Walgreens & Florida Elks:
Making the Holidays Happy with their 2019 Gift Drive
What an amazing and exciting time it is to be a part of the Florida State Elks Association (FSEA)! We are on such a positive mission that it has to make us all want to be “Loud, Proud and Visible.” How about the banners reflecting your donations for your community service? Thank you, Laz Suarez, for helping. Sandra and I hope each of you and your families had a great holiday experience. All of you are working so diligently to make membership a priority. We need to set the pace nationally with another gain in membership. If you want to feel really good about 2020, sponsor a member (or five) and then have your lodge schedule a bus trip to the Florida Elks Youth Camp for a tour along with an overview of the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services. The FSEA will pay for the bus providing you meet the criteria. What should really capture the moment is if each ofyou would go online to floridaelks.org and become a sustaining donor with a monthly deduction from your credit or debit card or checking account to continue our mission of helping children and veterans in need.

Are you aware the BPOE is on a fundraising mission to help restore the Pearl Harbor National Memorial? Elks will never forget our veterans. Visit enf.org or ask your lodge about this.

Join us at the February quarterly meetings and meet our Grand Exalted Ruler, Robert Duitsman, and his wife, Beth. They are great ambassadors and he has a fabulous message for you Feb. 8. Why not bring some of your newer members and make it an adventure? Join us Friday evening at the camp for food and friendship and entertainment by Re-Creation, a group that travels year-round to VA facilities to provide incredible entertainment for veterans.

Our Florida Ladies of Elks (FLOE) hosted their 57th annual conference at Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort, a great venue. These ladies provide unselfish service and support to the FSEA every year. I encourage all lodges to have an active FLOE organization.

What a great organization we have in the FSEA. Our COO/State Secretary, Carl Seibert, and his staff seem to never miss a beat. Dana Allshouse, Meetings and Events Coordinator, supports the Smith Conference Center’s user groups with all their needs. Dan Masi, Director of Development, reaches out to corporate groups for financial support. He is making us “Loud, Proud and Visible.” Barbara Shepard, CFO/Director of Accounting, ensures we are financially secure. I send my thanks from all of us to Rachael King, Editor and Manager of Publications, for making our Florida Elks Magazine the premier publication within the Elks order. What an amazing organization you have as a member of the FSEA.

Our Florida Elks Youth Camp Director, Nick Miller, and his staff are taking your camp to heights never imagined. Colleen Gallant, Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services Director, is expanding our outreach to approximately 550 children per week.

Come enjoy Baltimore for the Elks national convention. I can assure you that Baltimore is “not your momma’s Baltimore.” We are fortunate to be staying at the Marriott Inner Harbor directly on the water. It is beautiful with lots of shops and restaurants nearby. We will have a celebration and entertainment after Sunday’s opening events with Re-Creation.

Bob Grafton, Sandra and I look forward to seeing you and thank all of you for being an Elks member. Have a fantastic 2020!

Michael F. Smith, PNP
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Florida State Elks Association
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ALL address changes and cancellations MUST be submitted to the member’s lodge secretary, not the Florida Elks Magazine editor.

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WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

To share lodge news between Florida Elks Magazine issues, please email articles and photos to r.king@floridaelks.org. They will be posted to the Florida Elks News Online section of the state website, floridaelks.org, and the state Facebook page, Facebook.com/floridaelks.
They left one square inch of her face

We have been enjoying our

visitation to the districts

since the FLOE convention

in September. It is hard to believe

that as I write this article, my year as State

President is half over.

At our visit to the South Southwest

District, we were greeted at the

hotel by District Vice President, Bill

Dryburgh, and his wife, Cathi, and

a large group of proud Elks. That evening

at Rotonda Lodge, we were welcomed

by Exalted Ruler, Jean Humphreys, and

her husband, Bob. We had a wonderful

dinner with a large group of members

and district leaders. On Saturday

morning we toured Charlotte Harbor

on a King Fisher cruise boat and then

went to Punta Gorda Lodge for a
delicious lunch prepared and served

by the Elkettes. That night, Exalted Ruler,
Tim Pohto, and his wife, Cindy,
along with Elkettes President, Chick
LaCombe, and Punta Gorda Lodge
members provided us with another

great meal prepared by their kitchen

staff.

Our next visit was to the East Central

District where we were greeted at the

hotel by District Vice President, Tom

Hopp, and Felicia Reber and enjoyed a

wonderful reception at the hospitality

room. We traveled to Sanford Lodge

dinner and were greeted by

Exalted Ruler, Bert Wofford, and his

wife, Shannon. They presented us

with a special cake with our picture

on it. Someone decided to save the

piece of cake with Joyce’s picture on

it so they could raffle it off to raise

money for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund.

They left one square inch of her face

for another raffle. The Harry-Anna

Trust Fund made out again! The

next morning we had a tour of the

beautiful Stetson University campus.
The president of the university took

time to welcome our group of Elks and

congratulate us on our contributions
to the community. We had lunch at St.

John’s River Grille and then toured the

DeLand House at which we learned a

lot about the history and community

of DeLand. That night we were met

at DeLand Lodge by Exalted Ruler,
Chip Haverty, where we had a tour of

their incredible new lodge followed by

another great meal.

On the weekend of Oct. 18-19, we

visited the Southeast Central District.

We were met at the hotel by District

Vice President, Tom Carns, and Wendy.
That evening we went to West St. Lucie

Lodge and were met by Exalted Ruler,
Anthony DeCesare. We enjoyed dinner

and the entertaining Karaoke Dance

Music Band. On Saturday morning

we had a great adventure at the Navy

SEAL Museum in Fort Pierce. We sat in

a beach landing craft (me with a sniper

rifle) and a Black Hawk helicopter. If

you have the opportunity, you should

visit this museum. We learned a lot

and gained a special appreciation for

our Navy SEALs. We had lunch and

beverages at Hop Life Brewery. That

night, Exalted Ruler, Marty Hartrick,

and his wife, Barb, entertained us at

Stuart-Jensen Lodge with another great

meal.

Our last visit before the holidays was
to the Northwest District. We were met

at the hotel by District Vice President,
Toni Palmer, and her husband, Paul.
The hospitality room was full of proud

Elks. As a special treat for Joyce, her

best friends and Elks, Shelly Carroll of
Plant City Lodge and Diane Winsor of
Fort Walton Lodge, joined us for the
weekend. On Friday night we were met

by Exalted Ruler, Rick Wright, and his

wife, Debbie, at Warrington Lodge for

another great meal. The next morning,
Rudy and I were treated to a round of
golf at Marcus Pointe Country Club and

lunch at PDD Dave Wiley and Edie’s
house. We had eight golfers and four

ball chasers who were much busier
than they hoped for. Joyce, Dolly and

the ladies enjoyed an art festival in

Pensacola and lunch at Pot Roast and

Pinot Restaurant. It was a beautiful
cool day in northwest Florida. That
evening we were treated to another
great meal at Warrington Lodge.

Our midyear convention was held at
the Tampa Airport Hilton Hotel. There
we heard all the informative reports
from our state committees. We also
had a presentation from our Elks
National Foundation (ENF) Director, Jim
O’Kelley. He explained ENF spending
and how all our grants could be easily
obtained. At this convention, the Past
State Presidents endorsed Rudy Masi
and Dolly as President and First Lady
for 2020-2021 and Suzi Simonelli and
Joey were endorsed as VPAL and First
Man for 2021-2022. I congratulate all
four of you and send my best wishes
for the years ahead.

Joyce and I attended the Mississippi
Elks Association’s midwinter

conference in Biloxi, Miss. They hosted
Grand Exalted Ruler, Robert Duitsman,
and his wife, Beth. It was great to see
how another state carries out the work
of Elkdom. We met many proud

and excited Mississippi Elks. They treated
us like we were one of their own and

had known us for years. We met the
mayor of Biloxi, had a great meal at
Biloxi Lodge and ate at the famous
Mary Mahoney’s Old French House.

The end of this Florida Elks year is
very important. We are basically at the

same place with membership as last

year. We need to get those members

who have not paid their dues back

on board and initiate those who are

just sitting there waiting to come on

board. If we do not do this, we will not
be sitting in the front row at the Grand

Lodge convention in Baltimore. We

need a positive membership growth
again this year. Let’s do it!

Our Harry-Anna Trust Fund goal of

$750,000 for this year looks promising.
We were at $510,000 at the beginning
of December. I think if donations at the
quarters are strong, we can

exceed our goal. We have been talking
to each visitation about members

becoming monthly sustaining donors.

State President article continued on page 06
Our Challenges are Many, but they can be Met

In my last article, I proposed a case for the badly needed support of our lodges and their financial viability, a case designed to achieve profitability and one that required the inclusion of every member of the lodge. Here are the highlights:

- Involve all members in the solutions to the challenges of the lodge.
- Gather the business-minded members of your lodge and immerse them in the understanding of all operations.
- Gain member buy-in for operating the lodge and club as a business and profitably.
- Begin a maintenance fund for lodge repairs and beautification.
- Understand the bar and restaurant are not THE “lodge” but rather it is the members and their well-being.
- Grow membership based on a financial commitment to the upkeep and support of the lodge.

We are now preparing for the election of new leaders in our lodges and what better time than now to reenergize older members by declaring an interest in joining or extending their tenure on the leadership team their positions on the above ideas. For sure, if your current leadership team is not addressing these concepts or have not attempted to involve the membership in a lodge sustainability program, I ask, should they be continued on the leadership team? Is the status quo a sustainable strategy for your lodge?

But you say we can’t get anyone else to take on these leadership roles. What now? Refer to bullet point number one above. Have you involved ALL members of the lodge in developing a solution to this problem? My guess is that most don’t even know this problem exists. If you can get more than the customary 5% to 10% of your membership involved in solving the problem, maybe, just maybe, someone in the group will have an answer! This begs the next question. How do we get more than the customary 5% to 10% of our members to even show up? Let me begin by suggesting that you NOT hold an emergency membership or town hall meeting. This signals impending doom, and many would probably be ok with that. Remember, you have allowed them to be only dues-paying members for years. If you signal your need for them to do something, they will for sure not show up! This is where you hold a member appreciation function at the lodge, a member forum to update them on new and exciting changes coming to the lodge. Create an excitement around the event and make it positive and enlightening: make them not want to miss it! Maybe even hold it over several events or days to eliminate the bad date excuse. Tell them you are trying to get EVERYONE into the lodge for the event and create an expectation of attendance! Take roll call! Cover all reasons not to attend including the that of being unable to drive or requiring assistance. Form a committee of dedicated members who will drive them to and from the lodge and even have a contingency for those who simply cannot or will not attend. Take the event to them or involve them through a phone call or email campaign. Settle for nothing less than 100% participation!

An idea I have often suggested for improving communications with our members is what I call divide and conquer. A lodge of 300 members usually has 30 dedicated members. Take the membership list and draft 30 teams chaired by one of your 30 (10%) dedicated members. Go back to the membership list and rotate the selection of team members among the captains allowing each team captain to select their team. In the end, each of the 30 will have a team of 10, and they are tasked with keeping up with. Imagine the camaraderie that will develop as each team captain learns how each of their team members are doing and how they communicate with! It is my belief that email, texting and Facebook are not working and are not enough. They are not inclusive of everyone! We can ask every member to go to our websites to become self-informed. Phone calls are a thing of the past unless the person being called wants them. We think we are great communicators because of social media and instant messaging but I believe (and I am guilty of it, too) that we are worse communicators now than we have ever been before. Perhaps everyone will use modern methods, but today, as we work to retain both our new and longtime members, we must determine how each individual needs to be communicated with and then communicate with them in that manner! Nine people to keep up with is nothing and what have we got to lose? Poor attendance at meetings and events? Burned out volunteers? Loss of money?

The input of 300 people will always produce more solutions than the input of 30. Once our members feel like they are part of the solutions to challenges, they will no doubt feel more involved and will feel as if their opinions really do matter. We just might find a renewed sense of belonging among our members and that can lead to them becoming their own exalted ruler for membership – a win-win for everyone!

Speaking of our membership numbers, statewide and over the last 15 years our lodges have initiated an average of 5,313 new members each year! That is great, indeed, BUT we have lost an average of 5,803 members each year through their nonpayment of dues, many of them members for less than three years. No matter how you look at it, that is a net loss in membership, a revenue loss and a heart break to speak. Over the past five years I have begged Exalted Rulers to find a way to remove that revolving door from our buildings, but few have succeeded. Instead, we bring new members in, we work them silly, and then we wonder why they stop paying dues as they figure that working in a restaurant was not what they signed up for! Nowhere in the Elks does it say a lodge must contain a bar and restaurant. You know what? If your dues are not cut out and no one wants to step up to operate a restaurant, close the restaurant. Anyone who is joining for the cheap food and drinks is not joining for the right reasons and few lodges operate the bar or restaurant at a profit to begin with, so to think their patronization of a money-losing or, at best, a breakeven operation, is helping the lodge is ludicrous! All the while the facility incurs wear and tear on its building systems and equipment and no profits are being reserved to pay for their repair or replacement.

There are just too many options in the world today for dining – a restaurant on every corner, meal kits, restaurant meals and groceries delivered direct to the home, and healthy eating. No wonder we are failing and failing miserably at operating restaurants! Even with volunteer help (not to say more after reading the preceding paragraph) we are failing miserably! There have to be other options, and one size will not fit all. Every lodge is unique and made up of unique individuals. Each must solve anew problems for itself. And before you get too excited about leasing your kitchens to a proprietor, this strategy is NOT a rent a kitchen or through the efforts of Rachel Wright in the state office and supported by a think-tank made up of select lodge secretaries, a secretary resource page has been established on the Florida Elks website. A similar resource is being produced for lodge treasurers and that effort will be followed with a resource for Exalted Rulers, etc. We are also working to supplement our online resources with training videos starting with a series on reading financial statements. These resources will be available to all members and are being developed to help satisfy one of my mantras – if we don’t make these “volunteer” jobs easier, no one is going to want them! Being willing to self-educate, a desire to learn and initiative are key qualities to demand of those you elect to the leadership positions in your lodge. Elect them and then hold them accountable!

Please visit https://floridaelks.org/carls-corner and join the conversation by logging in and posting your comments.

Carl Seibert, COO/State Secretary
Florida State Elks Association
ADELLA ASHTON, PRESIDENT, FLORIDA LADIES OF ELKS

Hilton Airport Hotel in Tampa, Fla., our Vice President, Linda Rittenhouse, set up and supervised our ladies activity, wreath making. Everyone had a great time and there was such a beautiful array of wreaths made including football, holiday and patriotic themes. Thank you, Linda, for a fun and creative activity. Our liquid refreshments served by PSP Judy Reyes and her helpers certainly helped our creative juices.

Thank you, ladies, for attending our Sunday morning business meeting at 8 a.m. Nov. 17. Including officers, advisory, guests and delegates, we had 38 in attendance. Tom Carns, District Vice President and State Chairman of Ladies Organizations, kindly introduced our State President, Tom Ludwick; Vice President at Large, Rudy Masi Sr.; and endorsed Vice President at Large, Suzi Simonelli, PDD, to our ladies and guests. It’s always inspiring to hear from President Ludwick. Thank you for taking the time to visit FLOE!

PSP Felicia Vuletich presented a wrapup of her successful 56th FLOE conference at the Daytona Beach Hilton Oceanfront Resort. She was presented with a book of prayers by her chaplain, Betty Orcutt, and a scrapbook from her historian, Laura Sardella. A vote was passed by membership to donate $7,000 which is the proceeds of PSP Vuletich’s year to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund in equal parts to the Florida Elks Youth Camp and the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services. This presentation will be made at our quarterly meeting.

Our nominating committee chairperson, PSP Mary McCoy, announced that anyone interested in running for office for 2020-2021 should contact her at mbmccoy918@gmail.com. This includes current officers wanting to move up and ladies who would like to apply for treasurer or four-year advisory. The election of new officers will take place at the state convention. Bylaws Committee chairperson, PSP Felicia Vuletich, will take requests for bylaw and standing rule changes at fvuletich64@gmail.com. Please submit any requests or suggested changes as soon as possible as we will vote on changes at our February quarterly meeting.

I am very excited to announce that our FLOE advisory and officers have added a new program to go along with our major charities, FLOE’s angel program. Our goal is to send a child and family along with their therapist to Disney for a weekend. The child and family will be selected by Colleen Gallant, Therapy Services Director, and the therapists. To help raise money, we have 300 reverse draw tickets at $20 each with $2,000 going to the winner along with smaller prizes. Please consider purchasing a ticket to help send a child and their family for a weekend getaway.

**Chinese Auction:** We look forward to another year hosting the Chinese auction. Please keep an eye out for any items you may want to donate. Forms and information will be included in our May packet which will be available at our February quarterly meeting.

**FLOE Luncheon:** This year’s theme will be patriotic. We look forward to celebrating our veterans, active military members and first responders.

**Hospitality Suite:** At the state convention’s new location, the Rosen Centre, the FLOE hospitality suite will be open Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Stop by and have one of our themed drinks, a blue angel or the big red one.

**Importance of Delegates:** I thank you for your dedication to FLOE and I hope you know just how important you are. Delegates are our voice to our auxiliaries. Please try to attend as many FLOE meetings as possible and take the information back to your districts. If you cannot attend, please email our secretary, Debbie Farris Mortka, and me. Our officers, advisory and I look forward to working with all of you.

I hope to see everyone at the February quarterly meeting at the Florida Elks Youth Camp where we look forward to meeting our Grand First Lady, Beth Duitsman. The meet-and-greet luncheon will be at the Smith Conference Center Feb. 7 from 11 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. You may order tickets at floridaelks.org. Our next FLOE meeting will be held at the camp at 9 a.m. in Lakeview Patio C.

Adella Ashton, 2019-2020 President
Florida Ladies of Elks

As we enter the new year together as Florida Ladies of Elks and Elks members, we have many of the same goals in our hearts for the coming year. We all share a love for our children and dedication to our veterans, active military members, and first responders. I pray that we all reach our goals and that everyone has a blessed and happy new year!

In writing my first article for the Florida Elks Magazine, my mind has been swirling with so many thoughts and emotions and wondering how and where I begin. I’ve realized I want to shout to Elkdom the wonder of our Florida Ladies of Elks – their accomplishments and dedication in everything they do from the love of family to their planning and executing of functions to raising money for state charities and your lodges. There are so many instances of how our ladies organizations have helped and yet are able to donate money to our charities as well. With this in mind, I am dedicating our articles to boasting about our achievements and what we do together.

We have a new addition to our FLOE website – “It’s All About FLOE” – so please keep me posted and email me at floepresident@gmail.com so we can make this addition a source of information and achievements for our auxiliaries across Florida.

Not to brag, but I feel we have a group of very talented and creative ladies. On Nov. 16 at the Florida State Elks midyear convention held at the Tampa Lakeview Patio C.
Happy New Year!

As we say goodbye to 2019 and welcome 2020, I want to thank every one of you for your support of Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services (FECTS) over the last year.

A special thank you goes to Deborah Hall who has worked extremely hard this year keeping all of us at FECTS in line. Deborah works well with all our therapists as well as the many parents who call our office. As you can imagine, when a parent calls our office looking for much needed OT and PT for their children, it takes a very special person to help walk them through the process. We are so blessed to have Deborah as such an important part of our team.

We are also blessed to have 28 of the finest therapists. Each of our therapists is well trained and you can be assured that they are kind and loving while treating the children of Florida. They truly are our angels.

January through March 2019, we finished our Elk year traveling with then State President, Frank Malatesta, and his lovely wife, Sally, to the final district visitations. It was so awesome meeting so many of our members and hearing all the good each lodge does in their community. We also appreciate the time the therapists take out of their busy lives to go to the visitations to meet our State President as well as the members attending the state president’s dinner.

After our state convention in May, we began the district visitations with State President, Tom Ludwick, and his lovely wife, Joyce. Being able to spend time with our therapists at these visitations has been so rewarding for me as well as the therapists. We look forward to the final four visitations where three of our newer therapists will attend the visitations. They are really looking forward to meeting our members and sharing their stories.

I hope you are all planning on attending the February quarterly meetings here at our beautiful Florida Elks Youth Camp. I really enjoy having the time to visit with you and talk about our program.

We will also be attending the 2020 officer training seminar. This is such a wonderful time to meet our incoming officers and share the story of Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services and what you as members can do to help families that might contact your lodge asking for help. Informed members are so important to help get the word out to the public about this amazing program.

As you are well aware, in Florida, we are so blessed to have two of the finest major projects in this country. I encourage you to learn as much as you can about both projects and you will have so much to share with your friends while encouraging them to become members – to become a part of this amazing organization.

Thank you, one and all, for your continued support of FECTS. We cannot do this without you and your support.

On behalf of Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services, thank you for the confidence you have shown in our 28 therapists, Deborah Hall and me. We genuinely appreciate every one of our members. We are looking forward to an even better 2020.

Best wishes for a safe, happy and healthy 2020!

Colleen Gallant, Director
Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services

Encourage your membership. Let them know how important this fund is in supporting our Florida Elks Youth Camp and our Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services.

I hope everyone had a great holiday season and we look forward to seeing you at the February quarterly meetings. God bless you and your families, God bless our troops and those in harm’s way, God bless our Florida State Elks Association, and God bless America!

Thank you, Elks, for all you do to make our association so great. You make us “Proud to be an Elk”!

Thomas R. “Tom” Ludwick,
State President
Florida State Elks Association
Happy New Year from your Florida Elks Youth Camp! I hope you’re as excited for 2020 as I am. Registration for summer camp 2020 is open and as with last year, all applications will be completed online. So, spread the word to your families and campers. To register, go to floridaelks.org/camp and click “Sign up for Camp!”

As usual, every lodge has been granted six scholarships paid for by a grant from the Elks National Foundation (ENF). However, we’ve done things a bit differently this year. Instead of sending them to the lodge where they’ve often been lost, this year we sent them to your lodge’s designated District Director on the Florida Elks Youth Camp (FEYC) Board of Directors. If you’re not sure who your District Director is, please check https://floridaelks.org/officer/florida-elks-youth-camp-inc-board-of-directors.

You may contact your District Director for any information on the scholarships granted to your lodge.

Each scholarship provides a free week of camp to one camper, and we hope 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 listed on the next page. There is no cutoff date for registration, but it will be first come, first served. For the last two years, we reached our capacity by early April, and I expect to fill up even faster this year, so please, don’t wait!

As always, if you have any questions regarding camper registration, please contact our registrar, Jen Scott. She’s the same wonderful Jen; she just got married! You can reach her by email at jen@feyc.org or by phone at 352-431-8701.

We’re only about two months from the end of the Elk year, and as your lodges begin looking 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 Florida Elks Youth Camp and Florida Elks Children’s 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. 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.

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 day. To help keep them running and to help them grow, 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.

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 in our office. Upon request, 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 total campers are attending from your area, etc.

I’d also ask again that if families have trouble accessing a computer to complete a camper registration, please invite them to the lodge, a local library or their school’s media center. Have a volunteer sit with them and work through the application. As with the rest, 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 coming up in February, and we’d love for you to be there! The state February quarterly meeting will be at the camp Feb. 6-8. It’s a great opportunity for you to meet other Elks from across the state and to learn the latest about your major projects’ operations. This meeting is also special as it will be our Grand Exalted Ruler’s official visit to Florida. Grand Exalted Ruler, Robert L. Duitsman, will be here throughout the event and will be addressing all Florida Elks at Saturday morning’s session. Don’t miss it! In addition, we’ll have great food and entertainment Friday night as Re-Creation once again takes the stage here at FEYC. 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 for the event online at https://floridaelks.org/february-quarterly-registration.

Thank you for all you do as Elks, and we hope to see you in February!

Nick Miller, Director
Florida Elks Youth Camp
“Our mission is to mold the current generation of youth into adults we’d be proud to have as American citizens.”

**Inspire • Connect • Expand**

*Registration for Summer Camp 2020*
*Opens Nov. 1, 2019*

| Week 1   | June 14–20 |
| Week 2   | June 21–27 |
| Week 3   | June 28 – July 4 |
| Week 4   | July 5–11  |
| Week 5   | July 12–18 |
| Week 6   | July 19–25 |
| Week 7   | July 26 – Aug. 1 |

(military week)

For more information and registration, please visit

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help! In January, each lodge received stars that members can purchase for a suggested donation of $5 in honor of a child with ASD. Members can write the child’s name on the star and the lodge will hang them. Before the gala, each lodge will be contacted for its total number of stars sold. Larger stars representing each lodge will be displayed at the gala with the lodge number and their total number of stars sold to show attendees how the lodges participated and helped make a difference. No matter how small the donation, it helps to change a life.

The Event you Don’t Want to Miss

I hope everyone had a great holiday season! As we venture into 2020, there are many great things the Florida Elks do that make such a difference. One of the many events happening this year is our statewide gala, the premier fundraising event for Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services (FECTS). Florida Elks Charities is hosting its second annual Unmasking Autism gala. This year’s theme is “An Evening Under the Stars” and is being held at the Carillon Hilton in St. Petersburg, Fla., April 18. This is to help raise awareness of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and put a face on this disorder to show how FECTS is successfully treating the symptoms of ASD. Approximately 50% of our patients being treated by FECTS are within the ASD spectrum with cases ranging from mild to severe. The key is early intervention for these children to receive treatment to help them reach their full potential, whatever that may be for each child. The stars on the ceiling that night will represent children with ASD.

This event is one you don’t want to miss. It will be a fun, informative evening with a cocktail reception, full-course dinner, guest speakers, music, dancing and silent auction. New this year, we will be joined by Al Black, one of the original Florida Highwaymen artists who will be doing a live painting to auction off during the event. We would love for everyone to attend but know that schedules sometimes don’t agree. However, you can still help!

This event is a black-tie event that brings together people from the community with Elks members. This is the perfect time to showcase all the great things the Elks do to make a difference, and this is one of the ways we do this. If you or someone you know would like to be a sponsor or place an ad in the gala program, please visit unmaskingautism.com for more information.

I’m proud to be an Elk!

CALLING ALL ELKS! We as Florida Elks know we are the best Elks! Let’s become No. 1 in the country with the most sustaining donors as we are now running second behind California. The challenge is on. Let’s everyone take a look to see how you can make a monthly donation that helps make a difference and show that the Florida Elks can become No. 1! If you are already a sustaining donor, thank you!

WE ARE THE FLORIDA STATE ELKS – LOUD, PROUD AND VISIBLE!

Dan Masi, Development Director Florida State Elks Association

WALGREENS STORE CONTEST WINNERS FROM 2019 GIFT DRIVE

These stores collected the most toys during the 2019 Walgreens & Florida Elks Community Care Gift Drive.

Walgreens First Place Winner – Store #4398 – 777 toys – Dan Masi, FSEA Development Director; Jess Overbeck, store manager; Wes Shaw, Walgreens liaison; and Chuck Pappas, Walgreens District Manager 642

Walgreens Second Place Winner – Store #15518 – 688 toys – Dan Masi, FSEA Development Director; John Lynons, store manager; and Wes Shaw, Walgreens liaison

Walgreens Third Place Winner – Store #9297 – 401 toys – Dan Masi, FSEA Development Director; Shaun Lasky, assistant manager; Megan Verette, store manager; and Wes Shaw, Walgreens liaison

Dan Masi, Development Director Florida State Elks Association

Support Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services and the Florida Elks Youth Camp by becoming a monthly sustaining donor!

CHANGING THE LIVES OF FLORIDA KIDS

Supporting the Healthy-Heart Fund to save more than 1,000 lives each year, the Healthy-Heart Fund is the only stand-alone program in the country focusing on childhood heart disease. The Healthy-Heart Fund’s mission is to provide medical care for children with cardiovascular disease who are unable to afford the care they need. The Healthy-Heart Fund is the only national program that offers medical care for children with cardiovascular disease who are unable to afford the care they need.

Become a sustaining donor today with a monthly donation of only $18. This amount supports the care of one child each month for one year. Your donation will ensure that Florida children have access to the care they need and deserve. Together, we can change the lives of children with cardiovascular disease in Florida and beyond.

Only $19 a Month

www.floridaelks.org
This list reflects monthly sustaining donors as of Dec. 31, 2019, of the Florida Elks major projects: Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services and the Florida Elks Youth Camp. With donors’ ongoing support, these projects can continue their missions of changing the lives of Florida's children. Won’t you please join them? Visit floridaelks.org to become a supporter. To our donors, we sincerely thank you!
For 15 years, the Florida Elks Youth Camp has hosted a family camp weekend for patients of Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services (FECTS) and their families. The families attend at no cost to them. The 2019 event took place Oct. 4-6 and hosted 50 patients, 107 parents and grandparents, and 68 siblings; 19 FECTS therapists; and 14 OT/PT student volunteers from Daytona State College, University of Florida, Florida Gulf Coast University, and University of St. Augustine, Miami campus. Overseeing the activities were 16 staff members.

Families arrived Friday in time for dinner and ice cream and then attended a costumed dance party in the gym. After Saturday’s breakfast, attendees took part in ropes course activities as well as games, arts and crafts, and archery. They soaked up pool time in addition to time at the lake and in the gym. Following dinner and more ice cream, everyone enjoyed a bonfire before watching a movie. On Sunday morning, activities included coloring totes, pool time, games and fun in the gym.

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. Their time together in this unique setting wouldn’t be possible without generous donors like you.

“Family camp was an awesome experience that gave our family time to connect away from it all. My kids were able to interact and play with all different types of children and it was just such a nice family vacation.”

-- The Muñoz Family:
Olivia, 5; Sam, mother, Mason, 6, being treated for ADHD by therapist Camille Arevalo, MOT, OTR/L; Javier, father, and Logan, 5.

“This is our second year at family camp and we are so grateful for this opportunity. Our entire family looked forward to this weekend all year. We get a chance to bond as a family at amazing activities and have meaningful time with Miss Diane [Corson, therapist]. It was wonderful to see how much our child has grown and developed since the year before. Thank you for being a part of our journey!”

-- Valerie Gaynor
Mother of Xander, now 7
Also pictured is her husband and Xander’s father, JD

“Our 4-year-old daughter, Elleigh, loved all the attention and fun she received at camp! Our family is forever grateful for the opportunity to be with other parents of special kids and surrounded by professional therapists who guided and organized our time. Attempting new skills, spending quality time with loved ones and being cared for like guests of honor are only a few of the things we experienced at Family Camp 2019. Thank you!”

-- The Young Family

“Family camp was an awesome experience that gave our family time to connect away from it all. My kids were able to interact and play with all different types of children and it was just such a nice family vacation.”

-- The Muñoz Family:

Latoria Governor and Kaidyn Smith, niece and great-niece and guests of Althea Montgomery, FECTS occupational therapist, enjoy the bonfire with a patient of FECTS occupational therapist Paula Tarver and his parents, Natale and Chris. His mother shared, “Our family loves family camp because we get to spend time together and with other families that we know we have things in common with right off the bat. Our son can meet new friends and play in a socially safe environment. His favorite memory from camp this year was the bounce house.”

-- Valerie Gaynor
Mother of Xander, now 7
Also pictured is her husband and Xander’s father, JD

“When your daughter is Aspergers, your son is ASD (autism spectrum disorder) and the baby is Microcephaly with a Chiari, you don’t find many places that are safe, judgment-free AND everyone can agree on. But camp is one of them. Florida Elks gave us the opportunity to make some priceless memories this weekend at Umatilla, Fla. The family therapy camp weekend allows these kids to have fun, learn, challenge themselves and grow in a safe, loving environment — all at no cost to the families. From the bottom of our very grateful hearts, thank you, Florida Elks. We love you for loving and helping our kiddos succeed!”

-- Emily Hayes, parent
Pictured are Caleb and Hope Hayes, patients of Chrissy Nathan, OT, who both have ASD. Also pictured is their grandfather, Craig Bode.
Memories of Family Camp
by Lynn Cornelius-Mehlhorn

Our daughter had been practicing with her Mickey campfire set, imagining the taste of a real s’more and even slept in a living room tent after summer school themed camp when our Elks occupational therapist invited us to attend the weekend family camp with Children’s Therapy Services.

In the eyes of a child who is not fond of sand, transitions, heat or new experiences, she loved nearly everything when I asked her to share her top memories. Ironically, for a healthy eater who we had concerns about eating while away from home, she started with the food!

With excitement she rattled off, “I loved the waffles, the hot dogs, the salad, the ice cream....” When I broke into her revelry she admitted that even the s’mores tasted delicious. When I questioned further, “but they were sticky and gooey,” she added with a squished nose and waved her imaginary sticky fingers. That was clearly too much for her sensitive sensory system! Meals we shared in the comfortable dining hall with our new friends from various studies at UF. One peppy sweetheart was obliging to our little’s requests for drinks and condiments, giving the old folks a breather.

As we moved on to morning activities, Littles recalled simply with a matter of fact, “I liked sitting next to [Mallory] when we did tie die shirts. I did the bullsye pattern.” The relationships that grew from moments in time are what are savored the longest.

Time in the pool with Dad and our OT’s daughter was high on her favorites list despite her blue lips from the cool water temperatures. She can convey which songs were playing on the radio that afternoon with clarity as if it was yesterday. The water baby that she is, an adventure on the paddleboat could have gone awry when the troop had to be rescued following a strong wind that veered their vessel farther away from the starting beach. She was all smiles in her safety vest upon return to shore for photographs and stretched her sensory comfort zone by walking across the sand with momentum to keep up with the long-legged leads en route to archery. The awe of being like Rapunzel with a bow in hand!

Although not a traditional camp activity in my recollection, she enthusiastically went to the gym multiple times – the dance, running, the bicycle, the running, kicking and catching balls.... Did I mention the running?!

While she tackled the challenge and worked together as a team with her spotters and dad to traverse the ropes course, her recollection of this conquer was less than fun. “They should add stairs, put less nets and add a walkway to get across the top” are a few suggestions of our feisty 4-year-old! Yet, she thoroughly enjoyed the rock wall house, maybe because it was closer to the ground.

Each of these opportunities was exemplified by her shared joy to play with a cohort of volunteer high school and university students, each at her whim to run and laugh and play in response to her command. She doesn’t show exhaustion, nor does she nap; she adored every minute of movement, while her older mom and dad appreciated the opportunity to allow her a safe space to expend energy.

As a family, we are passionately appreciative for the timeless efforts and financial gifts that provided the charming camp facilities, kindhearted volunteers, attentive therapists, and the wonderful weekend of events for each of our grateful little balls of liveliness! Intermingling with fellow families and learning of the various miracles, challenges, and celebrations was a parent highlight as well, sharing experiences, knowing that we are all conquering daily struggles and creatively problem solving to implement the resources we have available to continue to improve one day at a time. Hope is alive!
2020 Officer Training Seminar

March 13-15, 2020
Orlando World Center Marriott
8701 World Center Drive, Orlando, FL 32821

All members are encouraged to attend, especially the elected 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.

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To advertise in the Florida Elks Magazine, please contact:
Rachael King, Editor
352-322-1282
r.king@floridaelks.org
On Oct. 15, The Advocacy Network on Disabilities presented Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services (FECTS) therapist Chantal Salnave with a Community Partner Award. As its mission, The Advocacy Network on Disabilities “champions the rights of individuals with intellectual, developmental, and other disabilities by promoting inclusion, providing services, and advancing systems change.” They serve people of all ages without passing on a fee to the clients.

The award was given at the network’s annual Breakfast for Champions at Hialeah Park Racing and Casino in Hialeah, Fla. The event is held to spotlight the accomplishments of family members, friends, coworkers, and neighbors who have developmental disabilities as well as to highlight organizations and programs that play a role in their success. Elene Good, president and CEO of The Advocacy Network on Disabilities, presented the award and remarked, “Whenever we refer a child to Chantal, she is always there. She has been doing this consistently for 20 years.”

Salnave had this to say about the award: “We were recognized for the support we give to their staff and the families they service. They expressed, ‘we could not accomplish our mission without the support of our community partners.’ It’s always a wonderful feeling to be acknowledged and appreciated for the work we do. I’m happy that we positively impact not only the children we treat but also the agencies who service them. The community is aware the Florida Elks make the therapy service we provide possible.”

Salnave also sends this message to FECTS donors: “Special-needs children, their parents, and the organizations who refer them rely on your caring and generosity to make available a much-needed service. Your support and interest in this population establishes a vehicle whereby the quality of their lives can improve and even soar. The daily ‘thank you very much’ from parents, the letters from parents and organizations, and awards we receive testify that your efforts in supporting our program are greatly appreciated and acknowledged. I would like to take this opportunity to also say, ‘thank you very much.’”

Because of donors’ ongoing support, Salnave and the rest of the program’s outstanding professionals can continue to provide their award-winning services across Florida.

What is your favorite part about being a physical therapist?
Treating, talking and laughing with my patients. I also enjoy interacting and teaching parents exercises to carry out during the week with their children.

What do you like most about FECTS?
I was attracted to this organization because they provide a critical service for free. I’m a parent of a special-needs young adult but I still remember the days when I had to borrow money to pay for my child’s therapies. I also like that we are well supported by this organization to provide the best possible service.

What is your typical day like?
Very busy and going nonstop. I’m either treating, driving or stuck in traffic.

How many patients do you treat per day/week?
I treat four to five kids/day – a total of 18 patients/week.

Which counties do you serve?
Miami-Dade County. Currently I also have one patient in Broward.

What parts of your job are unique to working with FECTS?
Servicing large geographic areas is unique. No child living in Miami-Dade County is turned down because we do not service their area. The financial support available for purchase of therapy supplies and durable medical equipment our patients need is also unique to FECTS. Our yearly meeting at the Florida Elks Youth Camp is very special. We are warmly welcomed with gifts, special dinners and excellent continuation education courses.
In October, the Brotherhood Ride took to the road once again. This year's ride was dedicated to 21 Florida fallen heroes who died in the line of duty in 2018. The team honored them by cycling through Florida for seven days covering over 600 miles and averaging 80-100 miles a day. The ride began Oct. 20 from the American Police Hall of Fame & Museum in Titusville and traveled north toward Jacksonville where they then made their way south through the center of the state before finishing Oct. 26 in Fort Myers.

Day 1 – Titusville to Ormond Beach
Dedicated to:
Battalion Chief Jason Castelli
Officer Thomas Coulter
Engineer Daryel Richards
Deputy Kevin Stanton

The riders held their opening ceremony introducing the team and who they are honoring this year. In addition to several speakers, Laz Suarez, Florida State Elks Association marketing manager and web administrator spoke at length about how important it is that the Florida Elks share their mission to never forget. This was the second year he’s been a part of the entire 600-mile trek to not only support the ride but also to spread the message of support to members and non-members throughout the state and abroad. Elks Care – Elks Share.

Day 1 is complete. The team finished 64 miles in sunny weather in the high 80s. They traveled through the Daytona area which happened to be the last day of Bike Week. They received a warm welcoming as they rode into Ormond Beach Elks Lodge #2193. The team took some much-needed showers before enjoying a delicious chicken parmesan and spaghetti dinner with homemade cupcakes. The Elks displayed a table with 21 candles, each with the names of those who were being honored.

Day 2 – Ormond Beach to Jacksonville
Dedicated to:
Captain Ronald Rabon
Officer Lance Whitaker
Deputy Benjamin Zirbel
K9 Fang

Ormond Beach Lodge once again fed the riders a delicious breakfast before they departed. It should be noted that the Elks hospitality is second to none! Day 2 is complete. The team rode for 81 miles. There were sunny skies with scattered showers and temperatures in the low 80s. As the team rode into Gainesville Elks Lodge #990, they were greeted by numerous members, well-wishers, tv stations and city officials. The following representatives stopped by to cheer the team on as they rode in: Chief Chad Scott, City of Alachua; Sheriff Sadie Darnell, Alachua County; Sheriff Bobby Shultz, Gilchrist County; Chief Antoine Sheppard, City of High Springs; Commissioner Ken Cornell, Alachua County; Commissioner Marihelen Wheeler, Alachua County; Mayor Gib Coerper, City of Alachua; Commissioner Helen Warren, City of Gainesville; State Representative Clovis Watson, District 20; Commissioner Harvey Ward, City of Gainesville; Lyle Wilkerson, City Manager of Trenton; Joel DeCoursey, City Manager of High Springs; Dayna Miller, Vice Mayor, City of Alachua; and Bill Senterfitt, Gainesville Lodge Exalted Ruler.

Day 3 – Jacksonville to Gainesville
Dedicated to:
Lieutenant Gerald Balboa
Officer Jermaine Brown
Detective Larry Marrero

This is the fourth time the ride has stayed at Jacksonville Lodge. The riders truly appreciate their continued support and hospitality. Everyone fueled up on a delicious breakfast before heading out. Ashley Rabon presented the ride’s founder, Jeff Morse, with Ronald’s captain’s bugles pin and asked him to wear it in honor of him.

Day 3 is complete. The team rode for 76 miles. There were sunny skies with scattered showers and temperatures in the low 80s. As the team rode into Gainesville Elks Lodge #990, they were greeted by numerous members, well-wishers, tv stations and city officials. The following representatives stopped by to cheer the team on as they rode in: Chief Chad Scott, City of Alachua; Sheriff Sadie Darnell, Alachua County; Sheriff Bobby Shultz, Gilchrist County; Chief Antoine Sheppard, City of High Springs; Commissioner Ken Cornell, Alachua County; Commissioner Marihelen Wheeler, Alachua County; Mayor Gib Coerper, City of Alachua; Commissioner Helen Warren, City of Gainesville; State Representative Clovis Watson, District 20; Commissioner Harvey Ward, City of Gainesville; Lyle Wilkerson, City Manager of Trenton; Joel DeCoursey, City Manager of High Springs; Dayna Miller, Vice Mayor, City of Alachua; and Bill Senterfitt, Gainesville Lodge Exalted Ruler.

Portable hot showers were made available by the Gainesville Elks as well as offering the Glen Springs on the property which several riders took advantage of after the long journey. The Elks prepared an amazing meatloaf dinner.
Day 4 – Gainesville to Ocala
Dedicated to:
Sergeant Noel Ramirez-Beltran Jr.
and Deputy Taylor Lindsey, both with Gilchrist County Sheriff’s Office

This was the ride’s second stay at Gainesville Lodge. Their hospitality and continued support are amazing. Everyone enjoyed a delicious breakfast before starting the day with temperatures in the 50s!

Day 4 is complete. The team finished 91 miles. Skies were sunny with temperatures in the high 70s. The riders received an amazing reception as they arrived at Ocala Elks Lodge #286. Representatives spoke and the Elks presented the team with a generous donation of $2,500 and prepared an incredible meal of pulled pork, beans, coleslaw and salad.

Day 5 – Ocala to Lakeland
Dedicated to:
Firefighter Francisco Gutierrez
Officer Tawanna Marin
Engineer Michael Matonak
K9 Cigo

This is the second stay with Ocala Lodge and it goes without saying that their hospitality and continued support are amazing. Everyone had breakfast sandwiches before heading out for the day.

Day 5 is complete. The team scratched another 103 miles off the ride. It was a beautiful day – partly sunny, some hills, little rain and temperatures in the high 80s. What an outstanding reception they received coming into Lakeland Elks Lodge #1291. As usual, Elks sure know how to make anyone feel welcome! A bus was supplied by the Boys and Girls Club of Polk County to transport everyone to showers at the nearby Kelly Recreation Complex. Everyone filled up on homemade lasagna and desserts before bed.

Day 6 – Lakeland to Lake Placid
Dedicated to:
Lt. William “W.C.” Donaldson
Deputy William Gentry Jr.

The team has stayed at Lakeland Lodge numerous times. The lodge holds various fundraising events to help raise money for their cause. Their continued support helps keep the team motivated. The lodge is also referred to as the ride’s official home lodge.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious breakfast before the pedaling began with temperatures in the 70s.

Day 6 is complete. The team blazed through 78 miles. They battled heavy headwinds, lots of hills, sun and temperatures in the high 80s. Mrs. Gentry, mother of Deputy William Gentry Jr. with Highlands County Sheriff’s Office, joined for part of the ride so she could see the team’s dedication honoring her son. She was so appreciative of the support. During one of the stops, she got out and hugged every rider.

The reception as they arrived at Lake Placid Elks Lodge #2661 was amazing. The team rode up the long driveway to a chorus of whistles, applause and smiles. Everyone was shuttled to the local high school for showers.

In usual fashion, the Elks pulled out all the stops for the team and offered an open menu for dinner and it was all so delicious. Following dinner, the Elks held a beautiful candlelight ceremony honoring the 21 fallen first responders.

Day 7 – Lake Placid to Fort Myers
Dedicated to:
Engineer Michael Camelo Jr.
Officer Adam Jobbers-Miller

This was the second time staying at Lake Placid Lodge and their generous hospitality was genuinely appreciated by all.

After a filling breakfast at Golden Corral Buffet & Grill which was provided by the Elks Past Lady Presidents and the Elks Past Exalted Rulers Association, the riders were back on the road.

A stop was made at the Cape Coral Fire Department to pay respects to Engineer Michael Camelo Jr. The team visited with his parents and coworkers.

Day 7 and the 2019 Brotherhood Ride is complete. The riders finished the day riding into Fort Myers Police Department honoring Officer Adam Jobbers-Miller. The reception received on the way was outstanding. There was a helicopter flyover and Marine boat escorts as they rode across the bridge into Fort Myers.

Everyone made it home safely with a final push of 89 miles in the sun, heat, hills and lots of head wind.

The genuine, heartfelt appreciation these riders have for their fallen comrades is so real and so sincere. With every grueling hill their legs may burn, but the commitment to honor those whose names are emblazoned on their backs and bikes keeps their pedals and hearts pumping harder with every passing mile.

Days pass and memories may fade, but the Elks will never forget the Florida fallen heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice. They honor their memory and stand with the Brotherhood Ride in their unwavering effort to remember their fallen and support their families.

Please visit https://floridaelks.org/brotherhood-ride to learn more and see more photos of the 2019 ride.

Content by Brotherhood Ride and Laz Suarez
WALGREENS & FLORIDA ELKS: MAKING THE HOLIDAYS HAPPY WITH THEIR 2019 GIFT DRIVE

With the third year completed, the partnership between the Florida Elks and Walgreens is stronger than ever as evidenced by the increased number of gifts donated and the number of families helped through the 2019 Community Care Gift Drive. This joint venture of Walgreens and the Florida Elks working together to make the holidays brighter for members of their community who are less fortunate than themselves began in 2017 with 87 stores in Pinellas and Hillsborough counties. All eight lodges in the West Central District took part in the inaugural year in which 2,000 families received gifts at a total value of $12,760. The following year’s totals increased to 3,000 families that received 5,200 toys and gifts valued at $45,000. Impressive as the first two years were, the 2019 gift drive outdid them both with 139 stores in Pinellas, Pasco, Hillsborough, Sarasota and Manatee counties donating 7,715 toys and gifts to over 4,000 families and organizations valued at $73,395.

How the Project Works

Each year in mid-November, all participating Walgreens stores place a donation box marked with the Walgreens and Florida Elks logos in a prominent location of their store for shoppers and employees to fill. There is even a contest among the stores for which location can collect the most gifts with plaques awarded by the Florida State Elks Association for the top three. Store associates fully support this effort and actively help solicit toy and gift donations. For example, Felix, the assistant store manager at store #5437, showcased gifts that cost $6.99 and under to help associates entice shoppers to donate while giving them affordable options to do so. Felix also added a sign to the table that informed shoppers about the Florida Elks mission. At store #9297, Janet says this effort is her favorite of the year. In just a short time of the box being out, she had already led her store to filling eight large bags of gifts. Associates also get into the spirit of giving. A customer service associate at store #5870 who remembers being in need at the holidays as a child matched customers’ purchases to give back the help she once received.

Gift Disbursement by Lodges

Once this work is done, the Elks then scatter in every direction to distribute the gifts as quickly as possible before the holidays to deserving and appreciative beneficiaries. Some lodges invite recipients to the lodge to choose their gifts. The lodges’ choices of recipients were once again creative and inclusive of many groups within their communities; the variety is astounding.

Brandon Lodge #2383

Brandon Lodge collected 1,003 toys from their Walgreens stores and organized them on display at the lodge so volunteers and recipients could browse and choose gifts for their causes. Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services therapist Paula Tarver had her choice of toys that she and fellow therapists could use during their therapy sessions. She was also given a balancing bike just prior to buying one with her own funds.

The lodge supports three local schools – Yates, Seffner and Mintz elementary schools – all Title 1 schools with families of low incomes. PER Sharon Hammersla and PER Mary Lou Scribner excitedly stuffed bags of toys for these children which Hammersla delivered to the schools.

Loyal Knight, Jim McCleary, and helpers filled bags for a family with seven children who otherwise wouldn’t have had a merry Christmas.

Teachers from Palm River Elementary School had the opportunity to walk the lodge’s gift aisles after their regular pickup service at store #5870 who remembers being in need at the holidays as a child matched customers’ purchases to give back the help she once received.

Elks Pickups

At the end of the gift drive after Walgreens associates and generous shoppers have done their part to fill the boxes to the brim, Elks lodges begin their role of making the rounds to all their nearest stores to pick up the hundreds of gifts and transport them to their lodges Dec. 15. Once at the lodge, an efficient group of volunteers sorts and categorizes the gifts to simplify the distributions, as the age range is infant to teens. This year’s lodge participants were Brandon #2383, Dunedin/Clearwater #1525, Holiday Isles #1912, Lakewood Ranch-Sarasota #2855, Largo #2159, New Port Richey #2284, St. Petersburg #1224, Seminole #2519, Tampa #708 and Tarpon Springs #1719.

By Rachael King

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The lodge supports three local schools – Yates, Seffner and Mintz elementary schools – all Title 1 schools with families of low incomes. PER Sharon Hammersla and PER Mary Lou Scribner excitedly stuffed bags of toys for these children which Hammersla delivered to the schools.

Loyal Knight, Jim McCleary, and helpers filled bags for a family with seven children who otherwise wouldn't have had a merry Christmas.

Teachers from Palm River Elementary School had the opportunity to walk the lodge’s gift aisles after their regular pickup service at store #5870 who remembers being in need at the holidays as a child matched customers’ purchases to give back the help she once received.

Elks Pickups

At the end of the gift drive after Walgreens associates and generous shoppers have done their part to fill the boxes to the brim, Elks lodges begin their role of making the rounds to all their nearest stores to pick up the hundreds of gifts and transport them to their lodges Dec. 15. Once at the lodge, an efficient group of volunteers sorts and categorizes the gifts to simplify the distributions, as the age range is infant to teens. This year’s lodge participants were Brandon #2383, Dunedin/Clearwater #1525, Holiday Isles #1912, Lakewood Ranch-Sarasota #2855, Largo #2159, New Port Richey #2284, St. Petersburg #1224, Seminole #2519, Tampa #708 and Tarpon Springs #1719.
budget of $1,500 was reduced to $100 for providing Christmas gifts to children of families in need.

George and Carolyn Thomas chose toys for a family that is homeless who receives help from local churches.

Toys were also given to the lodge-supported Adopt-a-Christmas-Family program chaired by Lecturing Knight, Marionette Sexton, which gives gifts and holiday meals to families in need.

Leading Knight, Mark Vargo, and trustee Rick Weigand, PER delivered the remaining presents to the children’s Shriners Hospital just in time to restock the almost bare toy shelves.

Palm River Elementary’s Missy Laycock, data processor; Frankye Bulmer, principal; Michele Schwartz, media specialist; and Donna Mancuso-Fultz, teacher, pick out gifts at Brandon Lodge for students after the Title 1 school’s holiday budget was slashed.

**Dunedin/Clearwater Lodge #1525**

Dunedin/Clearwater Lodge amassed 1,079 toys from their seven Walgreens stores and split them between four organizations. The Guardian Ad Litem Foundation which provides clothes, school supplies, emergency needs and inclusion activities received 190 gifts. Suncoast Voices for Children which attempts to prevent children from entering foster care received 195 gifts. The American Legion was given 208 toys for their “store” in which clients can hand out on their daily routes.

**Holiday Isles Lodge #1912**

Holiday Isles Lodge members picked up 682 gifts from nine area stores and gave them to the Santa’s Angels organization which gives toys to children in need year-round but mostly at the holidays. It was a good thing the lodge chose this organization to give its gifts to, because on a Friday night, Santa’s Angels ran out of toys at an event, but in the morning, the lodge replenished their stock with nearly 700 gifts for an event they were holding for children in foster care and children in need in Pinellas County.

**Lakewood Ranch-Sarasota Lodge #2855**

Sixteen volunteers from Lakewood Ranch-Sarasota Lodge gathered nearly 800 toys from 26 stores in Manatee and Sarasota counties. All the gifts were given to HOPE Family Services (HFS), a nonprofit organization whose purpose is “to provide services to survivors of domestic violence and help them stay safe, gain strength, and evaluate their options.” HFS added the gifts to their “store” in which clients shop for free; this allowed parents to provide holiday gifts to their children.

**Largo Lodge #2159**

Largo Lodge had 1,289 toys and gifts to allocate. Some were given to the Largo Police Department who distributed them to children in need. Other gifts were given to day care centers, a senior citizen center and to other numerous families in need. The rest of the gifts were given to churches that dispersed them to families in need within their congregations.

**New Port Richey Lodge #2284**

New Port Richey Lodge picked up 476 gifts from 14 stores in Pasco County and gave them to the Pasco Young Marines who in turn gave them to the Marine Corps Toys for Tots program to be distributed locally.

**St. Petersburg Lodge #1224**

St. Petersburg Lodge collected gifts from 11 Walgreens stores worth $2,875. On Dec. 18, Exalted Ruler, Dawn Elaine Lieber, delivered gifts to Sallie House and The Children’s Village, safe havens for children through age 17 who have been removed from their home due to abuse, neglect or abandonment. The children had made wish lists which Lieber was able to fulfill from the multitude of donated gifts. The recipients ranged in age from 3 to 15. Because children in foster care homes don’t usually have Christmas presents to open, this gift-giving was extra special.

Additional gifts were given to the Lealman Fire Dept., Pinellas Police Athletic League and CASA, a domestic violence center. Toys were also included in 22 Christmas food baskets packed by the lodge for families with children. Finally, the St. Petersburg Police Dept. picked up toys that they could hand out on their daily routes and to children and families of high crime victims.
Reflection Letter from Walgreens Gift Drive Liaison

I was really excited and nervous for year three of our partnership between Walgreens and the Florida State Elks Association for our holiday toy and gift drive. I was excited because of all the wonderful and inspiring work we have done together over the last two years for less fortunate families in the Tampa Bay area. Just thinking about the opportunity to do it again sent shivers through me. I was nervous because we have been so very successful in growing the drive year over year and I wanted this year to be bigger than the last. No pressure! When we all came together on the 18th of December to celebrate our corporate social responsibility efforts, I knew we had, yet again, exceeded our goals. When I saw store manager after store manager arriving in holiday flair, arms filled with gifts, I knew it. I never really doubted it. I know the type of people we have. The managers and team members in all 139 stores participating this year came together and made 2019 bigger than ever! We truly have the best and most engaged teams. Whatever we set our sights on, we accomplish. When I look back, I am proud of what we did and continue to do to live up to our vision to be America’s most-loved pharmacy-led health, well-being and beauty company. We are doing our part in Tampa Bay to make that vision come to life.

This year, I was really inspired by our non-leadership team members. We have employees who really get behind this effort. To some, it’s their favorite charity of the year. A few team members received some sort of help in the past from an organization like the Elks and are enthusiastic about the opportunity to return that same type of support back into the community. We have multiple team members in different stores who had the idea of giving to the cause instead of to each other. Engagement to me is the discretionary effort a team member chooses to give toward a cause. Nobody has to do this. We want to do this! Each selfless act, no matter how small, makes our community better and more supportive for everyone regardless of social status. Our team members know this and they show it with their undying support. None of the great things we have done in the Elks partnership would be possible without them.

My favorite part of the whole campaign was arriving at the St. Pete Lodge 1224 after our holiday breakfast in a car so loaded with gifts, it was hard to fit myself into it. The members of that lodge just light up with gratitude for our efforts. This year I didn’t want to experience that alone so I invited some managers to come along and see this thing go full circle. That’s when you really see it hit home. The St. Pete Police Dept. was there to meet us and pick up toys to deliver directly to families. I realized that in year three, this partnership has become a pillar in our community. There is a whole framework of multiple organizations, both public and private, around us and our efforts. They plan on our success. They depend on it. As the gifts were loading up for delivery, it was really impactful to me because I saw a gift that a store manager brought in earlier that day. I knew its story, where it came from, where it’s going. The recipient will never know all the hard work that went into getting that gift to them, but I know. It feels good to know.

We all share in the success of this gift drive, from the team member who built the display to the customer who made the donation to the driver who picked it up to the volunteer who arranged the final delivery, every one of them a hero in their community. A sincere thank you to each and every one of the hundreds of people in both Walgreens and the Elks who made the gift drive successful for 2019. Next year...we go bigger!!

Wesley Shaw
Clearwater Beach Store Manager, Pharmacy and Retail Operations & Walgreens Liaison for Florida State Elks Association

Looking Ahead

Dan Masi,
Florida State Elks Association Development Director, oversees the gift drive and conveys that “communication, excitement and enthusiasm from everyone involved starting with Walgreens and ending with the Elks distributing to many needy families and organizations are what it takes to make this program a success.” The program has grown each year, and 2020 will be no exception as South Hillsborough and Bradenton lodges join the list of participating lodges with the possibility of several additional lodges joining later this year. As one can imagine, an undertaking this complex is a difficult feat to accomplish, but when Walgreens and the Florida Elks team up, the results never cease to amaze.
2019-2020 STATE SOCCER SHOOT WINNERS

**Under 8 Girls & Boys**

- **First Place**
  - McKenzie Lansford
  - Clewiston #1853

- **Second Place**
  - Hailee Varvel
  - Eustis #1578

- **Third Place**
  - Jenna Kiper
  - Plant City #1727

- **First Place**
  - Alex Trevino
  - Clewiston #1853

- **Second Place**
  - Jose Garcia
  - Arcadia #1524

- **Third Place**
  - Abdiel Mite
  - Eustis #1578

**Under 10 Girls & Boys**

- **First Place**
  - Brylee Jensen
  - St. Petersburg #1224

- **Second Place**
  - Skylar Colas
  - Eustis #1578

- **Third Place**
  - Anita Arrequin
  - Clewiston #1853

- **First Place**
  - Acheton Yest
  - Dunedin/Clearwater #1525

- **Second Place**
  - Brayden Casique
  - Clewiston #1853

- **Third Place**
  - Jaylen Colas
  - Eustis #1578

**Under 12 Girls & Boys**

- **First Place**
  - Cholie Stanley
  - Florida Keys #1872

- **Second Place**
  - Kathryn Rodriguez
  - Jupiter #2469

- **Third Place**
  - Amelie Anders
  - St. Petersburg #1224

- **First Place**
  - Gianni Jeronimo
  - Plant City #1727

- **Second Place**
  - William Bussott
  - Clewiston #1853

- **Third Place**
  - William Blanton
  - Perry #1851

**Under 14 Girls & Boys**

- **First Place**
  - Arely Salgado
  - Plant City #1727

- **Second Place**
  - Cari Anthony
  - Clewiston #1853

- **Third Place**
  - Remington Poppell
  - Perry #1851

- **First Place**
  - Joshua Yost
  - Ormond Beach #2193

- **Second Place**
  - William Velasquez
  - Lake Okeechobee #2871

- **Third Place**
  - Matthew Thompson
  - Perry #1851

**Under 16 Girls & Boys**

- **First Place**
  - Leslie Pena
  - Plant City #1727

- **Second Place**
  - Mallory Folsom
  - Perry #1851

- **Third Place**
  - Jillian Barton
  - Clewiston #1853

- **First Place**
  - Dominick Curfman
  - Perry #1851

- **Second Place**
  - Hector DeSantiago Flores
  - Clewiston #1853

- **Third Place**
  - Issach Alfaro
  - Clewiston #1853
The Benefits of Becoming a Fidelity Club Member

If you missed this year’s midyear convention, you missed out on the opportunity to meet Jim O’Kelley, Director of the Elks National Foundation (ENF). He talked about the Community Investments Program (CIP) and how important they are to our communities.

One of the other things you missed was a raffle. Why is this important to mention here? It reminded me of just how great it is to be an Elk. Mike Smith, PNP contacted me just a few days before the convention to see if I could pull something together and hold a raffle for ENF. The raffle was for a ring made out of a $100 bill with the proceeds going to ENF in memory of C. Valentine Bates, PGER.

While Mike was in Alabama, he was watching an Elks member create various objects out of different sums of money. One of those was a ring made out of a $100 bill. This ring was given to him to bring to Florida to raffle off. You can imagine the fun I had pulling that raffle together, the whole time thinking, “Who’s going to want a ring made from a $100 bill?” But somehow it all worked out fine. We raised $1,100 in just two days of selling tickets.

That raffle taught me a lot about Elksdom. As Elks would come by the table to see what we had, I was amazed at how many bought tickets – “Oh, this is for Val Bates, what a great way to honor him.” “This is for ENF; of course I’ll get tickets.” It made me proud to be an Elk. It also got me thinking. How many of our Elks members have passed away this year? Wouldn’t it be nice to do something in their memory? We all do fundraisers and are always looking for new ideas. Why not have a special tribute to an Elks member who passes in your lodge? Either have a raffle or just take up a collection at the memorial service and send the monies to ENF in memory of our absent member. What a great tribute to them to give back to your community in their honor at the same time. If something as small as a $100 bill ring can raise $1,100, just think of the possibilities you can come up with at your lodge.

Also at the convention, it was announced that there is a challenge to all districts and lodges to get members to sign up for the Elks Fidelity Club. At the time of the convention, Florida was second in the nation with 184 members of the Fidelity Club. California was first with 475. Within three weeks, Florida was at 199 with more not reported in the totals yet, and California was at 484, so I know we can top that before March 31.

By joining the Fidelity Club, you will start receiving:

- Fidelity Club stickers for your membership card.
- Your name will appear in the online Fidelity Club Honor Roll.
- A new sticker at the end of each calendar year.
- An ENF fidelity pin once you’ve made 12 recurring gifts.
- Pin attachments starting at the 25th recurring gift.
- All donations are tax deductible for the calendar year.

The lodge will receive these guarantees if each member joins:

- The lodge per capita will be met each year.
- Fundraisers will be a bonus.
- The community will benefit from all the monies that are donated.

Florida will receive:

- More monies back from ENF.

Awards will be given at the Florida Elks state convention to:

- Top three districts with the most Fidelity members.
- Top three lodges with the most Fidelity members.
- Top three lodges by division with the most Fidelity members.

Remember, you signing up for the Fidelity Club either monthly or quarterly not only benefits ENF for this year but it will continue to help your lodge and community for years to come until you stop it. What a great way to show that you are proud to be an Elk. I know I am.

To sign up for the Fidelity Club, please visit elks.org/enf/FidelityClub.cfm. If you have any questions about ENF or need assistance signing up, please don’t hesitate to contact me at rmwijcik@gmail.com or 941-962-5475.

Rose Wujcik, PER, State Chairman
ENF Fundraising Committee
Florida State Elks Association

FLORIDA ELKS HISTORY

On this Day, Jan. 14, 1995, 25 Years Ago...

Holley-Navarre Lodge #2787 was instituted.

District: Northwest
Dispensation: Sept. 26, 1994
Institution: Jan. 14, 1995
Location: 2002 Elks Way
Navarre, FL 32566
Meets: 2nd & 4th Tuesday at 6 p.m.
2019 Membership: 158
During the holiday season, Rotonda Elks Lodge #2710 partnered with the Rotonda Quilting Club to provide a sewing opportunity for kids. Twenty-five third, fourth and fifth graders learned to use sewing machines to make their own Christmas pillowcase at Vineland Elementary School in Rotonda West, Fla. Members of the Elks and their spouses as well as members of the Rotonda Quilting Club volunteered their time at the school to assist students in their sewing project.

Debbie Sommers, Lodge Secretary, who helped the children prep their pillowcases for sewing, describes the endeavor. “I felt a sewing project would benefit children and engage Elks and their friends in a new kind of project. I originally wrote the project last year using our (Elks National Foundation) Promise Grant. We purchased eight new sewing machines and lots of Christmas fabric with the grant funds. To support reading and following directions, I created illustrated pictorial direction sheets so the children could follow each step and be successful. It was a huge success last year at Vineland Elementary. We had fabric left over from last year so I contacted the Vineland Elementary after-school coordinator again and asked if they would be interested in doing the project again. They were excited for an opportunity for the third to fifth graders to learn a life skill. We set up dates and times at the school and I put out a request through the lodge for sewers via Constant Contact and then worked with the gals interested in sewing with the students. Everyone enjoyed the experience and next year we have expanded to include an additional elementary school.”

The grant was written last year to be a multi-year project. All the fabric was purchased last year so this year used up what was left of the fabric – $125 worth. Next year they plan to write the grant for more fabric and possibly a few more sewing machines. This year’s Promise Grant was used to fund a book drive for toddlers through third grade.

For more information including guidelines, restrictions, applications and report forms, visit elks.org/cip/.
**INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE AUDIT: LEARNING FROM A LODGE EXAMPLE**

An Internal Revenue Service (IRS) audit of one of Florida’s lodges was conducted at the end of 2018. The lodge audit was successful as the lodge was found to not owe money to the IRS and the tax-exempt status remained intact. The IRS auditor provided the following information following the audit.

“Through the course of the examination, the examiner concluded that the following issues were present with the Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks lodge:

“During our examination of the organization’s Form 990 and related records, we determined that you didn’t complete Schedule G. Section 6033(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code provides, in part, as follows:

“…every organization exempt from taxation under Section 501(a) shall file an annual return, stating specifically the items of gross income, receipts, and disbursements, and such other information for the purpose of carrying out the Internal Revenue Service laws as the secretary may by forms of regulations prescribe…”

“For subsequent returns, complete all required parts in Schedule G. Failure to complete all required parts on Form 990’s Schedule G in the future may subject you to incomplete return penalties as mentioned in Revenue Ruling 77-162.1977-1 C.B.400 as well as jeopardize your exempt status since you aren’t meeting the requirements under which exemption was granted. It is in the service’s best interest to educate the organization to foster future compliance.”

Lodges should pay close attention in their review of the 990 and 990T to ensure the preparer has included all required forms and/or schedules prior to the signing, dating, and filing of the returns. If you receive an Internal Revenue Service audit notification letter, immediately contact the chairman of the Business Practices Committee for assistance in preparing for the audit.

Sonja S. Lopez, PER, Member
FSEA Business Practices Committee

Disclaimer: The Business Practices Committee of the Florida State Elks Association (FSEA) has prepared this information to assist the lodges of this fraternal order. The FSEA Business Practices Committee is neither responsible nor empowered to be responsible for the establishment of such procedures. The Business Practices Committee acts as a resource to assist lodges. You should always consult your lodge’s tax and legal advisors before engaging in any endeavors or transactions to ensure compliance with federal, state and local laws.

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**HOLIDAY BASKETBALL CLASSIC**

From Dec. 12-14, the Florida State Elks Association and the Florida Elks Youth Camp (FEYC) hosted the holiday basketball classic in conjunction with the Umatilla High School basketball program. More than 30 teams competed and came from several states as well as a boys’ and girls’ team from Australia. Twelve teams and their coaches were housed and fed by the youth camp. This year’s event was run by Danny Tabor, PSP; John Carter, PER, Sports Chairman; Larry White, PER, Sports Vice Chairman; Nick Miller, FEYC Director; and Brian Morris, Umatilla High School basketball coach. The Marion County Sheriff Department and the Marion County Fire Department assisted with security and emergency medical personnel on site.

**Boys Varsity**
- Umatilla High School – Umatilla, Fla.
- SL Jones Christian Academy – Pensacola, Fla.
- Mount Dora High School – Mount Dora, Fla.
- Seabreeze High School – Daytona Beach, Fla.
- Villages High School – Villages, Fla.
- Atlantic High School – Port Orange, Fla.
- First Academy – Orlando, Fla.
- Eustis High School – Eustis, Fla.
- Miami Carrollton School of the Sacred Heart – Miami, Fla.
- ByFord Western Australia
- University Christian High School – Jacksonville, Fla.
- Saints Academy – Orlando, Fla.
- Lighthouse Private Christian Academy – Pensacola, Fla.
- Inspire Prep (National) – Orlando, Fla.
- Inspire Prep High School – Orlando, Fla.

**Boys JV**
- Umatilla High School – Umatilla, Fla.
- Eustis High School – Eustis, Fla.
- Winter Haven High School – Winter Haven, Fla.
- Atlantic High School – Port Orange, Fla.
- Saints Academy – Orlando, Fla.

**Girls Varsity**
- Umatilla High School – Umatilla, Fla.
- Mount Dora High School – Mount Dora, Fla.
- Seabreeze High School – Daytona Beach, Fla.
- Villages High School – Villages, Fla.
- Atlantic High School – Port Orange, Fla.
- First Academy – Orlando, Fla.
- Eustis High School – Eustis, Fla.
- Miami Carrollton School of the Sacred Heart – Miami, Fla.
- ByFord Western Australia
- University Christian High School – Jacksonville, Fla.
- Chiefland High School – Chiefland, Fla.
- New Smyrna High School – New Smyrna Beach, Fla.
- Deltona High School – Deltona, Fla.
- Saints Academy – Orlando, Fla.

**Girls JV**
- Umatilla High School – Umatilla, Fla.
- Villages High School – Villages, Fla.
- Atlantic High School – Port Orange, Fla.
- Saints Academy – Orlando, Fla.

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Top: Australian girls’ team
Bottom: Montour HS boys team, Pennsylvania
Holley-Navarre #2787

Holley-Navarre Elks Lodge #2787 presented a check for $1,500 Dec. 9 to Caring and Sharing of South Santa Rosa County. The donation was raised from the lodge’s weekly bingo evenings as well as lodge fundraisers. Caring and Sharing distributes Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets, toys for children, gift certificates for teens, and clothing and household items.

Lake City #893

On Dec. 21, Lake City Lodge delivered Christmas food baskets to help community families in need. Donations of food, both nonperishable and uncooked turkeys from members, help fund this event as well as proceeds from the lodge’s Christmas raffle tickets. A silent auction was also conducted in early December. Santa visited the lodge Dec. 24 and gave presents to all the kids who attended.

Live Oak #1165

Live Oak Elks Lodge #1165 partnered with the Suwannee County Economic Council to assemble Christmas baskets and gifted them to elders and veterans. Lodge members donated nonperishable items.

Perry #1851

Perry Elks Lodge #1851 sponsored a Soccer Shoot Oct. 12. First place winners attended the regional Soccer Shoot Dec. 14 and those first place winners advanced to the state Soccer Shoot Jan. 4 at the Florida Elks Youth Camp. Pictured are the regional Soccer Shoot winners.

On Oct. 26, the Florida Forest Festival was held and Elroy the Elk (member Paul Miller Jr.) was in the parade, much to the delight of the kids. Perry Lodge hosted the return of the festival’s Mr. & Mrs. Tourist who were picked from the visiting RV campers for the past year. They attended the downtown events, rode in the parade, received the key to the city from the mayor and were guests at the festival Elks ball.

Thanksgiving food baskets were prepared by Perry Lodge and distributed by Taylor County United. Seven baskets were loaded with nonperishable items and each basket included a $50 gift card for purchase of additional food. The lodge also sent six gifts to the Lake City VA Domiciliary for Thanksgiving and bought clothes and toys for 16 children in Taylor County.

Perry Lodge hosted its 16th annual breakfast with Santa Dec. 7. It took three evenings to transform the banquet room into Candy Cane Lane and Santa’s workshop. The lodge served over 500 parents and children breakfast, entertained with songs and dance, and sent each child home with a present they helped build in Santa’s workshop. Michael Lynn Inc., contractor; Padgett Tree Service; Advanced Refrigeration; Foley Spotting Services; Impact Collision; Ragans Ace Hardware and Bassett’s Dairy were sponsors.

Tallahassee #937

For gift giving in the Christmas season, the Tallahassee Elketts adopted six children from the Salvation Army’s Angel Tree. Shoes and clothing were on the list of needed items and each child had something special that was really wanted. The Elketts provided all items on the list as well as extra pairs of shoes, socks and additional clothing.

On Dec. 17, Perry Lodge gave an in-kind donation for the Special Olympics to hold their annual Christmas party. After enjoying a meal cooked and served by Elks, Santa came for a visit. There were over 100 in attendance.

Tallahassee Lodge participated in the annual visit from Santa at Gretchen Everhart School Dec. 17. Santa (chaplain, Danny McElroy) brought 150 presents for the children provided by Good Shepard Catholic Church. Tallahassee’s Christy Ervin and Ron Brown, PDD assisted.
**Green Cove Springs #1892**

Green Cove Springs Elks Lodge #1892 participated in the City of Green Cove Springs’ Christmas festivities. On Dec. 1, 14 Elks and eight helpers packed age-appropriate gift bags for infants up to teens. On Dec. 7, 15 Elks and 10 helpers distributed bags to over 300 local children.

**Jacksonville #221**

On Nov. 9, Jacksonville Elks Lodge #221 held a paper-shredding event to support a local food bank. While 900 pounds of paper were shredded, a truck full of canned goods was filled.

**St. Augustine #829**

St. Augustine Elks Lodge #829 heard that the St. John’s Sheriff’s Department needed bears for its Cuddly Care program. Member Cathy Walsh ordered the bears and took donations from lodge members. Leading Knight, Connie Sarnowski, delivered the 47 bears to the sheriff’s department. The mission of the program is to raise the spirits of patients at Flagler Hospital and local nursing homes and has been in existence for nearly 20 years. Many organizations, businesses and citizens have collected hundreds of thousands of stuffed animals that have brought smiles to numerous patients’ faces.

**Eustis #1578**

On Oct. 14, six Elks and 10 Anna Miller volunteers met at Eustis Elks Lodge #1578 to pack a donation totaling $5,001.29 worth of gifts to The Haven of Lake and Sumter Counties. The donation included 350 adult/teen welcome kits, 118 children’s welcome kits, 14 birthday kits (cake mix, frosting and candles for children who celebrate their birthday at the shelter), 15 stuffed toys, baby dolls, 87 full-sized toiletries, and children’s clothes. Adult/teen welcome kits are one quart-sized bags containing toiletries. Children’s kits include the same plus hand sanitizer, a handheld toy, lip balm and various items for children. The kits are given to each person as they arrive at the shelter to make them feel special. The Haven of Lake and Sumter Counties is a safe house for women, teens, and children who have been abused and those who are survivors of rape.

**South Lake #1848**

South Lake Elks Lodge #1848 members and Elroy the Elk marched in the Clermont Christmas parade on Main Street Dec. 7. Over 1,200 drug-free red ribbons were passed out. That evening, Clermont residents enjoyed the Elks Christmas for Kids boat parade with over 80 boats participating. All money raised went to help over 250 children in the community.

**Winter Park #1830**

Winter Park Lodge Exalted Ruler, Ron Goluba, and member Sue Jovi were once again invited to play Santa and Mrs. Claus for the children of over 300 families in need at the annual HOPE Christmas in the City event. HOPE Helps Inc. is a local charity whose mission is to prevent and reduce homelessness in central Florida by helping individuals and families become self-sufficient through housing, outreach, prevention and education.
Winter Park Lodge members donated gifts for children on the lodge’s Angel Tree and delivered them to Casselberry Elementary School for children in need.

EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT

Merritt Island #2650

On Dec. 8, a country Christmas was held at Kiwanis Island on Merritt Island, Fla. For years, Brevard County has put on a Christmas party for citizens who are handicapped and mentally challenged. For over 20 years, Merritt Island Elks Lodge #2650 has supplied and prepared the food and drinks for approximately 200 people.

Merritt Island Lodge held the seventh annual Santa’s Boot Strap event Dec. 14 to give some holiday cheer to families in need. Nine people received $100 gift cards to Aldi. The other 75 families received enough food to last them throughout the holiday season. Lodge members purchased, packaged and delivered the gifts to the families. The lodge paid for this using $8,000 from its charity account.

On Dec. 14, the Port Orange Police Department partnered with Port Orange Lodge for their fifth annual Shop with a Cop and Elks event at a Target store in Port Orange, Fla. This event was made possible using a $5,000 grant obtained from Target by Port Orange Police Department and donations from the lodge. Each child received a gift card for $150 plus a $25 gift card for Christmas dinner. There were 29 police officers along with Elks who accompanied the 29 children and their families shopping for gifts.

Port Orange Lodge member Richard Violette and Port Orange police officer Andre Fleming pose with participants in the Shop with a Cop and Elks event Dec. 14 at a Port Orange Target.

CENTRAL DISTRICT

Aripeka #2520

On Oct. 24, Aripeka Elks Lodge #2520 used an Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant of $2,000 to hold a Halloween party for over 160 children and young adults from the community who are severely disabled. The annual event is named after deceased lodge member Hal Steffes and was started in 1987. The party featured a haunted house staffed by costumed lodge members who gave each passing person an abundance of candy and trinkets. The event also featured a lunch consisting of pizza, hot dogs, French fries, and ice cream along with the distribution of candy and several gifts for each person.

On Dec. 14, Aripeka Lodge hosted its third annual Guardian Ad Litem Christmas party for children who are placed in foster care by the courts. Lodge members used an Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant to purchase 26 bicycles and 24 tablets to help make Christmas a special day for these children. In addition, Guardian Ad Litem of Pasco County collected hundreds of presents from community businesses and community members to make sure the 35 tables in the large hall were covered with presents. The children and their foster parents were treated to hot dogs, chips and soda. The lodge’s own Santa and Mrs. Claus also made an appearance.

Kissimmee #1873

Kissimmee Elks Lodge #1873 purchased and delivered 619 student dictionaries to four elementary school third graders in the county Oct. 21. They also included drug awareness red ribbons in the dictionaries to serve as bookmarks. Funds for the dictionaries came from private donations and the lodge’s charity account.

With the benefit of an Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant for the fourth year, members of Kissimmee Lodge hosted foster and diversion care families of Osceola County Dec. 14. Providing for over 200 children in the system along with their families and siblings, they fed 800 individuals. They also offered pony rides, a super-sized bounce house, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, and multiple games and activities.
activities. There was a large collection of donated toys and gifts from the Elks members and the community. The caregivers could choose three gifts for each child at no cost. Elroy the Elk got many hugs and was a great hit as he passed out coloring books and red ribbon bookmarks encouraging them to be free from drugs and alcohol.

West Citrus #2693

West Citrus and Inverness Elks lodges hosted foster families of Citrus County at a dinner at West Citrus Lodge Dec. 15. The children received gifts as well. This annual event provides foster families a chance to meet and share the challenges and triumphs of being a foster parent.

Pictured are West Citrus Lodge volunteers – (back row) chef, Dave Vergil; West Citrus outside coordinator, Karin Nottage; Vinnie Gonzales; Mike Quade; Doreen Tortorella; Barry Grace; Charles Jancura; House Committee chairman, Scott Zakszeski; and Teresa Jancura. In the front are Lucille Lareau, Bonnie Lee, Linda Zakszeski and Eppie Demchak.

Zephyrhills #2731

On Oct. 26, Zephyrhills Lodge and the Veterans Committee donated cookies and popcorn at a value of $750 to Rose Castle Nursing Home, Westbrook Manor Nursing Home and Zephyrhills Fire Department. With PER Ken Fabiani are EMTs James Corbin and Jennifer Cook and a resident and Zephyrhills Fire Department. With PER Ken Fabiani is their $5,000 Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant and the state matching funds to pack Thanksgiving grocery packages for 200 families (approximately 700 people) that included a 12-15 pound turkey, green beans, mushroom soup, fried onion rings, corn, rice, potatoes, stuffing, popcorn, Jello, gravy and cranberry sauce. On Nov. 21, the groceries were given to families whose children attend one of five area schools.

Fort Pierce #1520

After seven months of planning, Fort Pierce Elks Lodge #1520 undertook the Operation 2019 Christmas backpack program at St. Lucie Public Schools including Lakewood Park Elementary School in Fort Pierce, Fla., where a local news station took video. The lodge used funds from the $10,000 Elks National Foundation Impact Grant, backpack lodge funds, and lodge member donations to buy food, new toys, school clothes, hygiene kits, snacks, Christmas candy, and more for hundreds of children who attend St. Lucie Public Schools and their families who are homeless. More than 30 Elks spent Dec. 8 sorting and packing thousands of items. St. Lucie Public Schools assisted by having two large school trucks pick up the 10 pallets loaded with donations. The delivery was Dec 11. They also presented $100 checks to 10 schools to buy school logo shirts for students who helped other students during the holiday season. The backpack program now helps more than 300 kids every weekend. This was their largest Christmas event with more than 1,000 kids helped.

With the support of Tracy Hanson, Director of Caterpillars to Butterflies Foundation in Dade City, Fla., and Ken Fabiani, PER, Zephyrhills Lodge donated 50 stuffed animals for the Christmas party held Dec. 11 at the lodge for children with mental health issues, autism spectrum disorder or physical disabilities. The foundation supports children’s growth and creativity. The children met Santa, sang carols and danced after their meal.

Melbourne #1744

On Nov. 1, Melbourne Lodge donated $2,500 from their Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant to the Melbourne Police Foundation to provide a secure, outdoor living area for a newly acquired police dog. Melbourne police dogs are housed with their handlers and the new dog required a 6-by-10 concrete pad with chain-link fence, dog house, rubber pads and leashes of various sizes.

Melbourne Elks Lodge #1744 used their $5,000 Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant and the state matching funds to pack Thanksgiving grocery packages for 200 families (approximately 700 people) that included a 12-15 pound turkey, green beans, mushroom soup, fried onion rings, corn, rice, potatoes, stuffing, popcorn, Jello, gravy and cranberry sauce. On Nov. 21, the groceries were given to families whose children attend one of five area schools.

Port St. Lucie #2658

On Oct. 12, the Port St. Lucie Elks Lodge motorcycle riders club loaded more than three pallets of goods and veterinary items for the Hurricane Dorian relief fundraiser. The donations were raised through their breakfast fundraiser, from lodge members and from themselves. Sheriff Ken Mascara was their police escort to the airport where Missionary Flights International is hangered. The goods were loaded onto a plane bound that day to The Bahamas. Pete Jordan, club president, said, “Hurricane Dorian was right off our Florida coast and just several miles away from our lodge and homes. That could have just as well been us in dire need of food and water.”

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Viera #2817

Viera Elks Lodge #2817 supports Genesis House, a facility that provides transitional shelter for women and their children who are homeless, long-term housing for student mothers and their children, and shelter for pregnant women and their children who are homeless. The lodge supports this organization with their Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant. On Dec. 23, the lodge provided $200 to fund a week at Camp Hope's Christmas Camp for four children from Genesis House. This program helps families like those at Genesis House with affordable child care during school breaks. Camp Hope provides children with a fun, safe, and enriching place to spend time during breaks so parents don't have to choose between their children and their jobs.

St. Petersburg #1224

On Oct. 5, Elks and the public turned out for St. Petersburg Elks Lodge's sixth annual classic car show and open house. Trophies were awarded in various car categories including the coveted best of show. Exalted Ruler, Dawn Lieber, organized the event which was co-chaired by Sharon Literski, Lecturing Knight. Volunteers set up tents, directed traffic and parking, and manned the beverage booths. The DJ play 1950s music, and food was available from the poolside grill and lodge menu. The community toured the lodge and received information about the Elks and their projects. The event raised $855 for the Florida Elks Youth Camp and Florida Elks Children's Therapy Services.

WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT

Dunedin/Clearwater #1525

Dunedin/Clearwater Elks Lodge #1525 held a food drive after Thanksgiving. All food was donated to Dunedin Cares, the local food pantry. Pantry volunteer names were unavailable.

Largo #2159

Austin Hollis of Boy Scout Troop #417 sponsored by Largo Elks Lodge #2159 was awarded his Eagle Scout rank at a lodge ceremony Nov. 2. His project was the construction of picnic tables for visitors to Taylor Park in Largo, Fla., who are in wheelchairs. He earned 30 merit badges though only 21 are required for the rank. He served as senior patrol leader and as junior assistant scoutmaster. He attends St. Petersburg College and is the troop’s eighth Eagle Scout.

St. Petersburg #140

On Oct. 31, St. Petersburg Lodge participated in a Halloween trunk-or-treat which brings the ritual to the safety of a private and known parking lot by turning the backs of vehicles into the new front porch. Members brought candy to hand out and socialized, had the opportunity to meet the lodge's neighbors, and showed off their themed trunks.
Thanks to the $2,500 Elks National Foundation Promise Grant plus lodge members donating $775 in new Christmas toys, St. Petersburg Lodge held a children’s Christmas party Dec. 7. With the grant and deep discounts from Walgreens, lodge volunteers went Christmas shopping for educational toys, electronic cars, soft and cuddly toys, diapers, clothing, and much more for newborns to 10-year-olds. Children ages 4-10 also received drug awareness activity books and their parents received drug awareness materials. The party had “elk” reindeer games, sugar cookie decorating, a balloon artist and Christmas tattoos. Along with children and grandchildren of lodge members, the lodge also invited several organizations in Pinellas County that the lodge has adopted. Attending the party were kids from the Children’s Village, MYcroSchool Pinellas, Sallie House and Westgate Elementary. Lunch was served to 120 kids and 130 parents and grandparents. Santa and Mrs. Claus spent time with each child and gave them specially selected toys. Children’s Village is a Salvation Army program that helps families in crisis or extreme hardship situations that are having difficulties taking care of their children and also provides long-term and alternative care for children who are no longer able to live with their parents. MYcroSchool Pinellas is a tuition-free public charter high school for students ages 16-21 in St. Petersburg, Fla., who are at risk of dropping out. Attending the party were teenage and young adult students with their toddlers. Sallie House is a safe haven for children from infants to age 17 who have been removed from their home due to abuse, neglect or abandonment. Of Westgate Elementary’s 613 students, 318 receive free lunches due to lack of family finances.

On Dec. 19, St. Petersburg Lodge’s volunteers led by Christmas food drive chairman, Mimi Reich, packed 300 Christmas dinner boxes valued at $11,724.40 that contained a complete Christmas dinner for a family of 4-6. In each box was a $20 gift card for a ham or turkey. The lodge used their $2,500 Gratitude Grant, $2,500 Beacon Grant and $2,000 Spotlight Grant from the Elks National Foundation plus member donations of food and money. Toys donated through the Walgreens/Florida Elks gift drive were included in 22 of the boxes. Home Depot donated the boxes. The volunteers delivered nine boxes to Heaven on Earth for Veterans whose mission is to alleviate Pinellas County veteran homelessness by providing quality, low cost, safe living spaces. Six boxes went to families in need at Tyrone Middle School, 22 boxes went to single-parent homes with two to four kids each, and the remaining 263 boxes along with excess food went to the 38th Avenue Baptist church to be delivered through their indigent family care list.

St. Petersburg Lodge members pack 300 Christmas dinner boxes Dec. 19 for their community members in need.

Tampa #708

In late December, Tampa Elks Lodge #708 was awarded the Elks National Foundation Impact Grant for the fifth year for their sponsored school club, Club Chivalry for Successful Students. They purchased computers for the Avid classroom where most students come in contact with the club sponsor. The students receive T-shirts and school supplies, and during the school year, Elks give motivational speeches and refreshments at the club meetings. Elks also chaperone and provide refreshments for multiple field trips. On Nov. 18, member John Flowers spoke about his career in sports television prior to a field trip to Steinbrenner Field to learn about careers in sports.

Club Chivalry students use computers provided by Tampa Lodge’s Elks National Foundation Impact Grant.

Brandon #2383

Using their $5,000 Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant and matching state funds, Brandon Elks Lodge #2383 gifted Burnett Middle School a much-needed and appreciated audio system and civics test preparation software. Teacher Matthew Kiati had been bringing in his equipment from home for special events. The staff is overjoyed with the assistance and new community partnership and the students were happily surprised when the new system was used for a dance a few days after the presentation Dec. 10.

Pictured at the audio system presentation from the Elks to Burnett Middle School Dec. 10 are (front) assistant principals Stacey Schbarbarum and Terrella Brooks; principal, Valerie Newton; teacher Matthew Kiati; and media specialist, Rosie Alfonso. In the middle are Past Exalted Rulers Christine Vogel, Sharon Hammersla and Mary Lou Scribner. At the top is George Scribner, DDGER.

Brandon Lodge adopted eight families with a total of 17 children and made sure they enjoyed a wonderful Christmas. On Dec. 18 there was plenty of Christmas spirit at the lodge with Christmas carols playing while elves wrapped gifts. Grandchildren of lodge members saw first-hand what Elks do. This is an annual tradition, and each year, families are sought that have fallen on hard times. Members choose a child to adopt and purchase and wrap presents for them. Christmas dinner is also provided to the families.

Brandon Lodge members Donald Harrison; Nancy Price, treasurer; and Nickie Wells, PER, trustee, wrap Christmas gifts Dec. 18 at the lodge for local families.
On Dec. 18, Brandon Lodge’s Bags of Brotherly Love served over 500 meals to the those who are homeless at both Trinity Café locations in Tampa, Fla. Trinity Café and Bags of Brotherly Love share the same mission – to bring dignity back into the lives of those less fortunate. This was all made possible through the Elks National Foundation Impact Grant that the Bags of Brotherly Love received in 2019. With all they do for those who are homeless, there were enough funds to purchase the food for both locations and feed everyone a hot meal which consisted of shepherd’s pie made by award-winning chef Dan, salad, broccoli, rolls, tea, and cake. They also handed out shoes and donated knit beanies and handmade scarves to those in need.

East Polk #2882

On Dec. 15, East Polk Elks Lodge #2882 hosted a Christmas party for children from the Light House School for the Visually Impaired from Winter Haven, Fla. They also invited the Silver Spurs Cloggers, a group which has children who would otherwise be unable to afford dance lessons. Both Elroy the Elk and Santa visited with the children and all children received a warm jacket or sweatshirt and at least one toy they wanted. The Winter Haven Police and Fire Department also visited the lodge to give demonstrations to the children.

Lakeland #1291

On Oct. 11, Lakeland Elks Lodge #1291 hosted its fifth annual Puttin’ on the Pink breast cancer fundraiser. Sher Thrush chaired the event. A record number of tickets were sold out weeks in advance and they raised a record amount for Hollis Cancer Center’s Breast Cancer Center – more than $12,000. The planning was a yearlong process; the first meeting saw 25 members and the number grew with each meeting. The evening consisted of dinner; entertainment by Carlos & Company; basket sales; a 50/50 drawing; a silent auction; and the sale of pink ribbons, T-shirts, and pink poinsettias. The hall and parking lot were decked out in pink. In attendance were cancer survivors and fighters who stood up to be acknowledged, supported, and applauded. Committee members obtained donations, sold tickets, helped set up and tear down, handled the dinner, participated in the brotherhood of pinkness fashion show, and helped with the entertainment.

Lodge members (mostly from Lakeland Lodge) Ray Stepson, Carl Hutchcraft, Alex Miller, Bob Fuschetti, Jeff Morse, Gerry Deig, Greg Williams, Kenny McCoy, Ron Sullivan, Ricky Mercer, Brant Tuman, Sean Love-Appling and Robbie McNally participate in the brotherhood of pinkness fashion show Oct. 11 at Lakeland Lodge’s Puttin’ on the Pink breast cancer fundraiser.

Plant City #1727

Plant City Elks Lodge member and police officer, Vince Wise, told the lodge that while the Plant City Police had 25 squad cars with defibrillators, the batteries were all dead. Due to the hiring of more officers, batteries were not in the budget. Members applied for the Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant to purchase the batteries. Even with a quantity discount, each cost $230. With the matching state grant, the lodge was $750 short but it was made up by members David Brewington and J.J. Calhoun. On Dec. 12 at the lodge’s annual luncheon for the police department, the batteries were presented to Chief Ed Duncan. After lunch, the members installed the batteries.

Plant City Lodge Americanism chairman, Ed Wise, and member J.J. Calhoun keep watch for torn or faded American flags flying at homes around Plant City, Fla. When one is found, they meet with the owner or leave a letter written on lodge letterhead informing them of an offer to replace the worn flag with a new one. When the offer has been accepted, they make the replacement. They offer this service to veterans, the elderly and folks with low incomes.

Pictured with three uniformed Plant City police officers (names unknown) as they receive defibrillator batteries Dec. 12 from Plant City Lodge are Ron Johns, Exalted Ruler; David Brewington, board member; Judy Wise, District Veterans Services Chairman; J.J. Calhoun, member; Sgt. Bass, Plant City PD; and Police Chief, Ed Duncan.

The Plant City Police Department informed Plant City Lodge that they often deal with traumatized children and it is much easier if they have a stuffed animal to give them to help calm them. If the children are placed into foster care, the children usually only bring a few personal items with them because they are removed from the home with nothing but the clothes on their back. On Dec. 12 at the lodge’s annual luncheon for the police department, Exalted Ruler, Ron Johns, donated a large amount of new stuffed animals for the police to carry.

Member J.J. Calhoun replaces a worn American flag with a new one on behalf of Plant City Lodge.

Santa (Kenny Jenkins) visits with children at East Polk Lodge's Christmas party Dec. 15.
Sebring #1529

Sebring Elks Lodge #1529 presented two $500 checks to local elementary schools for their after-school programs. Member Bob Funk presented the donation to Avon Park Elementary Sept. 23 and members Ken Hedges and Ronna Mason presented the check to Woodlawn Elementary Sept. 26. Avon Park's program teaches all aspects of putting on a play to students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Woodlawn's program is Leaders in Arts. Approximately 30 children from third and fourth grades stay after school to learn different styles of art for eight weeks.

On Nov. 2, Sebring Lodge presented the Hartland Horses & Handicap organization a check for $2,000 from the Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant. Hartland Horses & Handicap is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to use horses “to challenge perceived limitations of children and adults with disabilities that help them learn and grow while improving their lives.” Pictured are Hartland board member Mary Moll; lodge member and volunteer, Cheryl Paplaskas; board member Bonnie Williamson; Exalted Ruler, Ken Hedges; and board member Claire Langway.

Lakewood Ranch-Sarasota Elks Lodge #2855 to celebrate Cocktails for a Cause benefiting the 14th annual Community Shoe Box Drive and Reception. The event had guest bartenders competing for tips, a holiday-inspired raffle and wrapped boxes ready to be filled. “We started collecting shoeboxes in 2006 to help needy seniors,” said Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee CEO, Maribeth Phillips. “Gifts of toiletries, trinkets, and small necessities will be packed in a decorated shoebox and delivered to home-bound seniors through our organization.” The event raised $1,570.

Bradenton #1511

On Dec. 20, Sebring Lodge presented the Hartland Horses & Handicap organization a check for $2,000 from the Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant. Hartland Horses & Handicap is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to use horses “to challenge perceived limitations of children and adults with disabilities that help them learn and grow while improving their lives.” Pictured are Hartland board member Mary Moll; lodge member and volunteer, Cheryl Paplaskas; board member Bonnie Williamson; Exalted Ruler, Ken Hedges; and board member Claire Langway.

Lakewood Ranch-Sarasota Lodge later hosted hundreds of attendees for Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee's 14th annual Community Shoebox Drive. Over 1,000 shoeboxes stuffed with essentials and small gifts were collected to be distributed to homebound seniors in Manatee County. For many of them, this might be the only gift they receive for Christmas. The lodge donated the food and beverages, while members donated their time to set up, cook, serve, and clean up. Members also provided the entertainment and Santa.

Venice-Nokomis #1854

On Nov. 12 and Dec. 9, Venice-Nokomis Elks Lodge #1854 packed 80 food baskets for Thanksgiving dinners and 80 for Christmas dinners that were delivered to a local elementary school and dropped off to the guidance counselors to protect the privacy of the recipients in need. The lodge also provided 31 families with toys for Christmas. The guidance counselors provided the lodge with a list of first names and ages of children. All this was accomplished using their Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant.
all the children as well as family gift bags. Gifts were purchased with funds from the state president's grant and a donation from an anonymous donor.

At Christmastime with funds from the Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant, Punta Gorda Lodge donated food to replenish the shelves of the St. Vincent de Paul Society's pantry. The society delivered Christmas dinner baskets to 150 local families.

Rotonda #2710
On Oct. 25, Rotonda Elks Lodge #2710 used their $2,000 Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant to pay for the gold graduation package for seniors at Lemon Bay High School who are homeless. The remaining funds will be used to offset the cost of graduation caps and gowns for other seniors in need. The funds will ensure that these seniors can take part in all the senior activities and opportunities. It will also pay for their graduation tassel, LBHS medallion, senior class photo, class T-shirt, yearbook, senior class video and all other senior sponsored events. The Charlotte County School District has over 400 teenagers who are homeless. Most are considered “sofa surfing” which means they don’t have consistent places to sleep or reside. They bounce from homes and sleep on sofas. Members hope this project will decrease the isolation and hopelessness for seniors who have few resources and that it will encourage other seniors who are homeless to set goals throughout the school year knowing they will have the opportunity to walk across the graduation stage.

Punta Gorda #2606
On Oct. 3, the Past Exalted Rulers Association of Punta Gorda Elks Lodge #2606 donated $500 to the Punta Gorda Police Department’s Jammers Basketball League. The lodge’s name will be on the uniforms and the Elks logo will be on the police van. On Oct. 8, they held their 30th Octoberfest. Over 300 meals were served to members and guests by 38 volunteers. Proceeds of $2,644 were donated to the Florida Elks Youth Camp and the Harry-Anna Trust Fund.

On Dec. 1, Punta Gorda Lodge hosted its annual Christmas party with proceeds of $1,400 being donated to CARE (Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies) in Port Charlotte, Fla.

On Dec. 14, members of Punta Gorda Lodge assisted the Punta Gorda Police Department in hosting a Christmas party for foster families at the Punta Gorda Methodist Church. A turkey dinner with all the trimmings was served to 165 foster parents and children. Santa Claus brought gifts for 104 children in need including some who are homeless with the lodge’s Angel Tree. Members shopped for clothes, toys, books and bicycles to help make some of their wishes come true. Deliveries took place Dec. 16-20.

Lake Okeechobee #2871
Lake Okeechobee Elks Lodge #2871 hosted 2,000 kids and their parents for the second annual Halloween extravaganza Oct. 31. There were games, candy, a costume contest and a photo booth.
Boca Raton Elks Lodge held its annual Halloween party Oct. 26. A raffle raised $250 which was donated to St. Jude Children’s Hospital. On Oct. 24 at a ceremony at American Legion Post #142, Kenneth Jampeetti was presented with an American flag and an Eagle Scout award from Pompano Beach Elks Lodge #1898 by Exalted Ruler, Robin Haywood. His project was the installation of a flagpole, decorative stonework, additional electrical wiring and lights, landscaping, and tree and vegetation maintenance for the back property of the Legion. Pictured are scoutmaster, Scott Slinko of Oakland Park Lodge #2407; Haywood; Jampeetti; and scoutmasters Dorothy Pezzi and Jeff Early from Oakland Park Lodge #2407.

On Nov. 18, West Palm Beach Elks Lodge #1352 donated $500 and 31 turkeys to Greenacres Elementary after their Thanksgiving sponsor dropped out. Pictured are Alphonse Lindor, teacher; Deborah McNichols, principal; Karen Ebenhack, treasurer; Staci McGuire-Callovio, teacher; James Barie of Boca Raton Lodge; and Elaine Maes-Morey, Leading Knight.

On Dec. 14, West Palm Beach Lodge held their annual Christmas party for these families instead who otherwise would not have had a Christmas. Along with the lodge’s $1,500 and the $2,600 from South Dade Lighting, a showroom in Miami. On Dec. 2, they donated $2,600 to the lodge.

Boca Raton Lodge hosted its Hoop Shoot Nov. 1 with 45 participants. Pictured with the five winners from the Dec. 7 district Hoop Shoot is Exalted Ruler, Tito Young.

Florida Keys Lodge participated in the Halloween trunk or treat Oct. 26 at Founders Park in Islamorada, Fla. Decorations were added to the drug awareness trailer and the tent was set up to distribute drug awareness information, red ribbons and candy.

On Oct. 14 at a ceremony at American Legion Post #142, Kenneth Jampeetti was presented with an American flag and an Eagle Scout award from Pompano Beach Elks Lodge #1898 by Exalted Ruler, Robin Haywood. His project was the installation of a flagpole, decorative stonework, additional electrical wiring and lights, landscaping, and tree and vegetation maintenance for the back property of the Legion. Pictured are scoutmaster, Scott Slinko of Oakland Park Lodge #2407; Haywood; Jampeetti; and scoutmasters Dorothy Pezzi and Jeff Early from Oakland Park Lodge #2407.

On Dec. 14, West Palm Beach Lodge held their annual Christmas party for these families instead who otherwise would not have had a Christmas. Along with the lodge’s $1,500 and the $2,600 from South Dade Lighting, a showroom in Miami. On Dec. 2, they donated $2,600 to the lodge.

South Miami/Coral Gables Elks Lodge #1676

The Geraldine family attends Miami Lodge’s Christmas party Dec. 14 and receives gifts from Santa and lodge members.

Pompano Beach Elks Lodge #1898

On Oct. 14, South Miami/Coral Gables Elks Lodge #1676 presented a $2,500 check to Neighbors 4 Neighbors (N4N) for the Hurricane Dorian relief fund at CBS 4 WFOR Television in Miami. The lodge raised this money through a benefit concert held Sept. 29 at the lodge. Keni Garcia, N4N; Jim Glolowski, 5-year trustee; Kay Meagher, N4N; Reggie Hernandez, Exalted Ruler; Debbie Budde, Lecturing Knight; Lynne Cameron, Executive Director of N4N; and Tim Brockland, Slippery Tim & Friends, are pictured.

South Miami/Coral Gables Elks Lodge #1676

On Oct. 14, South Miami/Coral Gables Elks Lodge #1676 presented a $2,500 check to Neighbors 4 Neighbors (N4N) for the Hurricane Dorian relief fund at CBS 4 WFOR Television in Miami. The lodge raised this money through a benefit concert held Sept. 29 at the lodge. Keni Garcia, N4N; Jim Glolowski, 5-year trustee; Kay Meagher, N4N; Reggie Hernandez, Exalted Ruler; Debbie Budde, Lecturing Knight; Lynne Cameron, Executive Director of N4N; and Tim Brockland, Slippery Tim & Friends, are pictured.
**VETERANS & MILITARY NEWS**

**NORTHWEST DISTRICT**

**Holley-Navarre #2787**

On Nov. 4, Holley-Navarre Elks Lodge #2787 presented a check to the Military Family Life Counseling Program at Navarre High School which supports service members, families and survivors with nonmedical counseling worldwide. The check was to help Military Student Support (MSS) host their first military appreciation night Nov. 12. There are 488 students at the school who are military dependents. One of the purposes of this night was to make the active-duty members and students aware of the counseling support available to them and to inform them that even though they live off base, they have all the opportunities to attend and utilize on-base activities such as the youth center. They were also introduced to tutor.com for military families.

**Live Oak #1165**

All veterans and active duty military members and family along with first responders were invited to a free meal Nov. 11 at the seventh annual Live Oak Elks Lodge #1165 and Garrison Farms tribute. The event fed 230 veterans from all conflicts. Everything was donated, leaving the lodge without expenses. The Life South bloodmobile was also on hand.

**Perry #1851**

Perry Lodge's Veterans Day luncheon was held Nov. 10 with over 100 in attendance. Event chairman, Ed Harvey, recognized all veterans present. The JROTC presented the colors and the Patriot Guard posted flags outside. Memorabilia from local veterans was also on display.

**NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT**

**Inverness #2522**

Freedom Grant, Inverness Elks Lodge #2522 hosted 17 veterans who are disabled, 10 of whom earned the Purple Heart, on a daylong fishing trip Oct. 24. Stories were told, friendships were made, and awards and prizes were given. The lodge provided fishing shirts to the veterans in large part due to the generosity of some local businesses.

**Winter Park #1830**

Winter Park Elks Lodge members treated a group of veterans from Lake Baldwin VA and domiciliary to a dinner at Red Lobster Nov. 23. They were also guests at the lodge’s Veterans Day dinner where the guest speaker was Adrian Whitsett of Channel 2 News, a USMC veteran.

On Dec. 12, Winter Park Lodge members joined Orlando politicians, Eagles and Moose members, Boy Scouts, the VFW, local TV and news organizations, and others at Greenwood Cemetery in placing wreaths on graves of fallen military. Wreaths Across America is an event coordinated with 1,300 cemeteries.

**EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT**

**Gainesville #990**

On Nov. 8, Gainesville Elks Lodge #990 invited 18 veterans transitioning from homelessness to a luncheon to pick out essential items needed in establishing their residences. Each veteran was also given a laundry basket filled with towels, cleaning supplies and more. The Elks National Foundation Freedom Grant made this possible. Pictured is Peter Tallman.

**Green Cove Springs #1892**

On Nov. 15, Holley-Navarre Lodge presented a check for $1,200 to Food for Vets whose mission is to provide food and essentials to veterans and military members in need. The lodge raised the money primarily from their charity bingo game. Samantha Peace accepts the check from lodge board president, Ben Gray, in Fort Walton Beach, Fla.

**Palm Coast #2709**

During the lodge's weekend open house Nov. 9, Palm Coast Elks Lodge #2709 held a dinner dance fundraiser for the Gary Sinise Foundation which honors defenders, veterans, first
responders, their families and those in need. A total of 76 members and members of the public attended the event which raised $5,000.

Port Orange #2723

Using an Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant, Port Orange Elks Lodge #2723 purchased two iPad Pro tablets and presented them to Emory L. Bennett Veterans’ Nursing Home Dec. 16. Pictured are Frank Tamberelli, member; Victoria Chandler, Emory Bennett therapy aid supervisor; and Jerry Peterson, VAVS Representative.

SOUTHEAST CENTRAL DISTRICT

Aripeka #2520

On Dec. 14, members of Aripeka Elks Lodge #2520 laid 1,060 wreaths on the graves of veterans at Grace Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Hudson, Fla. Members collected donations and held a spaghetti dinner fundraiser and blind auction to purchase the wreaths. Wreaths Across America provided one wreath for every two that were purchased. There were 300 members, community members and students from Hudson High School ROTC who gathered for a formal ceremony.

Zephyrhills #2731

The Veterans Committee from Zephyrhills Elks Lodge #2731 donated various coffees worth $1,200 to James A. Haley Veterans Hospital in Tampa, Fla., Oct. 19. The coffee will be used in the Spinal Cord Department and Rehab Department for veterans in rehab or spinal cord recovery.

From Oct. 11 through Dec. 28, Zephyrhills Lodge furnished the homes of 16 more veterans – Juan Velez, James Esser, Jeff Couchman, Tom Hudson, Jessie Page, Raymond McDilda, Mike Hanley, Greg Dorset, Bob Lewis, David Clark, Brian Cade, Herbert Jennings, William Anderson, Anthony Givens, Orlando Houston, and Delroy and Jeanene and their 2-year-old son, Jamie – bringing their total to 28. The typical household items given to the veterans include a dining table and chairs, sofa, chairs, TV, nightstand, lamps, coffee maker, pots and pans, dishes and silverware, towel sets, and bed and bedding. The gifts are usually delivered by members PER Ken Fabiani (Veterans chairman), Tom Pete, Steve Czerneski and Dave Crotty.

SOUTHEAST CENTRAL DISTRICT

Viera #2817

Viera Elks Lodge #2817 continued their support of Operation Shoe Box whose goal is to provide practical support to American troops deployed overseas and those returning home by providing care packages and letters of encouragement as well as supplies for veterans who are homeless. On Dec. 13, the annual soups, stews and chowders competition held at the lodge raised $182 for the organization.

Viera Elks Lodge #2817 purchased two iPad Pro tablets for Operation Shoe Box and a gratitude grant. The Lodge raised $182 for the organization.

CENTRAL DISTRICT

Largo #2159

On Nov. 4, Largo Elks Lodge members Jeanne Reinhart, PDD and Rudy Fontane delivered the lodge’s 30th Welcome Home Kit, a program sponsored by the Elks National Veterans Service, to Nathan Witt, Chief of Voluntary Service at Bay Pines VA Healthcare System in St. Petersburg, Fla. Some items included were kitchen utensils, dishes, a coffee maker, bed linens, towels, a clock radio, a lamp, light bulbs, batteries and dishes.

Thanks to Largo Lodge, the veterans at Largo Liberty Manor enjoyed a holiday dinner of steak, the typical household items given to the veterans include a dining table and chairs, sofa, chairs, TV, nightstand, lamps, coffee maker, pots and pans, dishes and silverware, towel sets, and bed and bedding. The gifts are usually delivered by members PER Ken Fabiani (Veterans chairman), Tom Pete, Steve Czerneski and Dave Crotty.

Largo Lodge received the Elks National Foundation Impact Grant to enhance the lives of residents at Liberty Manor in Largo, Fla. The lodge had two air conditioning units, solar film on all the windows and a patio installed. They purchased a new grill and held monthly picnics as well as special events for Veterans Day and Christmas. David Lindsay, a member of Brandon Lodge and spouse of Liberty Manor’s CEO, Connie Lindsay, installed the air conditioners along with his associates. Florida Wrapz Inc. from Indian Rocks Beach, Fla., donated the labor to install the solar film throughout the facility. Patio pavers were installed by Ed Cabana, PER Sonja Lopez, PDD Jeanne Reinhart, and three community service workers – Paul, Cody and Andre. Their Christmas party was Dec. 14 and a gift bag with sheets, pillows, personal hygiene items, cookies, socks and much more was given to each surprised and appreciative resident. Additional renovations included a new flag pole in the front yard after it had been knocked down by a car. It was installed by Ed Cabana, Janet Kingsley, and Ron Johnston and included a light at the top. They also purchased two rocking chairs for the patio. Members take turns cooking weekly meals. With several grants being used at Liberty Manor, members have developed friendships with the residents. One resident even said, “You can visit us without always bringing gifts.”

St. Petersburg #1224

On Oct. 26, St. Petersburg Elks Lodge #1224 held their annual USA show and veterans appreciation dinner. The show was a full-scale patriotic event paying tribute to our military. Fred Wall, 94, from Largo Lodge #2159, was the oldest veteran present. He served both the Atlantic and the Pacific Theatre during World War II as a Seaman 1st Class in the Navy and had the honor of cutting the cake representing all military branches. Representing the youngest veteran was Amy Evans, 50, U.S. Air Force. Proceeds will benefit C.W. Bill Young VAMC. Present were eight veterans who participated in the National Golden Age Games held in Anchorage, Alaska, June 5-10. Proceeds from 2018’s USA show sponsored these veterans’ attendance at the games.

St. Petersburg Lodge donated $5,000 to Historic Programs to take veterans who have never been able to visit the national memorials in Washington, D.C. Parades and ceremonies were held during their visit Nov. 7-10. Forty Elks veterans (two WWII, two Korea, 36 Vietnam) and 13 caregivers attended these
events from the following districts – NW, NC, E, C, SE, WC, SW, SSW, SE, and SSE – and lodges – Aripeka, Crestview, Kissimmee, Lakewood Ranch-Sarasota, Largo, Naples, Ocala, Punta Gorda, West Palm Beach, St. Petersburg, Stuart-Jensen, Tampa, and Zephyrhills. The Elks provided a veteran speaker for each war. VPAL Rudy Masi Sr. spoke on behalf of the Florida State Elks Association. The donation paid all the expenses of three veterans including accommodations, air fare, memorial visits and meals.

On Dec. 9, several St. Petersburg Lodge members delivered hundreds of Christmas ornaments donated by various lodges and organizations to all those hospitalized at C.W. Bill Young VAMC. Also on hand were Santa Claus and Majik the Elf (community volunteers). The ornaments were secondary; the real gift was spending time with the veterans. Pictured are Exalted Ruler, Dawn Elaine Lieber; Liz Ramburg; Santa Claus (Charlie Cox); Johnny Miller, VAVS Deputy Representative; and Majik the Elf (Kim Cox).

**SOUTHWEST CENTRAL DISTRICT**

**East Polk #2882**

On Nov. 13, East Polk Elks Lodge #2882 hosted a Christmas luncheon Dec. 18 for 33 veterans and their caregivers. The guests came from Fairway Pines, Sunny Hills and the Palms. Santa and Mrs. Claus (non-members Robert and Nancy Yearicks who attend this event each year) presented them with gifts.

**Sebring #1529**

On Nov. 9, the N.U.B.S. (Never Underestimate Brave Students) of Oneo Elementary School along with Manasota Elks and N.U.B.S. community service co-advisors, Marie Mueller and Dawn Riggsbee, went to Bay Pines VA Medical Center in St. Petersburg, Fla., to deliver lap blankets to the veterans. The blankets were made by the N.U.B.S. members with fleece fabric purchased from the lodge’s Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant. They had a pizza party and the N.U.B.S. members helped the 48 veterans with their lunches, played games, sang, and enjoyed talking with the veterans. They received thank you letters from the Bay Pines staff who said how much the veterans enjoyed the N.U.B.S. visit and their lap blankets. Pictured with the N.U.B.S. members are Dawn Riggsbee, co-advisor, and Manasota Lodge members Stephanie Lund; Pam McDowell, Exalted Ruler; Diane Davis, Jim Kollath; Ken Davis, PDD; and Marie Mueller, member and co-advisor. Not pictured is Jim Klocke.

**Plant City #1727**

On Nov. 10, Plant City Elks Lodge #1727 held their annual picnic Nov. 10 at Bay Pines Medical Center. A lunch of hot dogs, hamburgers, barbecue chicken, potato salad, baked beans, coleslaw, watermelon, and chocolate cookies was served to 156 veterans and their families. Jim & Steve Pops to Polkas donated their time to entertain everyone. All seven district lodges participated.

**SOUTHWEST DISTRICT**

**Manasota #2734**

On Nov. 11, Sarasota South Elks Lodge #2495 held a veterans’ appreciation dinner with 82 veterans and their family and guests. There were 149 spaghetti dinners served. Each veteran received a challenge coin representing the branch of service in which they served. The evening had three guest speakers – retired Army Col. Ben Knisley; Army Chief Warrant Officer (CW3) Todd Slaughter, whose family was assisted through the Army of Hope; and USN 1st Lt. Bernard Friedland, the oldest veteran in the room at 92. Friedland began serving in World War II when he was 17 years old as a USN Seaman 3rd Class crossing the English Channel in an attack transport during the invasion of Europe. He later served in
the Korean War and was one of the last standing executive officers of a MASH unit. Twelve years later he served in the Vietnam War. His powerful message was that we have to take time to teach children the history of America that is not being taught in schools. Pictured are Exalted Ruler, Richard Bouchard; Friedland; Knisley and Slaughter.

Venice-Nokomis #1854

On Nov. 20, Venice-Nokomis Elks Lodge #1854 hosted 45 veterans for lunch using their Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant. The veterans were from local assisted living facility Ashton Gardens. Pictured is 103-year-old veteran Mr. Vogel with his wife. The lodge also delivered $500 in comfort pack items Dec. 12 to the VA Medical Center Nursing Home using the same grant.

Punta Gorda Lodge #2606

Punta Gorda Lodge sent a group of veterans including eight lodge members to Washington, D.C., Nov. 8-10 as part of the Parade of Heroes. The lodge raised $6,825 to help defray expenses.

Punta Gorda Lodge hosts monthly luncheons at the lodge for 12 residents of the Douglas T. Jacobson Veterans Home. They also serve meals to 25 veterans at Veterans Village, a transitional housing program for veterans in Punta Gorda who are homeless.

On Dec. 5, the Punta Gorda Lodge Past Exalted Rulers Association held their annual Christmas party. A monetary collection took place with a total of $260 collected and donated to the Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans Home’s Recreation Fund.

SOUTH SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Fort Myers #1288

On Nov. 10, several veterans who are members of Fort Myers Elks Lodge #1288 rode in the Fort Myers Veterans Day parade in two cars and a truck that pulled an Elks drug trailer. Pictured are Al Roehr; Dan Birt; Jack Hoagland, PER; Dick Conley, District Deputy; and Kawelo Makaneole, PER.

Jupiter #2469

On Nov. 2, Jupiter Elks Lodge members and guests along with local scouts welcomed and hosted a bus-full of veterans from a local VA for an annual Thanksgiving luncheon. Members cooked a traditional dinner that was served by the scouts. After lunch, veterans enjoyed two rounds of Elk races and each went home with a goody bag and a homemade quilt made by Hibiscus Quilt Guild of South Florida to keep them warm.

Pompano Beach #1898

On Nov. 2 at the District Deputy visitation at Oakland Park Lodge, Frank Sellers of Pompano Beach Elks Lodge #1898 provided laundry baskets to each lodge and challenged them to fill them with food to be delivered to the nearest veterans’ center. He and PDD Charlotte Burrie delivered the baskets to Trudis Perez, Director of Veterans’ Services at the Pompano Beach Veterans Center.

Lake Okeechobee #2871

Lake Okeechobee Elks Lodge #2871 used their Elks National Foundation Impact Grant for their fifth veterans’ stand down. Supplies were given before Christmas to local veterans in need.

SOUTH SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

Boca Raton #2166

Boca Raton Elks Lodge #2166 held its annual Christmas party Dec. 14. Raffles were held and $300 was used to purchase canteen tickets for the residents in the Palm Beach Veterans’ Hospital. The lodge obtained 200 decks of playing cards for veterans, and the Boca Raton Firefighters’ Benevolence Association donated 60 packages of socks to be distributed to the Miami Veterans’ Hospital. Pictured are lodge Veterans’ chairman, Rick Haradon; Boca Raton Firefighter/Paramedic Chief and lodge member, Aaron Oatley; Exalted Ruler, Tito Young; Boca Raton Firefighter/Paramedic, Alex Kennedy; and VAVS representative to the Miami VA Hospital, Billy Green.
Lodge Planning Calendar

February 2020

FyT:
February is Harry-Anna Trust Fund Month

2/6-8 • February Quarterly – FEYC – Umatilla, Fla.
2/7 • Hope Scholarship applications judged
2/8 • Van Duren Scholarship applications judged
2/11 • Van Duren Scholarship winners announced
2/15 • FSEA announces winner of FSEA Drug Awareness
postcard contest
• FSEA announces winner of FSEA Drug Awareness
tests
• State Hoop Shoot – FEYC – Umatilla, Fla.
2/17 • HOPE Scholarship winners announced
2/26-28 • Georgia midwinter meeting – TBD

Deadlines:
2/1 • By 11:59 a.m., Central Time – GL to receive ENF
Legacy Scholarship applications
2/25 • State Chairman to complete judging of received
ENF-MVS Scholarship applications and forward to
GL
2/28 • District Americaism Chairman to submit top
three essays to Division to State Americaism
Chairman
• State Veterans Chairman to submit selection of
Male and Female Veteran Volunteer of the Year to
NVSC

Due Dates for Non-Grand Lodge Reports & Taxes:

2/17 • 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
2/19 • 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 for payments other than to independent
contractors (if paper filing, see 3/1/31 for
electronic filing)

Statutes:
• February – Nominations and election of officers
($3.080, $3.090)
• February – Local lodge directory information filed
through CLMS2web ($3.090)

State President’s Visits:
2/21-22 • Southwest Central District – Arcadia #1524

March 2020

FyT:
3/1-15 • Officer Training – Orlando World Center Marriott
3/15 • FSEA announces winners of FSEA Americaism
essay contest on FSEA website
• FSEA announces winners of FSEA Best Lodge
Bulletin contest on FSEA website
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 FSEA Lodge Scrapbook
contest to State Lodge Activities Vice Chairman

Notes for Due Dates for Non-Grand Lodge Reports & Taxes:
Florida sales taxes, if filed and paid by paper, are due the
30th 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. Each month’s due date
reflected.
Quarterly reemployment tax returns (Form RT-6), if filed
on paper, are due the last day of April, July, October, and
January. If electronic filing is required, the due dates are
reflected.
Depository 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 utilized by your Lodge. If you have any questions
about payment, please contact enf.elks.org/volunteers.

April 2020

FyT:
4/1 • ENF Certificates Chair to register themselves
every year through the ENF Fundraising Chairs
homepage: enf.elks.org/volunteers
• ENF Learning Center is available to all registered ENF
Fundraising Chairmen upon online registration
• ENF Chair Certification guidelines can be viewed at
enf.elks.org/volunteers
4/4-5 • State Golf Tournament – Sebring, Fla.
4/15 • ENF MVS & Legacy Scholarship winners posted
• FSEA announces winner of FSEA Americanism
Lodger
4/18 • Harry-Anna Trust Unmasking Autism Gala of Hope –
St. Petersburg, Fla. – Hilton Carillon
• Hoop Shoot finals – Chicago
4/22-24 • Spring Trust Fund Trustee Seminar – FEYC –
Umatilla, Fla.
4/26-28 • State Softball Tournament – DeLand, Fla.

Deadlines:
3/15 • Lodges to submit entries for GL Contest “A” – State
All-American Lodge to DDGER, then to State Lodge
Activities Chairman postmarked by 4/1
3/31 • Lodges to update online Roster of Lodges information
4/1 • State Drug Awareness Chairman to submit state
winning essay and poster to GL National DAP Director
• State Lodge Activities Chairman to receive from
DDGERs GL Contest “A” – State All-American Lodge
• ENF Gratitude Grant applications available on GL
website to lodges that have met the prior year GER
giving goal (as of 3/31/20)
• ENF Beacon, Freedom, Promise, and Spotlight
Grant applications and Impact Grant intent to apply
available on GL website
4/3 • District VPs to submit District Chairmen to FSEA Secretary
4/10 • State convention hospitality room reservations through FSEA
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 Fraternal Committee Member
4/17 • Deadline to order plaques through FSEA for
presentation at state convention
• District VPs to return unsold draw tickets to FSEA
4/20 • Deadline to reserve a room for state convention at
Rosen Centre in Orlando, Fla.
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 names of deceased members
(April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020) for the state
conversion 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.)
4/17 • 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 (U.S. Mail)
• 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 – Apportion legislative committees ($13,020)
• April – Secretary Report to lodge ($12,050)
• April – Trustee Report and Budget to lodge ($12,070)
• April – Lodges to request GER Special Citation for lodges
with contributions to ENF Americanism
• Report due with dues payment to GL May 1
($16,010 – Subject to $100 Fine)
SAVE THE DATE

2nd Annual

UNMASKING AUTISM GALA

An Evening Under the Stars

presented by

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2020
6-11 p.m.

CARILLON HILTON . 950 LAKE CARILLON DRIVE . ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33716

For more information, please contact Dan Masi at 352-805-0823 or visit www.UnmaskingAutism.com.