening, NeuroNet, RDI and balametrics. To these, she added:

- **Handwriting Without Tears**, a handwriting program developed by Jan Z. Olsen, OTR that uses a developmental and kinesis (muscle memory) approach to teaching handwriting.
- **MNRI – Masgutova Neurosensorimotor Reflex Integration** – works on integration of the primitive reflexes.

Now Abby is high-functioning on the ASD spectrum. She was retested and she scored years higher than her initial scores. She shows major improvement in her focus and attention, organization, handwriting, self-esteem, eye contact, social and emotional skills, visual perceptual/fine motor skills, sensory processing skills, and self-regulation. She has less anxiety and sleeps through the night.

Abby's life-changing experience with Tarver and Florida Elks Children's Therapy Services has made her want
to be an occupational therapist so she, too, can help improve the lives of others as FECTS has done for her. Abby’s mother was overwhelmed with gratitude at the great strides Abby made thanks to FECTS. In her thank-you letter, Maureen writes, “Paula is such a wealth of knowledge! Any issue I brought up, she was able to think of an intervention to help improve it. She was very patient and loving and Abby is really going to miss spending time with her. She was also a coach and encourager for me. She helped me believe that anything is possible for my daughter if we are ready to put in the hard work. Much of the therapy I have experienced with my daughter (at other places) in the past has been unfocused and did not lead to much change. I was so impressed by how Paula assessed my daughter at the beginning, middle and end of therapy and I was able to see concrete and measurable improvements throughout our time together! I also really appreciated her systematic and easy-to-follow plan. I always knew exactly what we needed to be working on each week and why (Paula took the time to explain the science behind what she was recommending). I think I have learned just as much as my daughter as a result of spending time with Paula each week.”

Autism spectrum disorder is challenging, but you can help. As Tarver says, “the old prognosis that there is no hope...for autism is outdated.” Be part of the new hope and add one more piece to the autism puzzle by attending the Harry-Anna Trust Unmasking Autism Gala of Hope April 13 to learn more about how Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services is treating this disorder and how you can make a real difference in the lives of children like Argie and Abby. Please visit floridaelks.org/harryannagala/ for more information.

### Autism Spectrum Disorder Core Deficit Characteristics

#### Severe Sensory Processing Disorder
- Poor regulation
- Poor modulation
- Poor discrimination
- Poor visual attention
- Poor auditory processing
- Poor mirror neuron efficiency
- Poor balance and coordination
- Poor strength and endurance for age
- Poor gross/fine motor skills
- Delays in self-care skills
- Picky eaters
- Explosive behavior
- ADD/ADHD

#### Sensory Modulation Disorder
- Sensory over-responsivity
- Sensory under-responsivity
- Sensory seeking/craving

#### Sensory-Based Motor Disorder
- Dyspraxia
- Postural Disorder

#### Sensory Discrimination Disorder
- Visual
- Auditory
- Tactile
- Vestibular
- Proprioception
- Taste/Smell

#### Emotional Delays
- Poor referencing
- Poor eye contact
- Unable to read and interpret nonverbal communication
- Controlling and dominating behaviors
- Poor experience and emotion sharing
- Poor problem-solving skills
- Feel uncomfortable in dynamic situations

#### Speech Delays
- Auditory Processing Disorder
- Poor nonverbal communication skills
- Apraxia

#### Poor Resilience
- Become easily frustrated
- Have overwhelming feelings of incompetence – avoidance syndrome
- Tend to run away when they feel incompetent
- Poor task completion

#### Rigid Inflexible Thinking
- Can’t see shades of gray
- OCD
- Need for strict daily routines with no variations
- Prefer to play with static toys

#### Difficulty functioning in dynamic interactions with others and prefer static/safe/consistent environments
- Have poor co-regulating or monitoring skills
- Have difficulty adapting to or altering plans based on changing circumstances

#### Episodic memory and appraisal deficiencies
- Unable to reflect on past experiences or personal memories or anticipate future ones
- Unable to analyze and develop a game plan for a situation

#### Poor Play Skills
- Tend to focus on the peripheral/outer edges of rooms (ceiling fans, lights, windows, light switches, pictures, plants, etc.)

#### Biological Issues
- Food sensitivities – most common are gluten (wheat protein) and casein (dairy protein) and need to be put on a strict GFCF diet
- Decreased levels of glutathione
- Decreased levels of essential fatty acids
- Leaky gut syndrome
- High levels of metals in blood and tissues
We realize the cost to attend this gala is outside the budgets of many members. However, there are ways lodges can still support the event and even make some money while doing so! It is a fun and elegant dress-up event that some members might find enjoyable to attend.

1. Purchase two tickets ($500) and raffle them to a lucky winner! You would need to sell only 50 $10-tickets to get paid back!

2. Purchase two tickets and pay for the hotel room for one night for a lucky winner (total $668.37).

3. Purchase an ad in the gala program book (minimum cost $60). The deadline is March 1.

4. Sponsor a table ($2,500) and send lodge members or maybe your district therapist and patient families, etc. to represent the lodge at the gala.

We hope you will consider attending the 2019 Harry-Anna Trust Gala of Hope and help us unmask autism!
The Elks’ First Charity
from the biography, Charles Algernon Sidney Richardson Vivian (1842-1880), Founder: Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks
By Lowell P. Tyler, PER, State Historian (now Emeritus)

Chicago has long been known as the Windy City. In 1871, Illinois was suffering from a long drought. Everything was dry and windy. Chicago was experiencing its traditional high winds. Conditions were hazardous and a combustible situation existed with additional hazards of fanning winds. Chicago was a new city of 334,000 residents housed in homes of mostly wood construction. It was considered a city that embodied the spirit of modernity.

On a cool and windy fall day in early October 1871, legend has it that Mrs. Catherine O’Leary was milking one of her cows by the light of a kerosene lantern. Mrs. O’Leary’s gentle hands may have startled the milk cow and it kicked, knocking over the lantern. The dry hay in the barn along with the fanning high winds quickly spread the flames. To make matters worse, the alarm system to alert the fire department malfunctioned, resulting in a delay to an already overmatched fire department. It burned from Oct. 8-10 before the fire department and residents were able to get it under control. Flames destroyed a third of the city, racing through the downtown commercial district and destroying the homes of about 100,000 residents.

The Chicago fire captured worldwide attention and there was a massive outpouring of charity. The catastrophe did not escape the ears of the infant BPO Elks. On Oct. 26, 1871, the new order initiated one of its first benevolent acts. The Elks held a benefit on this day at the Academy of Music to aid the victims of the great Chicago fire.
In June, Plant City Lodge’s Veterans chairman, Judy Wise, began planning a way to honor veterans and active military members for the week leading up to Veterans Day which would culminate with Plant City Elks Lodge hosting a free barbecue for them. The now late Exalted Ruler, Marty Carroll, was eager to make this happen and applied for and received the Elks National Foundation Freedom Grant to use as seed money. Additional components of the plan were to get businesses and homes to fly a flag in the veterans’ honor for the week and to offer them discounts. The lodge provided window clings to merchants to indicate they were offering discounts.

Wise took the idea to the city manager, city council, the Chamber of Commerce and Plant City Historic Main Street where it was well received. Lodge members Dee Spivey, David Brewington and David Davenport formed a committee, and Wise recruited 10 volunteers from the Plant City Main Street organization and local merchants. After three months of meetings and phone calls, interest grew.

Local USA Scout Troop #744 walked door to door selling American flags as a fundraiser. Pinch a Penny Pool Products, which is owned by two veterans, ordered the flags for the lodge and obtained a promise from Joffery Coffee and Tea to furnish drinks at the barbecue. Many people and businesses donated time, gift certificates and cash as well.

Committee member and chaplain, Daniel Middlebrooks, gathered items with the help of the Elks to make up goody bags to hand out at the barbecue. He was helpful with many tasks and also served as master of ceremonies during the barbecue. With his help, they obtained an authentically restored World War II Jeep to display at the event. A World War II veteran also showcased his beautiful new truck with a wrap that honored the raising of the flag on Iwo Jima.

Wise contacted James A. Haley Veterans Hospital and invited the recreational specialists to bring as many veterans as they would like and promised them goody bags containing canteen cards that could be used at the hospital.

The scout troop volunteered to present the colors at the barbecue. It was their first time doing this ritual and therefore worked extra hard to perfect it.

As Nov. 11 approached, the lodge realized that with giving away so many tickets to veterans, it was becoming too large of an event to cook for themselves, so Wise hired military-oriented Mission BBQ.

Brewington and his son, Chris, displayed a massive flag from two of their business trucks during the barbecue.

Nearly 300 people attended the event. Plant City Lodge received proclamations from the city and county. To close the program, Past National President/Grand Exalted Ruler Mike Smith gave a history of Elks’ support of veterans. The event was so successful that the mayor challenged the lodge to make it an annual event.

* Current submission by Judy Wise
* Photos/Dee Spivey
Grand Lodge Statutes: Board of Directors

“Section 12.070. The Board of Trustees, or the board established in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6 of Section 16.020 after each annual installation shall meet and organize by electing a chairman and secretary who shall be members of the board. The chairman of the board of directors shall attend all District Deputy clinics unless excused for good cause by the District Deputy. The board subject to control by the lodge shall have the following powers: (a) control of the funds, investments, and real and personal property of the lodge, not otherwise provided by law, and shall receive and collect the income and rents therefrom; (b) execute all leases, contracts or other papers when ordered by the lodge. The board shall not have authority for listing of lodge real estate for sale and/or entering into any sales contract prior to approval of such action by a majority vote of the lodge. The board shall hold at least one regular meeting each month and needed special meetings called by the chairman. They shall keep minutes of each meeting of the board. The Exalted Ruler shall be given the same notice of all meetings of the board and in the same manner as is given to the other members of the board. It shall also keep a record of investments made under direction of the lodge which shall show original cost, the due dates and amount of interest or profit on investments, the date and amounts of deposits made by it, and date and amounts of drafts drawn from the bank by order of the lodge.

It shall purchase all supplies ordered by the lodge, and all papers, books, and stationery needed by the officers for the performance of their duties. It shall hold the bonds of the officers and shall present a monthly written report of its transactions at the first regular meeting each month. It shall establish an Accident Prevention program, with one member designated as Accident Prevention manager, to continually review and implement a policy in concert with Grand Lodge and State Association programs to protect the lodge from claims for accidents and injuries. It shall perform other duties as may be required by the laws of the order and bylaws of the lodge.

The board of directors shall present a segregated budget not later than the final regular meeting of the lodge in April, making appropriations for each of the several objects for which the lodge must or may provide out of monies known to be in possession of the lodge or estimated to come into it during the ensuing lodge year. A budget either in its original or modified form must be adopted by the lodge at the meeting or at the next regular meeting. After the budget has been adopted, all expenditures during the lodge year must be kept within the limits of the appropriations made. When a proposal is made for expenditure in excess of the adopted budget, the proposal shall be promptly referred to the board of directors for consideration and written recommendation at the next regular lodge meeting. The proposal may be adopted by not less than a two-thirds vote of the members present at a regular meeting. The budget may include an item for contingent purposes to cover emergencies and expenditures there from may be approved by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at a regular meeting. Unexpended appropriations at the end of the lodge year shall be available for appropriation in the budget for the next lodge year. In lodges where a Budget Committee is required by the bylaws, the budget shall be prepared by that committee. The committee shall report to the lodge by the final regular meeting in April.

16.020 ANNOTATED STATUTES

An incorporated lodge shall make provision for a board which shall be designated in accordance with the requirements of the corporation laws of the state or territory in which such lodge is situated and which shall be composed of the four chair officers of the lodge and the trustees and which shall be vested with the powers and duties conferred upon the Board of Trustees by the laws of the order.

16.020 Opinion

02 When a lodge is incorporated under the provisions of Section 16.020, the board of the corporation, composed of the four chair officers and the trustees of the lodge, are vested with the powers conferred upon the Board of Trustees of the lodge by the laws of the order and are required to exercise all powers conferred upon the Board of Trustees of an unincorporated lodge. Thus, the bylaws of the incorporated lodge should provide that the board of the corporation shall perform all duties of the Board of Trustees.

Q&A with John Amen Sr., Grand Lodge Committee on Judiciary Member

Does the Board of Trustees still function as a Board of Trustees responsible for finances, budget and facilities/property, or do all functions of the Board of Trustees to include the aforementioned go to the Board of Directors?

No. In an incorporated lodge, the trustees’ duties are solely as members of the corporate board unless the form of club governing body (House Committee) is made up of only the trustees in which case the club governing body stays the same as before.

If the Board of Trustees makes up the House Committee in accordance with bylaws, do they still meet as a House Committee or do the officers become part of the House Committee?

There should be two separate agendas and sets of minutes. The subject matter of each meeting is different. The club governing body is not affected by the lodge being incorporated under 16.020.

Does the Board of Trustees have any function other than being a member of the Board of Directors and/or House Committee?

No.

Can the Board of Directors add members or is the Board of Directors limited to the four chair officers and trustees?

The corporate board is limited to the four chair officers and the trustees.

Is there any cross of duties between the Board of Directors and the House Committee even if they are made up of the same people?

No.

Do the Board of Directors have any function other than being a member of the Board of Directors?

No. They may stay with three trustees.

Some lodges only have three trustees. Must they increase to five trustees for the Board of Directors?

Yes.

Do all the lodges have to change their bylaws to show a Board of Directors?

No. They may stay with three trustees.

What do the Board of Directors and House Committee do with the five-year general revision of bylaws?

Some lodges only have three trustees. Must they increase to five trustees for the Board of Directors?

Yes.

Do the Board of Directors and House Committee have to hold separate meetings and minutes?

Yes.

Does the Board of Trustees have any function other than being a member of the Board of Trustees?

No.

If there is no longer a Board of Trustees, must any member of the Board of Trustees attend the DD clinic?

The chairman of the board must attend DD clinics. That person may or may not be a trustee.
Fort Walton Elks Lodge #1795 presented a $1,500 Elks National Foundation Anniversary Grant to Emerald Coast Autism Center to help with much needed school supplies. Michelle Knowles; Tom Knowles, PER; Jamie Clemons, Lodge Secretary; Kevin Clemons, PDD; Lauren Cooper, ECAC Community Relations Coordinator; Colette Willey, Chaplain; and Paul Willey, Exalted Ruler, take part in the check presentation Oct. 18.

Holley-Navarre #2787

On Dec. 14, Holley-Navarre Elks Lodge #2787 presented a check for $1,500 to Caring and Sharing of South Santa Rosa County, a 501c(3) nonprofit organization that provides food baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas as well as other assistance to South Santa Rosa families. The total included $500 from an Elks National Foundation Anniversary Grant and $1,000 from the lodge charity account which is sourced predominately from the lodge's weekly bingo that is open to the local community. The lodge held the check presentation prior to bingo to thank the public for their continued support throughout the year and give them an opportunity to see how proceeds from their patronage are used.

Chuck Howard, Caring and Sharing representative, accepts a donation from Holley-Navarre Lodge presented by Kris Kane, Exalted Ruler, Dec. 14 at the lodge.

Pensacola Beach #497

Pensacola Beach Elks Lodge #497 hosted an impromptu wedding for two Hurricane Michael evacuees Oct. 22. The lodge use was gifted to the couple at no cost to them and everything was donated by members.

Twin Cities #2747

Rick Woelfl (pictures), Twin Cities Elks Lodge Exalted Ruler, and Joe Arthur, Leading Knight, deliver dictionaries to third-graders at Eglin School Oct. 26. The first batch of dictionaries for third-grade students in six schools were delivered Oct. 26. In all, the lodge will distribute about 600 dictionaries; the lodge does this every year. Tom Casey, Trustee, and Kathy Casey, Tiler, delivered dictionaries to other schools.

Lake City #893

In December, Lake City Elks Lodge #893 once again provided food baskets for Christmas to the community's families in need. Baskets were assembled Dec. 22, just in time for delivery for the holiday.

Live Oak #1165

Life South was at Live Oak Elks Lodge #1165 Nov. 12 and collected 10 pints of blood from donors.

Live Oak Lodge prepared 125 food baskets for Christmas for approximately 625 members of the community in need. Each basket contained a frozen turkey with all the trimmings.

Perry #1851

Perry Elks Lodge #1851 donated a $1,000 scholarship to Big Bend Technical College (BBTC) to help 22 students get their GEDs. Many GED recipients continue with training at BBTC or pursue a college degree elsewhere.

After Hurricane Michael, Perry Lodge hosted the Brotherhood Riders who came through town with two trucks and trailers loaded with relief donations. Member Jim Bassett loaned a refrigerated truck for the trip to the panhandle to haul bags of ice. Other items included were washers, dryers, laundry products and personal products. Live Oak and Tallahassee lodges brought their donations to Perry Lodge. Perry Lodge fed the riders and put them up for the night.

Perry Lodge hosted their 15th annual breakfast with Santa co-chaired by members Randy and Deidra Newman. Contributions from Ware Oil Supply, Consolidated Communications, Bassett's Dairy, Winn-Dixie, Save-A-Lot, the lodge and sponsoring members helped the lodge provide breakfast for more than 500 adults and children and gifts to over 250 children. In Santa’s workshop, children helped build their toy, a Build-a-Santa. It takes two evenings of nonstop decorating to turn half the banquet room into Candy Cane Lane and the North Pole.

Children attend the breakfast with Santa at Perry Lodge.
Tallahassee #937

Tallahassee Elks Lodge #937 sponsored a trip for Gretchen Everhart School students and their families Sept. 27-30 to the Florida Elks Youth Camp. Buses were procured with Elks National Foundation grants and other donations. The camp generously donated facilities, staff, and food, and several lodge members attended as chaperones. This annual event is often the only trip that the families can make due to the physical and emotional challenges faced by the children.

Green Cove Springs #1892

Green Cove Springs Elks Lodge #1892 participated in the annual Green Cove Springs Police Department’s trunk or treat event Oct. 27. Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services therapist Rae Montgomery assisted lodge members with giving out treats as well as drug awareness ribbons and information about Elks services. Over 2,600 community members enjoyed a fun-filled holiday evening.

NORTHEAST DISTRICT

Gainesville #990

On Nov. 19, Gainesville Elks Lodge #990 donated more than 150 Thanksgiving food baskets to local veterans and families in need or in crisis as well as to Glen Springs Elementary School for its annual food drive. Their goal of 150 baskets was in recognition of the Elks’ 150th anniversary. The lodge used an Elks National Foundation Promise Grant to donate over 100 meals to local veterans and more than 180 pounds of food to the Catholic Charities agency.

Green Cove Springs Lodge donated four folding tables and 16 chairs to the Green Cove Springs Branch Library for use with their many preschool children’s programs. The lodge used the Beacon Grant matching funds received from the Florida State Elks Association to make the purchase. Linda Rittenhouse, FLOE Treasurer; Lucie Barnette, Exalted Ruler; and Gene Rittenhouse, PER, delivered the gift to the library's branch manager, Jennifer Parker, and Friends of the GCS Library VP, Dee Pratt, Nov. 5.

On Dec. 1, using funds from the Elks National Foundation Promise Grant and from the lodge’s PER Association, Green Cove Springs Lodge continued their tradition of sponsoring Santa’s Workshop held in connection with the city of Green Cove Springs’ annual Christmas parade. After visiting with Santa, children and their families are greeted by lodge members and volunteers who hand out gift bags packed age-appropriately for infants through teens. Each of the 88 students received two books and a sweatshirt just in time for winter vacation. Remaining funds were donated to the school’s resource teachers for classroom supplies.

FLORIDA ELKS MAGAZINE 22
Eustis #1578

Eustis Lodge used a $2,500 Elks National Foundation Promise Grant and a $2,500 Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant to provide more than 1,200 books to three elementary schools. This was the 11th year they gave a dictionary to third-graders at Treadway Elementary and the seventh year they gave a thesaurus to their fourth-graders. Three years ago, they included Eustis Heights Elementary and added a novel for fifth-graders written by a local author. A group of about 30 students from each school met the author to discuss her writing process. The lodge also sponsored a writing contest to encourage more writing. For the past three summers, the lodge has used grant money to buy books for leisure reading for all summer-school students to encourage them to share the joy of reading with their parents and siblings. In the fall, they added students from Triangle Elementary to their book-giving program.

On Nov. 16, Eustis Lodge and Anna Miller Ladies members smoked, wrapped and prepared 181 Thanksgiving turkeys for delivery to nine schools for families in need.

The Eustis Anna Miller Ladies donated $200 to the Haven of Lake and Sumter Counties so Christmas presents could be purchased for a few children currently at the Haven.

On Dec. 15, Eustis Lodge held a Christmas party for Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services patients and others. Children made crafts and had fun on wooden horses. Bill Hall read “‘Twas the Night Before Christmas,” Santa Claus and his elf came to hand out gifts, and characters from the Star Wars movies took pictures with the guests.

Inverness #2522

The Citrus Youth Educational Symphonic Orchestra (CYESO) is a program dedicated to teaching classical and symphonic music to children ages 5 to 19 in Citrus County and surrounding communities. Its focus is learning music for the development of intellect and character in children. Inverness Elks Lodge's Community Activities committee has chosen CYESO as its major project. The program has pledged to raise $4,000 by April 2019, and the lodge has presented $1,500 toward that goal as of Nov. 2. Herb Yates, Community Activities chairman, is also the lodge disc jockey and donates his tips to the project. All CYESO donors receive a lapel button created by the lodge.

Inverness Lodge awarded plaques, certificates and Walmart gift cards to the Hernando Elementary School students who participated in the Elks drug awareness poster contest. The theme was “Drugs Take Away.” First-place winner was Serena DiNardo, second-place winner was River Moll and third-place winner was Michael Green.

Students from Lecanto Middle School placed in the Inverness Lodge-sponsored drug awareness essay contest. Pictured are Lodge Drug Awareness chairman, Jim Manos; principal of Lecanto Middle School, Inge Frederick; first-place winner, Cassidy Struble; third-place winner, Ava Rueck; and School Resource Deputy, Joseph Gentile. Not pictured is second-place winner, Christian Halle.

Inverness Lodge held its Hoop Shoot Dec. 15 at Inverness Middle School. There were 25 contestants representing five elementary schools and Inverness Middle School. Winners were Noah Meyer, boys ages 8-9; Rohan Patel, boys ages 10-11; Mark Covino, boys ages 12-13; Kasidee Florio, girls ages 8-9; Bryleigh Florio, girls ages 10-11; and Jenna Anderson, girls ages 12-13. Winners advance to the district competition in Tavares.
Ocala #286

Ocala Elks Lodge Exalted Ruler, Mike Miller; Esquire, CJ Duplechin; and PER Brian Seybert served a meal to community members who are homeless at the September meal at Interfaith. Interfaith is a local organization that helps low-income and homeless people. The lodge serves a meal there every other month, and in the months in between, they provide bags of toiletries for them.

DeLand #1463

DeLand Elks Lodge #1463 has donated the use of their lodge for the training and adoption process for New Horizons Service Dogs. New Horizons provides service dogs to disabled adults, children and veterans at no cost to the recipients. The dogs have had approximately two years of training before being paired, and each recipient must complete the two-week training and process.

On Nov. 10, DeLand Lodge sponsored a Hoop Shoot at DeLand Middle School with children from Volusia County participating. The first-place winners moved on to the district Hoop Shoot Jan. 5 at DeLand Middle School. Volunteering are (front row) Katherine and Ken Conroy, Linda Witt, Dan Dragonetti, Troy Surloff, Van Johnson, Davina Jones with daughter Sara Jones, and Mark & Barbara Thompson. In the back row are Larry Smith, Phil Watcutter, (third person’s name missing) and Bernie Korwes.

Winter Park #1830

Winter Park Elks Lodge members provided Christmas gifts to 82 children who are in need or homeless. PER Vivian Thomas worked closely with Casselberry Elementary School principal, Mallory Holliday, who provided lodge members with the names, ages and sizes of the school’s children in need along with their siblings. Members and volunteers shopped, wrapped, bagged and delivered the gifts to the school prior to the school’s holiday break.

Edgewater-New Smyrna Beach #1557

Edgewater-New Smyrna Beach Elks Lodge #1557 participated in the Edgewater fall festival which raised money for the local food bank, Gifts of Love. Pictured are Lecturing Knight, Denise Bell, and trustee, Bill Bell, handing out treats to the trick-or-treaters Oct. 27.

Edgewater-New Smyrna Beach Elks Lodge #1557 has received several grants from Elks National Foundation that enable them to continue their support of the Gifts of Love food bank. They also support the High 5 program which sends weekend food packages home to elementary school children who are in need of such assistance. Lodge member Marci
Skates and several Elks prepared and delivered over 90 packages to three area schools.

Merritt Island #2650

On Dec. 9, Merritt Island Lodge helped sponsor the country Christmas party at Kiwanis Island Park on Merritt Island. For two decades, the lodge has supplied all the food, drinks and desserts for this party. PDD John Lesko helped organize the lodge’s participation in this event. This party is for all people in the community who are disabled. The Elk Cowpokes hauled supplies to and from the party, set up, cooked, served, and cleaned up. Santa made an appearance and gave the guests a Christmas party to remember.

PORT ORANGE #2723

On Oct. 28, the Merritt Island Elks Lodge #2650 team participated in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk. This is an annual event that the lodge has participated in for the past seven years. This year the event was held at The Avenue in Viera, Fla. The team raised $2,560. Pictured are team members June Horgan and Elaine Marr.

On Dec. 9, Merritt Island Lodge helped sponsor the country Christmas party at Kiwanis Island Park on Merritt Island. For two decades, the lodge has supplied all the food, drinks and desserts for this party. PDD John Lesko helped organize the lodge’s participation in this event. This party is for all people in the community who are disabled. The Elk Cowpokes hauled supplies to and from the party, set up, cooked, served, and cleaned up. Santa made an appearance and gave the guests a Christmas party to remember.

CENTRAL DISTRICT

Kissimmee #1873

Kissimmee Elks Lodge #1873 hosted over 300 children who are in foster care along with their families at the Christmas carnival Dec. 8. This was the third year for the event which was made possible from Elks National Foundation grants. Organizing the event was Community Based Care and their agencies. This was a community affair with volunteers from various agencies including 50 Elks. Activities included pictures with Mr. & Mrs. Claus (Charles and Lorraine Barker), ornament-making, a hula hoop contest, family photos, packaging s’mores and a bounce house. The sheriff brought a police canine and the fire department had a truck on display. Music was provided all day and food was available. Upon arrival, children were directed to activities while parents had choices of age-appropriate gifts for the children. Personal shoppers were available to find the perfect gifts and Santa’s helpers wrapped and kept the presents a surprise.

West Citrus #2693

West Citrus Elks Lodge #2693 raised enough money from member donations to contribute more than 100 turkeys to the WE Care Food Pantry for Thanksgiving. Lodge and ladies members also raised nearly $3,000 for children of Homosassa who are less fortunate than themselves.

Zephyrhills #2731

To celebrate Fire Prevention Week, Zephyrhills Elks Lodge #2731 held a fundraiser Oct. 18 for Zephyrhills Fire Rescue. Nearly half the department is made up of volunteer members. The department works three 48-hour shifts and could not function without their volunteers. Susan Slater, lodge events planning chairman, coordinated the
event which included 50/50 raffles, food sales and children’s games with toy prizes for the winners. The Florida Antique Bucket Brigade (FABB) was there including Mike Morris, who attended his rookie training for Tampa Fire Department in 1952, on the 1925 Seagrave pumper which he displayed proudly. He now owns the pumper and restored it to its original condition. PER David Moyer presented Morris with a certificate honoring him as the first president of the FABB in 1977. Also on display were the 1914 American LaFrance and the 1934 Ahrens Fox pumper along with others from the 1950s; all now belong to other FABB members. In attendance were the Zephyrhills and the Pasco County fire rescues. The event raised $450 which was presented to lodge member Blake Donaldson of Zephyrhills Fire Rescue Nov. 5 at a lodge meeting.

**Fort Pierce #1520**

On Dec. 9 with 32 volunteers, Fort Pierce Elks Lodge #1520’s pantry/food backpack program packed food items in backpacks for 13 St. Lucie County public elementary schools. More than 600 children who are homeless had an ample supply of food during the long holiday school vacation. The lodge partners with school officials and they agreed to send a large truck to pick up and deliver the food to the schools Dec. 12. While this was going on, the lodge visited three schools most in need and donated boxes of school shirts, belts, shorts and Christmas gifts for families that are homeless whose children attend these schools. All the schools that the lodge helps are provided free breakfast, lunch and now snacks before leaving school. This successful program is fueled by 39 dedicated team members.

**Vero Beach #1774**

Vero Beach Lodge is making children’s wishes come true at Hibiscus Children’s Center. These children have been removed from their homes due to abuse, neglect or abandonment. The lodge used $750 from the Elks National Foundation Promise Grant to deliver the wishes in time for the holiday season. Lodge Community Activities chairman, Rich Miller, said the children have also been rewarded with “Hibiscus dollars” for doing extra “chores” and acts of kindness.

**SOUTHEAST CENTRAL DISTRICT**

**Fort Pierce #1520**

On Dec. 9 with 32 volunteers, Fort Pierce Elks Lodge #1520’s pantry/food backpack program packed food items in backpacks for 13 St. Lucie County public elementary schools. More than 600 children who are homeless had an ample supply of food during the long holiday school vacation. The lodge partners with school officials and they agreed to send a large truck to pick up and deliver the food to the schools Dec. 12. While this was going on, the lodge visited three schools most in need and donated boxes of school shirts, belts, shorts and Christmas gifts for families that are homeless whose children attend these schools. All the schools that the lodge helps are provided free breakfast, lunch and now snacks before leaving school. This successful program is fueled by 39 dedicated team members.

**Vero Beach #1774 & Sebastian #2714**

Vero Beach and Sebastian Elks lodges collaborated to donate stop-the-bleed kits to every school in their district. Stop-the-bleed kits allow bystanders to become equipped and empowered to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives. The total cost of $2,435 was shared by both lodges. Richard Miller, Vero Beach Lodge Community Activities chairman, said, “traumatic injuries at schools have become a new reality. We hope that the kits are never needed; however, it is better to be prepared to administer aid as quickly as possible. Elks care – Elks share.”

Through donations, 50/50 drawings and generous individuals, Zephyrhills Lodge presented $6,200-worth of gift cards for holiday meals to teen students of Zephyrhills High School who are homeless. At the presentation were principal, Angie Shone; registrar, Diane Vaughn; Exalted Ruler, Ken Fabiani; and Past Exalted Rulers Dave Moyer, Alice Perry, Bill Knapp, Shirley Crawford and Elsie McFarland.

Vero Beach Lodge’s Community Activities chairman, Rich Miller, is pictured with some wished-for items of children at Hibiscus Children’s Center. The items were purchased using a Promise Grant.

**Vero Beach #1774 & Sebastian #2714**

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Dash plaques were issued to the classic trucks, roadsters and muscle car show Oct. 6. Drivers and the Elks Riders. Tom Mortka walked as Elroy the Elk. Many car lovers turned out for St. Petersburg Elks Lodge's fifth annual 35th holiday street parade Dec. 8 in downtown New Port Richey. New Port Richey Elks Lodge #2284 participated in the parade. Christmas angel tree was a huge success. Members took one of the tags from the tree with an area child’s name who is in foster care. Their age, hobbies and wish gift request were included on the tag. Members provided a gift for their sponsored child, and the presents were distributed to the children before Christmas.

The Interact Club is a service group that helps the surrounding community and the students earn volunteer hours toward scholarships. Nine members volunteered at each event so they could earn cash to start the new scholarship, the Anthony Melcher Memorial Fund. This scholarship will be available to senior track and cross country athletes. This scholarship is being established by Diana Melcher, Anthony's sister, and the Melcher-Baer family along with the Interact Club. Their focus is to increase awareness about suicide prevention while raising money for scholarships for young athletes at Dixie Hollins High School. Anthony Melcher graduated with honors from Dixie Hollins High School in 2009 where he was captain of the cross country team and won many awards. He was also the captain of his team in Ragner Relay Races. Melcher, 20, of Pinellas Park, Fla., died by suicide, July 24, 2011.

This scholarship is available to graduating seniors who participated in track and cross country for a minimum of two years, must have a minimum GPA of 3.3, must have demonstrated a minimum of 50 hours of school and community service, and be seeking a four-year degree. The scholarship winner will receive $1,000.

On Oct. 20, St. Petersburg Lodge held its annual kids’ Halloween party. The lodge opened its doors to the community for a night of safe activities and a ghoulishly delightful Halloween setting for neighborhood children and their families. Seventy-five children attended this event which was free and open to the kids and their families. A special Halloween appearance was made by Elroy the Elk, the drug awareness mascot. There were Halloween costume contests with prizes, carnival games, bounce houses and trick-or-treating. A total of $1,500 was spent by the lodge with an additional $178 in candy donations.

On Dec. 1, the lodge hosted their annual community kids’ Christmas party. Christmas music was provided by Johnny Miller. There were stations for games, Christmas ornament craft decoration, cookie decorating and balloon making. A free lunch and dessert were served to 86 kids and 141 parents, grandparents and elves present. Santa and Mrs. Claus arrived when they heard sleigh bells being rung by the excited boys and girls. Santa spent time with each child and gave each child an especially selected toy. Toys were purchased using the Elks National Foundation Promise Grant of $2,500 and deep discounts from Walgreens.

The lodge was also able to provide toys to make Christmas a much brighter one for 60 children sheltered at CASA (Community Action Stops Abuse). CASA provides safety, empowerment and...
On Dec. 21, St. Petersburg Lodge's team of volunteers spearheaded by Christmas food drive chairman, Rudy Masi Sr., PDD, put together 300 Christmas dinner boxes which contained a complete Christmas dinner for a family of four to six people. Also included in each box was a $20 gift card from Publix for a ham or turkey. The lodge used the $2,500 Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant, the $2,000 Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant and the $1,500 Elks National Foundation Anniversary Grant to purchase the food. Members donated an additional $630-worth of food. The volunteers delivered some of the boxes to families in need whose names had been submitted to the lodge and to Heaven on Earth for Veterans whose mission is to alleviate Pinellas County veteran homelessness by providing quality, low-cost, safe living spaces. The remaining boxes went to 38th Avenue Baptist Church to be delivered through their indigent family care list.

Camp activity directors began leading the teambuilding with low exercises. Eventually the students added helmets to their gear and took to the air. They did the high swing, climbed a challenging tower and catapulted down, and climbed the rock wall. The group left the camp around 5 p.m. and had dinner on the way home.

A children’s Christmas party took place Dec. 22 at Tampa Lodge. There was pizza, cookie-decorating, entertainment by Miz Daisy and lots of presents donated by generous south Tampa residents at their local Walgreens. The children also made cards for Paradise Elks Lodge that was recently destroyed by the California fires.

On Dec. 6, Tampa Lodge’s Club Chivalry took their annual teambuilding field trip to the Florida Elks Youth Camp. The students were offered pastries and breakfast beverages to enjoy as they left Tampa. When they arrived at the camp, the students were each given a long-sleeve T-shirt as their Christmas present. After a game of kickball and lunch, they went to the ropes course.

FLORIDA ELKS MAGAZINE
Brandon #2383

Using an ENF Anniversary Grant, Brandon Lodge provided assistance to Limona Elementary in the form of new equipment. The school had 14 pieces of equipment that could not be repaired because they were too old (13 years old), so the lodge replaced five of the document cameras. These cameras connect to a laptop to project math lessons, allow students to view science investigations on a projection screen or white board, share read-alouds so the entire class can see, and enable the students to work together on reading and writing projects.

SOUTHWEST CENTRAL DISTRICT

Lakeland #1291

On Oct. 12, Lakeland Lodge held their fourth annual Puttin’ on the Pink breast cancer awareness event. It was a night of celebration for survivors, support for those fighting breast cancer and remembrance of those lost to the disease. The event began with dinner and pink desserts all prepared by their volunteer chef and members. They held a silent auction, T-shirt sales and basket raffles. Pink ribbons were sold which were hung all around the bar. Part of the entertainment was Carlos and Priscilla Roman who sang a very special version of “Imagine” by John Lennon which was adapted especially for this event. The guests were later entertained by some loving and good-natured men, the brotherhood of pinkness, who modeled the latest pink fashions as a fundraiser. On Dec. 3, lodge members went to the Hollis Cancer Center to present the proceeds of $3,301.23.

Brandon Elks Lodge #2383 delivered over $2,000-worth of school supplies, coats and shoes to Yates Elementary School using their Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant. Delores Westfall makes the presentation to Gabrielle Segura, MSW, a Yates social worker.

On Nov. 9, Lakeland Lodge presented their Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant of $2,000 as well as member donations of more than $1,100 to Senior Orphans of Polk County. Founded over 25 years ago, this program assists local, indigent seniors without family support and monthly incomes of $600 or less. Senior Orphans is 100% volunteer driven with no administrative costs. They accept donations such as personal hygiene items, cleaning supplies, and paper goods, and when a case manager contacts the program, they have immediate access to their clients’ needed supplies. The donations help thousands of needy seniors with their day-to-day living expenses. Seniors are screened through qualified agencies such as the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Polk Elderly Services or Peace River Association. Senior Orphans and the agency case managers are careful to ensure that the neediest of the needy receive assistance.

Pictured presenting the proceeds from Lakeland Lodge’s Puttin’ on the Pink breast cancer awareness event are members Alice Hutchcraft, member; Vicki Baker, Exalted Ruler; Sher Thrush, member; Eric Decker, Director of Philanthropy; Timothy Dench, Director of the Hollis Cancer Center; and Carl Hutchcraft, member. Dec. 3.

During October, the Lakeland Boys and Girls Club of Lakeland received a donation of tickets to Disney. While this donation made it possible for children to visit the park, many of the boys and girls did not have the means to purchase food during their visit. Lakeland Lodge members donated money which was used for this purpose.

On Dec. 15, Lakeland Lodge hosted their annual Christmas party for the Lakeland-Mulberry Boys and Girls Club using an Elks National Foundation Promise Grant. Lodge members donated over $1,000-worth of toys and crafts. Members Leroy and Nancy Bowden again donated 20 bikes to be given to the children who also received multiple toys and clothes handed out by Santa. The children enjoyed a bounce house and pony
rides and got glitter tattoos. A pizza lunch including punch and Christmas cupcakes was served. Elroy the Elk made a special appearance handing out drug awareness coloring books and bags. Lakeland firefighters were on hand giving a tour of the fire truck and explaining fire safety to the children. Lodge member Jaime Cook showed up with his Channel 8 News van and let the children view the inside of the van and explained how it all works. Crafts and games were enjoyed throughout the day as well. Each child had their photo taken with Santa that was framed to take home. A giving tree was also set up for the children not attending the party.

South Hillsborough #2672

South Hillsborough Elks Lodge #2672 held their annual Christmas Angel Tree program for children in foster care. Through the lodge members’ generosity, especially the Partners of the Elks, 100 children had a great Christmas. Fifteen of the bicycles were sent to northern Florida where the hurricane destroyed everything.

Sebring #1529

Sebring Lodge presented the Champions for Children Foundation of Highlands County Inc. with a check for $1,000. The monies were designated for the safe house which helps protect women and children from domestic violence. Exalted Ruler, Ken Hedges, presents the donation to Carissa Marine, CEO of the foundation.

Bonita Springs-Estero #2753

On Nov. 6, Bonita Springs-Estero Elks Lodge #2753 presented a check for $7,340.25 to the Harry Chapin Food Bank to benefit the Florida Hurricane Michael Relief Fund. The lodge held 50/50 raffles, passed the hat at several events and asked the membership for donations. The Elks also matched the single largest donation. John Kuhn, Special Events Manager of the Harry Chapin Food Bank, accepts the donation from Dianne Wilhelm, Exalted Ruler; Frank Scandale, Esteemed Lecturing Knight; and PER Steve Cicak, trustee and Lodge Advisor.

Deep Creek #2763

Deep Creek Elks Lodge #2763 included 14 people from the Janet Jones Group Home for adults who are physically and mentally disabled for their Thanksgiving dinner. The lodge includes members of this home in their special events.

The Deep Creek Ladies of the Elks made donations to Alex’s Lemonade Stand and to Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services for therapists to buy Christmas gifts for their patients.

Englewood #2378

Englewood Elks Lodge #2378 donated $1,088 to Myaaka Elementary to pay for the purchase of a book for children in grades two and four (162 children). Estelle Dichazi, Elks member, presents the check to Jackie Hamilton, Media Specialist, Oct. 31. Also pictured are principal, Mrs. Shepard, and students Emily Atherholt, Emily Elkins, JT Ralston, Amelia Bernicchi and Peyton Horn.

Naples #2010

Naples Elks Lodge #2010 donated the use of its facility and resources as part of its ongoing support of youth programs in the community to the Naples Lely High School girls’ lacrosse team. They ran a car wash Dec. 1 to raise funds for non-funded equipment and uniforms needed for the team. Pictured are student team members Thascha Renard and Lizzy Lopez; head coach, Brad Bissell; and lodge trustee, Roger Marx. The team raised $850.
Punta Gorda #2606

The Punta Gorda Lodge Past Exalted Rulers Association held a sold-out Oktoberfest event Oct. 29 with over 400 people. Proceeds of $2,632.96 were donated to Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services and the Florida Elks Youth Camp. They also collected $270 to purchase 27 $10 gift cards for the Veterans Village veterans.

On Dec. 9, the lodge held a Christmas party with the proceeds being donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Society to help less fortunate seniors in their community.

Rotonda #2710

Rotonda Elks Lodge #2710 distributed trick-or-treat bags outside Walmart in Englewood, Fla., Halloween afternoon. Bags contained candy, coloring books, crayons, pencils, ribbons and drug awareness reminders. Elks Cathy Redman, Debbie Sommers and Sam Besase distributed drug awareness brochures and booklets along with candy to teenagers and their parents. Exalted Ruler, Phil Sommers, hands a Halloween treat bag to Luke Wilson and his mother.

The 2018 Southeast District Hoop Shoot took place at the local Boys and Girls Club. Pictured are District Vice President, George Zocchi; first-place winner for boys ages 8-9, Bryce Wright, from West Palm Beach Lodge #1352; second-place winner, Wyatt Phillip, from Okeechobee Lodge #2871; ages 8-9 winner, Judson Phillip, from Okeechobee Lodge #2871; second-place winner, Isaiah McElroy, from Jupiter Lodge #2469; ages 12-13 winner, Nicholas Mitao (second row), from Jupiter Lodge #2469; second-place winner, Sadler Soles, from Clewiston Lodge #1853; West Palm Beach Lodge Hoop Shoot director, Brien Morel; girls ages 8-9 winner, Anna Belle Damiano, from Jupiter Lodge #2469; girls ages 12-13 winner, Rylie Tucker, from Okeechobee Lodge #2871; and District Hoop Shoot chairman, PER Luis B. Orms, from West Palm Beach Lodge.

Clewiston #1853

Clewiston Elks Lodge #1853 held a fundraiser to help support the local Hendry County Sheriff’s Office with their annual shopping-with-the-sheriff program which aims to ensure that kids who are underprivileged have a memorable Christmas. A member of the sheriff’s department is paired with a child and takes them shopping for their Christmas wish list.

Jupiter #2469

Jupiter Elks Lodge #2469 hosted their annual Halloween haunted lodge that drew nearly 1,000 public spectators. They gave 13 local student groups and nonprofit organizations more than $2,000 for staging, decorating and acting out the fright scenes.

With member and community support, the Jupiter Elks supplied 108 local families with turkey dinners for Thanksgiving.

Lake Okeechobee #2871

Lake Okeechobee Elks Lodge #2871 used their Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant to support the D.A.R.E. program in schools by purchasing workbooks and awards and hosting the graduation guest speaker. This year, 550 children participated.

Lake Okeechobee Lodge used their Elks National Foundation Promise Grant and Anniversary Grant to host their first Halloween extravaganza. Partnering with other nonprofits, businesses, first responders and county commissioners, they hosted 2,238 people at the Agri-Civic Center on Halloween night. There were costume contests, a photo booth, games, a hay ride and candy. The families enjoyed a safe, fun atmosphere complete with a haunted walk. PDD Gary Casperson, pictured, gives hayrides.

Cleon - 4-7, the Elks’ drug awareness program speaker, Ray Lozano, presented drug facts about nicotine and other addictions to students and their parents. He visited five elementary schools, two middle schools, one freshman campus, the high school and the Okeechobee Achievement Academy. His message reached 3,206 students, 230 adults and 52 Elks members.

West Palm Beach #1352

West Palm Beach Elks Lodge #1352 hosted its annual Turkey Dinner with Santa for children who are underprivileged from three schools the lodge supports. There were 55 children and parents in attendance. Reindeer (Patriot Guard Riders and the Eagle Riders) assisted at the event as well.

Boca Raton #2166

On Oct. 20-21, Boca Raton Elks Lodge #2166 held a weekend-long membership drive within the community. Saturday featured an Oktoberfest. The weekend resulted in three membership applications.

Boca Raton Lodge held their annual Hoop Shoot Nov. 3 at a local church.
Many of them moved on to compete in the district Hoop Shoot Dec. 1, and all the Boca Raton contestants moved on to the regional competition.

During December, Boca Raton Lodge collected new, unwrapped toys which were distributed to local families in need by the Boca Raton Firefighters’ Benevolent Association. A blood drive was also held.

Delray Beach #1770

Delray Beach Elks Lodge #1770 used their Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant to adopt seven families for Christmas from the Caridad Center, while their Elks National Foundation Promise Grant was used to bring Santa and gifts to over 200 children at the Boys & Girls Club in Delray Beach.

Hollywood West #2365

On Nov. 7, Hollywood West Elks Lodge #2365 hosted the local Hoop Shoot in Hollywood at the Boys and Girls Club of Broward County. Lodge volunteers assisted Hoop Shoot Chairman and Exalted Ruler, Paul Houser, in making this competition fun for all. Afterward, an awards ceremony was held.

On Nov. 10, Hollywood West Lodge member Bennie Stravato coordinated a charity motorcycle ride to benefit the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. Over 20 bikers from the lodge and others from the community participated in the event which generated a large profit from the sale of 106 tickets. The ride commenced at the lodge followed by a visit to West Palm Beach Lodge and a stop at Oakland Park Lodge on the return trip. A barbecue was held at the lodge after the ride.

On Dec. 1, Hollywood West Lodge hosted their annual Dinty Moore dinner to raise money for their annual children’s Christmas party. Children from the local Hope Outreach Center were invited to the lodge where they greeted Santa who arrived on a local fire truck. The children were served a complimentary lunch, got to visit with Santa, and received a goodie bag and a gift from Santa.

SOUTH DISTRICT

Florida Keys #1872

Florida Keys Elks Lodge #1872 held their Soccer Shoot Nov. 10. First-place winners were Chloe Kessler, U-8 girls; Wyatt Meyers, U-8 boys; Sophia Barry, U-10 girls; Jacob Pickering, U-10 boys; Xol Placencia, U-12 boys; and Jackson Harrington, U-14 boys. These six winners advanced to the regional Soccer Shoot.

Key West #551

Key West Lodge promoted the Hoop Shoot and drug awareness programs Oct. 28 at Children’s Day held at Key West Park. Filled with bounce houses, rides, snacks and more, the annual event raises money for local children’s organizations and every penny raised goes to the organizations.

Miami #948

On Oct. 18, Miami Elks Lodge #948 held a presentation for Wheelchairs 4 Kids. Founders, Lonnie and Madeline Robinson, work in conjunction with Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services therapists who visit children in their homes and administer treatment. They are aware of kids who are in need of wheelchairs and ask for the lodge’s help in securing them because their parents cannot afford them. The Elks presented a wheelchair to 15-year-old Julian who has cerebral palsy with spastic diplegia and a gait trainer to 15-year-old Jose who has cerebral palsy and spastic quadriplegia. Their faces and their parents’ faces lit up at the presentation. Julian immediately looked comfortable in his up-to-date custom-made wheelchair. Jose, who can only stand with support on both sides, has been wheelchair-bound. The gait trainer enabled him to move his legs and walk with the support of his new apparatus. He smiled and moved around the lodge dining room with ease, and when asked if he was happy, he said “yes, now I can walk with my friends at school.”

Pictured at Miami Lodge’s Wheelchairs 4 Kids presentation Oct. 18 are Scott McGowan, Custom Mobility rep; Jose Ricardo Sanchez in his new gait trainer; Patricia Avila; Julian Lopez in his new wheelchair; Daniel Heidenreich, Julian’s father; Mallerly Romero, Julian’s mother; and Lonnie Robinson, Wheelchairs 4 Kids board member. Lodge officers Will Garritz, Nancy Carr, Al Reker, Kathy Held and Frank Reynolds are pictured in the back row.
Veterans Day program with guest speaker, Skye Musson, a Coast Guard veteran, followed by a meal. Gently used coats were collected for veterans and were distributed before Christmas.

**Inverness #2522**

On Veterans Day, Inverness Elks Lodge #2522 served 275 meals at their free veterans breakfast. This was the last day of a three-day open house at the lodge during the Dragon Boat Festival.

**Ocala #286**

On Dec. 15, Ocala Lodge members placed over 200 wreaths at the national cemetery in Bushnell, Fla., for Wreaths Across America.

**South Lake #1848**

Veterans Day program with guest speaker, Skye Musson, a Coast Guard veteran, followed by a meal. Gently used coats were collected for veterans and were distributed before Christmas.

**Gainesville #990**

On Oct. 20, Gainesville Elks Lodge #990 partnered with the Gainesville Garden Club and the Gold Star Mothers of Gainesville to provide a Gold Star memorial marker at the entrance of the Malcom Randall VA Medical Center.

**Green Cove Springs #1892**

Wreaths Across America accepted a $7,000 donation from Green Cove Springs Lodge, the largest Florida donor.

**Ocala Elks Lodge #286**

Hosted a Christmas party for veterans receiving services from the local agency Vets Helping Vets. Veterans received presents and a traditional Christmas dinner. Lodge members made desserts for them to take home and enjoy. One lucky veteran won the large stocking.

**Lake City #893**

Lake City Elks Lodge #893 held a Veterans Day luncheon with live music. Colonel Bill Brown, USAR Ret., was the guest speaker.

**Live Oak #1165**

On Nov. 12, Live Oak Elks Lodge #1165 in concert with Garrison Farms held its sixth annual Salute to Veterans program providing a free lunch to veterans and active duty and reserve military soldiers and their families. About 250 people were served.

**Perry #1851**

Perry Elks Lodge #1851 held its annual veterans banquet Nov. 4. The lodge also conducts an annual veterans program at Veterans Park downtown as part of the Taylor County veterans program.

**Tallahassee #937**

Tallahassee Elks Lodge #937 held a Veterans Day program with guest speaker, Skye Musson, a Coast Guard veteran, followed by a meal. Gently used coats were collected for veterans and were distributed before Christmas.

**Green Cove Springs #1892**

Wreaths Across America accepted a $7,000 donation from Green Cove Springs Lodge, the largest Florida donor.

**Blackwater #2887**

On Oct. 18, Holley-Navarre Elks Lodge #2787 donated $600 to Food for Veterans Inc., a 501(c)3 Florida nonprofit organization operating on donations to provide food and essentials to honorably discharged veterans and active-duty military members in need of assistance. Kate Mayor, founder and CEO, said, “as we approach that last week of the month, many low-income veterans struggle between purchasing necessities such as medications or putting gas in their car and feeding themselves. Your donation will be used to purchase enough food to help him/her survive until the first when other possible organizational help is provided.” Mayor accepts the donation from Ben Gray, trustee; Wendy Cocanour, bingo chairman; and Kris Kane, Exalted Ruler.

**Ocala Elks Lodge #286**

Hosted a Christmas party for veterans receiving services from the local agency Vets Helping Vets. Veterans received presents and a traditional Christmas dinner. Lodge members made desserts for them to take home and enjoy. One lucky veteran won the large stocking.

**South Lake #1848**

South Lake Elks Lodge #1848 hosted a successful charity golf tournament at Green Valley Country Club with approximately 80 golfers. Afterward, a banquet, an awards ceremony, auctions and raffles were held. Half the proceeds, $2,651.38, were donated to the Habitat for Humanity Veterans Village. An additional donation of $2,651.38 was presented to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. Pictured at the donation presentation to Habitat for Humanity Veterans Village are tournament chairman, Greg Speer; Ann Carter; Danielle Stroud; and Exalted Ruler, Russell Smith.
residents of the Melbourne Veterans Transition Facility, a temporary shelter for homeless veterans and their immediate families, to the lodge for a Thanksgiving feast. The facility provides for the immediate needs of homeless veterans while they search for work and save enough money to acquire permanent housing. This year, 23 guests from the center joined the lodge for dinner. The Ladies of the Elks put together 18 men’s and six ladies’ bags with the remainder of the supplies donated to the facility for future residents, and they also provided Angel Tree presents for the five children at the facility. The lodge donated $300-worth of gift cards to augment the needs of the veterans.

Winter Park Elks Lodge donated $4,000 to the Elks National Veterans Service Committee (ENVSC). Just in time for Christmas, ENVSC representative, PER Ron Goluba, delivered items requested by the Lake Baldwin and Lake Nona veterans living centers, hospitals, and domiciliaries including new clothing, food, hygiene items, adult coloring books, markers and journals.

Winter Garden Elks Lodge members served 120 veterans from the Orlando VA nursing home a Christmas barbecue lunch and delivered a new blanket to each of them. Members also held karaoke for the veterans.

Winter Park Elks Lodge members served 120 veterans from the Orlando VA nursing home a Christmas barbecue lunch and delivered a new blanket to each of them. Members also held karaoke for the veterans. Every year since 1994, Merritt Island Elks Lodge #2650 has invited the residents of the Melbourne Veterans Transition Facility, a temporary shelter for homeless veterans and their immediate families, to the lodge for a Thanksgiving feast. The facility provides for the immediate needs of homeless veterans while they search for work and save enough money to acquire permanent housing. This year, 23 guests from the center joined the lodge for dinner. The Ladies of the Elks put together 18 men’s and six ladies’ bags with the remainder of the supplies donated to the facility for future residents, and they also provided Angel Tree presents for the five children at the facility. The lodge donated $300-worth of gift cards to augment the needs of the veterans.

Central District

West Citrus #2693

West Citrus Elks Lodge members contributed over $1,200 to the veterans committee to purchase Christmas gifts for veterans who are confined to nursing homes and assisted-living facilities.

Zephyrhills #2731

Zephyrhills Lodge members Diana and Dee Mauro donated a banner to thank veterans; it is mounted above the doorway and is the last thing veterans see before boarding their bus after Friday dinners at the lodge. Veterans from both the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital and its domiciliary attend dinner as well as from Westbrooke Manor Assisted Living. The domiciliary provides opportunities for motivated but at-risk veterans to participate in a residential rehabilitative therapeutic community.

Southeast Central District

Vero Beach #1774

At the president’s visit to Vero Beach Lodge, President Frank Malatesta presented Rose Tufano with a plaque as Southeast Central District Elk of the Year for her work with the Cookies for Soldiers lodge program which has been providing cookies and other treats to troops in southwest Asia for over 10 years. Once a month, Tufano and volunteers meet at the lodge to receive donations of homemade or store-bought cookies from members for soldiers. The group wraps the cookies to withstand shipment and mails them to designated locations.

Viera #2817

Viera Elks Lodge #2817 donated $2,745 to Operation Shoebox which mails comfort items for deployed military members overseas. Operation Shoebox has delivered over one million boxes and 50,000 stockings to the troops. Lodge members have been donating items for a while but recently learned money for shipping boxes is most needed, so this donation was earmarked for shipping. Leading Knight, Vinny Traviglia; Secretary, Patti Traviglia; Esquire, Chris Ferris; and Exalted Ruler, Wendy Cars, present the donation to Operation Shoebox volunteer Helen.

West Central District

Largo #2159

The West Central District Army of Hope fundraiser which included a Chinese
auction and games was held at Largo Elks Lodge #2159 Oct. 21. The Army of Hope provides assistance to families of deceased, disabled and deployed members of the military. Volunteers and scouts turned out in droves and eight district lodges participated.

Among the West Central District Army of Hope fundraiser attendees were Frank Palladini, PSP; Carl Seibert, COO/State Secretary; Theresa Matthews, DDGER; Anthony Fratello, DVP; and Ron Locke, Army of Hope Chairman.

Largo Elks Lodge #2159 received the Elks National Foundation Freedom Grant to paint the interior of Liberty Manor, a home for veterans in Largo, Fla. Lodge Veterans Committee members spent four 10-hour days, Oct. 29 through Nov. 1, to complete the job. The second part of the grant will be used to construct, purchase and set up a shed in the back yard to protect items such as their bikes.

On Nov. 3, the St. Petersburg Ladies and lodge members held their annual USA show and veterans appreciation dinner with a “Walk through the 1940s” theme. The evening provided music, skits, food and entertainment. Presentation of colors and the Pledge of Allegiance were led by veterans of the Korean War Color Guard Chapter 14. There was also a parade of military flags carried by veterans who had served in those branches.

Attendees included retired Major General Jack O’Connor and his wife, Andrea, and C. W. Bill Young VAAMC guests Nathan Dewitt, Chief of Voluntary Services; 10 veterans; and their driver. Ervin Stark, an Elk from Largo Lodge #2159, was the oldest veteran present at 96 years old and had the honor of cutting the cake. The youngest veteran was 35-year-old Jennifer Perron, U.S. Army, who served in Iraq in 2004 and was one of the guest veterans from the VAMC. Proceeds will benefit C. W. Bill Young VAMC and the FSEA Historical Programs partnership.

On Nov. 15, St. Petersburg Lodge presented $6,575.48 to veterans causes. The money was raised from a jerky/chili cook-off, a trivia dinner and game night, and the USA Show and veterans appreciation dinner. The first donation was for $4,500 and it was presented to Nathan Witt, Chief of Voluntary Services, and D’Onna Lee from the Army’s Auxiliary at C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center in Bay Pines, Fla. The money will sponsor veterans from the facility to the upcoming National Golden Age Games, a senior adaptive rehabilitation program and national multi-event sports and recreational seniors’ competition for veterans of all abilities.

The second donation of $2,075.48 was given to the Florida State Elks Association Historical Commemorative Projects and it was accepted by their liaison, Rudy Masi Sr., PDD. The funds will assist with expenses incurred during the Parade of Heroes which took WWII, Korean and Vietnam veterans to a celebration Nov. 8-10 in Washington, D.C. All expenses were paid for the veterans and their companions.
sebring #1529

on dec. 19, sebring elks lodge #1529 hosted a christmas luncheon for 45 veterans and their spouses at the lodge with santa, mrs. claus and one of their elves. the veterans came from four local assisted-living facilities in sebring and received a gift from santa which was donated by the 40 & 8 veterans organization.

lakewood ranch-sarasota #2855

on nov. 13, tom sweeney, chairman of the lakewood ranch-sarasota lodge veterans committee, presented a check for $5,000 to homes for our troops for the build project of army specialist michael monthervil. the funds were raised at a hawaiian luau held at the lodge where over 200 attendees heard from monthervil how greatly their support is appreciated. his home will be specially adapted to meet his needs. he was injured in afghanistan and lost the use of his legs and dexterity of his hands.

cape coral #2596

cape coral elks lodge #2596 participated in the city’s veterans day parade. pictured are lodge members and veterans ignazio fragione (world war ii) and joe talamo (korean war). not pictured is vietnam veteran john Nugent, the lodge’s representative at the vietnam veterans memorial ceremony in washington, d.c., nov. 10.

Englewood #2378

On Oct. 1, Englewood Elks Lodge #2378 donated new 43”-televisions to four veterans nursing facilities for the common rooms. Socks, hats, puzzles, games and books were also donated. The lodge’s Elks National Foundation Anniversary Grant was used.

On Oct. 17, Englewood Lodge donated $500 from the Elks National Foundation Anniversary Grant and additional ongoing fundraising to Fish’n for Heroes Wounded Warriors Inc. This organization takes veterans on a fishing trip; afterward, veterans are taken to a restaurant where the fish is prepared for them. The lodge’s donation covers four veterans and a helper.

Cape Coral #2596

Punta Gorda #2606

Punta Gorda Elks Lodge #2606 was instrumental in supporting the Punta Gorda veterans parade held Nov. 3 with the lodge’s Elkettes winning second place for their float which emphasized drug awareness. Exalted Ruler Walter LaCombe also presented a plaque to Korean War veteran George Hart Jr. who was driven in the parade by his son.

SOUTHWEST CENTRAL DISTRICT

Arcadia #1524

Arcadia Elks Lodge #1524 partnered with Operation Outdoor Freedom (OOF), a program under the Forestry Department, to provide a special dinner at their recent hunt at the Peace River site. This opportunity was funded by an Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant. OOF provides recreational opportunities to wounded veterans. Areas of Florida state forests dedicated to this effort are fully equipped to accommodate the needs of wounded veterans, providing a unique opportunity for recreation and rehabilitation.

Brandon #2383

On Dec. 16, a group of elves and helpers from Brandon Elks Lodge #2383 arrived at the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital spinal cord injury unit bearing gifts. The Brandon Ladies of Elks and lodge members put together 100 gift bags with mugs, socks, candy, gift cards, pens, pads, Rubik’s cubes and ballcaps. They also took the time to visit with the veterans.

Lakeland #1291

On Oct. 14, 26 Lakeland Elks Lodge #1291 members used their Elks National Foundation Freedom Grant to cook lunch at James A. Haley VA Hospital in Tampa, Fla., for 400 patients and staff for a total of 600 meals. Meals were delivered to the patients’ rooms for those who were not able to get out. Also, $1,500-worth of shoes, underwear and personal-care items as well as $1,010 in various gift cards were donated to the hospital for use in the patients’ care and rehabilitative therapy.

SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

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SOUTHWEST DISTRICT
Jupiter #2469

Jupiter Elks Lodge #2469 hosted several veterans including some disabled veterans bused in from the local VA for a Thanksgiving dinner. Local scouts assisted with the event. Veterans received a handmade quilt from a local quilt group as well.

West Palm Beach #1352

On Dec. 1, West Palm Beach Elks Lodge #1352 used an Elks National Foundation Freedom Grant to host a Christmas dinner for veterans and their families at no cost to them. This event was attended by 90 veterans and family members. Pictured are veterans who are blind from the VA Hospital of Palm Beach.

Oakland Park #2407 & Pompano Beach #1898

Oakland Park and Pompano Beach lodges held a joint Veterans Day brunch for veterans free of charge followed by a veterans memorial service.

Delray Beach #1770

On Nov. 20, Delray Beach Elks Lodge #1770 presented 100 Walmart gift cards totaling $1,000 to Michelle Zielenski of the VA women’s unit located at the Bill Kling Clinic for the female veterans of Broward County. The lodge also donated $1,150 in canteen cards for veterans to use at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in West Palm Beach.

Hollywood West #2365

On Oct. 20 and Nov. 18, chaperones from the Sandy Nininger Veterans Nursing Home transported able veterans housed at the home to Hollywood West Elks Lodge #2365 where they were served a complimentary brunch. A bloodmobile was also set up in the lodge parking lot. On Oct. 28, the Veterans Committee held their quarter auction with vendors contributing their time and merchandise for auction to benefit veterans.

Oakland Park and Pompano Beach lodges held a joint Veterans Day brunch for veterans free of charge followed by a veterans memorial service.

Florida Keys #1872

Florida Keys Elks Lodge #1872 donated $650 to the Upper Keys VFW Post 10211 for their building project. The VFW has currently been just a dingy bar, but their new commander, Dennis Ward, who is also an Elks member, has taken over a building project to add rooms for therapy, classes and yoga so it will no longer just be a bar. Ward accepts the donation from Dennis Tarbell, Exalted Ruler.

South District

Miami #948 & South Miami/Coral Gables #1676

On Nov. 11, Miami Elks Lodge #948 and South Miami/Coral Gables Elks Lodge #1676 hosted a Veterans Day community picnic to raise funds for area veterans and the Army of Hope. More than 100 guests attended. Volunteers from both lodges planned, prepared, recruited entertainers, and cooked and served lunch. Other members collected donations, made presentations and provided demonstrations. A missing-man table was on display. Boy Scout Troop 362 acted as honor guard. Attendees were entertained with tai chi and yoga lessons, line dancing lessons, a fencing demonstration, magic shows and continuous music. They also learned how to apply a tourniquet and basic CPR courtesy of Florida International University under the direction of Dr. Jefry Biehler. The Coast Guard Auxiliary was also on hand as well as Century 21 representative Mariela Pritikin who talked about their veterans’ and first responders’ mortgage incentive program. There was also a soccer crossbar challenge and a frisbee toss contest courtesy of Bird Road Subaru. The South Florida Jewelry Guild provided demonstrations on various jewelry-making techniques. The event raised more than $2,000 for veterans programs.

During the Miami and South Miami/Coral Gables lodges' event, a certificate of appreciation was presented to Miami Lodge member Egbert Dawkins, left, by Reginald Hernandez, South Miami/Coral Gables Lodge Exalted Ruler. Dawkins is a decorated veteran who made a large donation for the picnic.

SOUTH SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

Jupiter Lodge donated $1,000 to Wreaths Across America, and on Dec. 15, lodge members and the lodge charters, Boy Scout Troop 109 and Cub Scout Pack 157, assisted in placing the wreaths on veterans’ graves in Lake Worth, Fla., at the South Florida National Cemetery.

SOUTH DISTRICT

Florida Keys Elks Lodge #1872 donated $650 to the Upper Keys VFW Post 10211 for their building project. The VFW has currently been just a dingy bar, but their new commander, Dennis Ward, who is also an Elks member, has taken over a building project to add rooms for therapy, classes and yoga so it will no longer just be a bar. Ward accepts the donation from Dennis Tarbell, Exalted Ruler.
Lodge Planning Calendar

February 2019

February is Harry-Anna Trust Fund Month
2/7-8 • February Quarterly – FEYC – Umatilla, Fla.
2/8 • Hope Scholarship applications judged
2/9 • Van Duren Scholarship applications judged
2/12 • Van Duren Scholarship winners announced
2/16 • FSEA announces winner of FSEA Drug Awareness Poster Contest & Essay Contest
* State Hoop Shoot – FEYC – Umatilla, Fla.
2/18 • HOPE Scholarship winners announced

Deadlines:
2/2 • By 11:59 a.m. Central Time – GL to receive ENF Legacy Scholarship applications
2/10 • District Americaism Chair to complete judging of received ENF MVS Scholarship applications and forward to GL
2/28 • District Americaism Chair to submit top three essays per division to State Americaism Chairman
* State Veterans Chairman to submit selection of Male & Female Veteran Volunteer of the Year to NVSC

Due Dates for Non-Grand Lodge Reports & Taxes:
2/15 • Deposit payroll taxes for prior month to U.S. Treasury (Lodges may be eligible to pay quarterly if certain conditions are met.)
* Deposit withholding to U.S. Treasury from gambling winnings if more than $2,500 cumulative for the year
2/15 • Sales tax for prior month to Florida Department of Revenue (electronic payment and filing no later than 5 p.m.)
2/28 • Copy A of Form W-2G and Form 1096 to U.S. Treasury (if paper filing) (3/31 if electronic filing)
* Copy A of Form 1099-INT and Form 1096 to U.S. Treasury (if paper filing) (3/31 if electronic filing)
* Copy A of Form 1099 MISC and Form 1096 to U.S. Treasury (if paper or electronic filing)

Statutes:
* February – Nominations and election of officers ($3,080, §3.090)
* February – Local lodge directory information filed through CLMSweb ($3,090)

State President’s Visits:
2/22-23 * North District – Perry #1851

March 2019

3/1-2 • Georgia Midwinter Meeting – TBD
3/5 • FSEA announces winners of FSEA Americaism Essay Contest on FSEA website
* FSEA announces winners of FSEA Best Lodge Bulletin Contest on FSEA website
3/15-17 • Officer Training – Orlando World Center Marriott
3/16 • SE Regional Hoop Shoot – Valdosta, Ga.
3/31 • Year-end Membership Report is recorded at GL

Deadlines:
3/1 • Deadline for lodges to submit a candidate for the GL Marvin M. Lewis Scouting Award to GL Activities Member
3/15 • Lodges to submit results of FSEA Elks Training program testing to State Elks Training Chairman
* Lodges to submit entries for the FSEA Lodge Scrapbook Contest to State Lodge Activities Vice Chairman
* Lodges to submit entries for GL Contest “A” – State All-American Lodge to DDGER
* Lodges to complete FSEA Americaism Essay Contest
3/15 • Lodges to submit contributions to ENF to count toward GL Contest “F” – Lodge Per Capita Contributions to ENF
* Lodges to submit contributions to ENF to count toward GL Contest “F” – State Per Capita Contributions to ENF
* FSEA planning calendar entries to FSEA
3/25 • Submissions to Florida Elks Magazine – Spring edition to Editor
3/29 • Lodges to submit contributions to Harry-Anna Trust Fund to count toward FSEA Per Capita Contributions to HATF Contest
3/31 • Lodges to submit contributions to Harry-Anna Trust Fund to count toward FSEA Per Capita Contributions to HATF Contest
* Last day for lodges to notify FSEA of receipt of ENF Beacon Grant in order to receive their FSEA Matching Grant (can be done as soon as Beacon Grant is awarded)
* Deadline for lodges to submit names for Citizen, Elk & Officer of the Year to the Grand Secretary
* Lodges to submit names (two members max) for GER Special Certificates for Outstanding Service to Area GL Fraternal Committee Member
* Lodges to request a GER Special Citation for Lodges for 6 Programs Participation to Area GL Fraternal Committee Member
* Lodges to request a GER Special Citation for Lodges for 2 Programs Participation to Area GL Fraternal Committee Member
* Lodges to submit ER for a GER Special Citation for Outstanding Service to Area GL Fraternal Committee Member
* Lodges to submit their final membership information by CLMS for GER Special Citation to Lodge for 2% or less Lapseation
* State Americaism Chairman submits top essay per division to GL
* All 2018-2019 ENF Anniversary, Beacon, Freedom, Gratitude, Impact & Promise Grant projects must be completed
* FSEA emails Lodge Secretary access to State Annual Reports Reporting Console to update lodge data, file state membership report & remit FSEA dues, file list of deceased members, submit state convention delegates, and remit delegate registration fee

Due Dates for Non-Grand Lodge Reports & Taxes:
3/15 • Deposit payroll taxes for prior month to U.S. Treasury (Lodges may be eligible to pay quarterly if certain conditions are met.)
* Deposit withholding to U.S. Treasury from gambling winnings if more than $2,500 cumulative for the year
3/19 • Sales tax for prior month to Florida Department of Revenue (electronic payment and filing no later than 5 p.m.)

State President’s Visits:
3/8-9 • Southwest District – Lakewood Ranch Sarasota #2855

April 2019

4/1 • ENF Certificates Chairmen must register themselves every year through ENF-Fundraising Chairs homepage: enf.elks.org/volunteers
* ENF-Learning Center is available to all registered ENF Fundraising Chairmen upon online registration
* ENF Chair Challenge guidelines can be viewed at enf.elks.org/volunteers
4/6-7 • State Golf Tournament – Sebring, Fla.
4/15 • ENF MVS & Legacy Scholarship winners posted on GL website
* FSEA announces State All-American Lodge winners
4/24-26 • Spring Trust Fund Trustee Seminar – FEYC – Umatilla, Fla.
4/26-28 • State Softball Tournament – Deland, fla.
4/27 • Hoop Shoot® finals – Chicago

Deadlines:
3/15 • Lodges to submit entries for GL Contest “A” – State All-American Lodge to DDGER, then to State Lodge Activities Chairman to postmark by 4/1
3/31 • Lodges to update online lodge information for FSEA Roster of Lodges
4/1 • State Drug Awareness Chairman to submit state winning Drug Awareness Essay and Drug Awareness Poster to GL National DAP Director
* State Lodge Activities Chairman to receive from DDGERs GL Contest “A” – State All-American Lodge
4/6 • Deadline for District VPs to submit list of District Chairmen to FSEA Secretary
4/12 • Deadline for hospitality room reservations through FSEA for 2019 state convention
4/15 • Lodges to complete FSEA online committee reporting for the quarter ending 3/31
* State Lodge Activities Chairman to submit state winning entries for GL Contest “A” – State All-American Lodge to GL Activities Member
4/19 • Deadline to order plaques through FSEA for presentation at state convention
* District VPs to return unsold reverse draw tickets to FSEA
4/22 • Deadline to reserve a room for state convention at Orlando World Center Marriott
4/30 • Lodges to submit state convention delegate names and state convention registration fee to FSEA
* Lodge Secretaries to submit their state membership report and dues payment to FSEA
* Lodges to submit their names of deceased members (April 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019) for the state convention memorial program to FSEA

Due Dates for Non-Grand Lodge Reports & Taxes:
4/10 • List of new officers and bar manager to Alcohol, Tobacco
4/15 • Deposit payroll taxes for prior month to U.S. Treasury (Lodges may be eligible to pay quarterly if certain conditions are met.)
4/19 • Sales tax for prior month to Florida Department of Revenue (electronic payment and filing no later than 5 p.m.)
4/29 • Form RT-6 - report wages for prior quarter to Florida Department of Revenue (electronic payment and filing no later than 5 p.m.)
4/30 • Form 941 – report wages for prior quarter to U.S. Treasury
* Deposit FUI (Federal Unemployment Insurance) tax for prior quarter to U.S. Treasury (Quarterly deposits of federal unemployment insurance tax are required when cumulative amount owed exceeds $100.)

Statutes:
* April – Installation of officers ($12,010)
* April – Appoint statutory committees ($13,020)
* April – Secretary Report to lodge ($12,050)
* April – Trustee Lodge to GL Lodge Activities Member ($12,070)
* April – Lodge annual membership and Charity Report due with dues payment to GL May 1 ($16,010 – Subject to $100 Fine)

Notes for Due Dates for Non-Grand Lodge Reports & Taxes
Florida sales taxes, if filed and paid by paper, are due on the 20th day of each month. Many, if not all, lodges are required to pay and file electronically. Due dates for electronic payments are moved back to ensure that funds are received by the state on the tax due date. See each month’s due date reflected.
Quarterly reemployment tax returns (Form RT-6), if filed on paper, are due on the last day of April, July, October and January. If electronic filing is required, the due dates are reflected.
Depositary dates of taxes to the U.S. Treasury are noted. An earlier date may apply depending upon whether your payment is directly deposited through your bank or through a bank utilizing the payroll program of your lodge’s choice. PLEASE DETERMINE FROM YOUR BANK OR YOUR PAYROLL PROGRAM HOW SOON BEFORE THE DUE DATE YOU NEED TO AUTHORIZE PAYMENT.

Florida Elks Magazine 38
February Quarterly
Feb. 7-9, 2019
Florida Elks Youth Camp

Welcoming
National President/GER
Michael T. Luhr
and First Lady
Barbara Luhr

Cook-off
Feb. 9, 2019
at Eustis Lodge