Dear Friends:

We welcome Past Grand Exalted Ruler James M. McQuillan and Karen to our Mid Year Convention in Orlando. Jim and Karen visited with us several years ago and we are delighted to have them return.

While reading a number of the Lodge bulletins since the convention in Charlotte, I note that there appears to be some confusion concerning the results of the voting on the two resolutions submitted by the Florida Elks.

After a number of years of strong support (and with persistence and persuasion by all of you), the resolution allowing a degree team for the rendition of the initiatory ritual was passed by a narrow margin. The resolution that would allow the degree team (if the Lodge had approved the use of a degree team by bylaw amendment) to perform the initiatory ritual upon the official visit of the District Deputy was defeated by a narrow margin.

Of course the impetus for these Resolutions was to assure that the incoming members are impressed by a beautiful ritual.

Where are we?

If your Lodge members felt the initiatory ritual rendition could be much improved and more impressive, you have the opportunity to amend your bylaws and provide that a degree team (not necessarily composed of present officers) be employed. Any Lodge officer has a right to be part of that team in his/her station.

Of course the impetus for these Resolutions was to assure that the incoming members are impressed by a beautiful ritual.

Where are we?

If your Lodge members felt the initiatory ritual rendition could be much improved and more impressive, you have the opportunity to amend your bylaws and provide that a degree team (not necessarily composed of present officers) be employed. Any Lodge officer has a right to be part of that team in his/her station.

If you decide on a degree team and use it for the regular initiations, then at the visit of the District Deputy, I suggest you use a current member as the candidate. That way all of your incom-
Since my last message we have made several more visitations. We visited the South District and were hosted on Friday evening by Marathon Lodge. On Saturday we enjoyed lunch at the Green Turtle Restaurant and had conch chowder and conch fritters followed by key lime pie. Saturday evening the official visit was held at the Florida Keys Lodge.

I received a proclamation from the mayor of Key West making me a Key West Conch.

We then visited the East Central District. On Friday evening we were hosted by New Smyrna Beach Lodge for dinner. We then had a tour of their new Lodge building which is beautiful. On Saturday we enjoyed a cruise on the St. Johns River followed by the official visit that evening at Deland Lodge.

Our next visit was to the Southeast District. We were hosted on Friday evening for dinner by West Palm Beach Lodge. On Saturday we toured the Bert Reynolds Museum followed by a tour on the Manatee Queen up the Intercoastal Waterway to see some of the homes of the rich and famous. Saturday evening our official visit was held at Jupiter Lodge. They also have a beautiful new lodge facility.

We then visited the West Central District. Friday evening we had dinner at the Dunedin/Clearwater Lodge followed by the West Central District PER Association meeting. Dunedin/Clearwater Lodge also has a beautiful new lodge facility. Saturday we toured the Pasco Safety Town followed by lunch at Tarpon Springs Lodge.

Saturday evening our official visit was held at New Port Richey Lodge where their theme was camping. Their meal included beans and franks and smores for dessert. The district made a large donation of craft supplies to the Florida Elks Youth Camp.

We then headed northwest for our next visit to the Northwest District. Friday evening we were hosted by Destin Lodge for dinner. On Saturday we toured the Air Force Armament Museum followed by lunch at Twin Cities Lodge. Saturday evening our official visit was held at Fort Walton Lodge.

Our next visit was to the Southeast Central District. Friday evening we were hosted by Vero Beach Lodge for dinner. On Saturday we had breakfast at Sebastian Lodge. We then headed to the Sebastian River where we boarded the River Queen for a cruise. Following the cruise we went back to Sebastian Lodge for lunch with Boy Scout Troop 599 and Cub Scout Pack 568, both sponsored by the Lodge. Saturday evening Sebastian Lodge hosted the official visit.

We have enjoyed meeting and spending time with the members of each district as well as sharing the programs of the Florida State Elks Association.

Mid-year is upon us and I hope all is going well at all lodges throughout our great state. I am looking forward to hearing the reports at our Mid-year Convention in Orlando of our accomplishments to date.

As you are aware our goal this year is to raise $1,000,000.00 for our Harry-Anna Trust Fund. We will need all the lodges throughout our state to help in achieving this goal. I hope that your Lodge has planned a special function or activity to raise money for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. Now is the time if you have not already done so.

By working together we can continue to “Make a Difference in a Child’s Life.” Thank you for your support.
A MESSAGE FROM THE STATE SECRETARY

Carl T. Seibert, PDD

Our August Quarterly meetings were held at the Youth Camp August 16th - 18th and as always, the meetings were well attended and very informative. Thank you to all who attended! We were once again fortunate to have the Past State Presidents host a barbecue on Friday night. We had a great crowd and it was enjoyed by all.

February 2008 meetings will be held at the Youth Camp the 8th & 9th. It is recommended that reservations for the February meetings be made early as room availability is always limited in the Umatilla area during that time of the year. A list of area hotels can be found at our website www.flels org.

In early October, I was privileged to attend the annual conference of the Florida Ladies of Elks (FLOE). This conference recognized the ladies’ achievements over the prior year, a highlight of which was their never-ending support of our major projects. During 2006/2007 our Ladies Organizations donated over $153,000 to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund and our major projects! Congratulations go to FLOE State President Dolores Casella and her officers for a great year, and best wishes are given for an even better year to incoming 2007/2008 State President Beverly Messerschmidt and her officer team! Ladies, we thank you!

The cutoff date for reservations for the Mid-year Convention has now passed and I am happy to report that we exceeded the number of rooms we had reserved for this event. The response for pre-registration for name badges was tremendous and I thank everyone who completed the pre-registration process. The convention will be held November 8-10, 2007 at the Wyndham Orlando Resort.

The 2008 State Convention will be held once again at Disney’s Coronado Springs Resort May 21-24. More information on the State Convention will be available in late December/January.

Speaking of conventions, plans are now underway for the 2008 Grand Lodge Convention in Anaheim, California July 6-10. Once our hotel assignment is made, Tom Elmore and I will journey to Anaheim to make the arrangements for our delegation. As more details become available they will be provided.

The Trust Fund Report for the six months ended September 30, 2007 was posted on the web site. Elsewhere in this publication you will find a list of those persons who have completed the purchase of a gold or silver certificate since our last report. We are well on our way to meeting our State President’s per-capita goal for this year! Keep up the great work!

Now that we are at the halfway point for the year, all Lodges should be well on their way to at least meeting one half of the Lodge’s “Magic Number” membership goal! In September the State Membership Committee sent every Lodge in the state a poster with their calculated “magic number” for the year. This number is the total of new members needed to be obtained through initiation, transfers in, and reinstatements. By meeting this number it should offset the number of members your Lodge is projected to lose this year based on statewide averages. If every Lodge meets or exceeds their “magic number” goal for the year, Florida should once again record another statewide membership gain! Do you know what your Lodge’s “Magic Number” is? Are you helping your Lodge meet this goal?

I hope you will visit our website often and that you have seen the continuing improvements that are being made to it. My thanks go to our Webmaster Jerry Mills who has been working so hard to accommodate every suggestion and request that comes in. Believe it or not, many of the additions and modifications to the website occur as a result of suggestions made by our members! If you haven’t visited lately, please take a look and keep your suggestions coming! The website address is www.flels.org.

The office of the Florida State Elks Association is here to serve our association and its members. If at any time we can be of assistance or service, please don’t hesitate to contact us. My phone number is (800) 523-1673 extension 230 and the e-mail address is fsea@mpinet.net.

FLORIDA LADIES OF ELKS

Dolores L. Casella, Past President

Dear Florida Ladies of Elks and Elks,

What a year!!!!! I have not recovered from the 44th Annual FLOE Conference yet. In my estimation, it was very successful. We had 203 registered Ladies and 53 registered Guests, 248 for lunch and 159 for the banquet. From beginning to end it was magnificently prepared and presented due in total to the hard and dedicated work of all the District Committees and Ladies involved in preparation and presentation. I cannot believe how excellent the hotel was from beginning to end with good service and good food. The finale was the President’s Banquet where we had great food, a wonderful band, and a marvelous time.

Advisory Board Audit Committee Chairlady Carole Weston gave the Audit Report for 2005-06 that found no major discrepancies and complimented the then Treasure, Joan Fritz, on a job well done. Carole gave her “365” Club report and said that $13,076.82 was donated this year by the Lodges to the “365” Club. She also announced there is now enough money to purchase another therapy van from the “365” Club.

By-Law Committee Chairlady, PSP Betty Pickenpaugh, presented a Proposed By-Law Amendment that changed the mileage rate in Expenses, Section 3, Item (c) from $0.24 to $0.45 per mile. The Amendment was passed.

FYEY Director, Lynn Warburton, PDD, gave his report and passed out awards. The Most Money Donated plaques went to 1st Place, Cape Coral, 2nd Place, Live Oak and 3rd Place, Naples. The Most Children to Camp plaques went to 1st Place, Punta Gorda, and 2nd Place, Cape Coral. Good job Ladies.

A Parlimentarian Workshop presented by FLOE Past Presidents Ben Brown, Jr., PSP-PGIG, speaking was both enlightening and informative.

We had a special treat during our luncheon when FSEA Organist, Ed Deresh, PDD, played for us. He also kept us on key in the morning singing “God Bless America”.

The afternoon session began with a very beautiful and moving Memorial Service presented by the West Central District. It was highlighted by FSEA Organist, Ed Deresh, PDD, playing and Gail Sansoussi and PSP R. Elizabeth Wise singing.

The guest speaker this year was Honorable John M. Griesbaum who gave a dynamic talk about Florida’s abused, abandoned, and neglected children, and the Florida Juvenile Dependency Court. He mesmerized his audience and received a standing ovation when he closed his speech.

FECTS Administrator, Ben Brown, Jr., PSP-PGIG, gave his report and handed out awards. The plaques for Largest Amount Donated award went to Punta Gorda Elkettes for donating $20,850; 2nd went to Eustis Anna Miller Circle for donating $7,844. The Largest Per Capita plaque went to South Miami Coral Gables which has 12 Ladies who donated $2,000 or $166.00 per member. The Traveling Trophy for the Ladies who have donated the most money went to Punta Gorda Elkettes.

State Chairman of Ladies Organizations, Richard Lee, PER, gave his report and gave out the Conference Awards. The Ladies had Total Hours 306,654, Total Miles 563,051 and Total Money $554,797 for a total impact in Florida of $6,582,771. The Membership Plaque for the highest percentage in attendance at the Conference was given to Live Oak, the Mileage Plaque for the most miles traveled to Conference was given to Punta Gorda, the Attendance Plaque for the highest number of ladies present in the room was given to Punta Gorda, and the Yearbook Plaques were given to 1st Place Miami, 2nd Place Ocala and 3rd Place Melbourne. The engraved traveling trophy for the largest amount of money donated was won again this year by the South Southwest District. Congratulations to you all.

PSP Lee Weigel gave out the Craft Room Awards: 1st Place to Ocala, 2nd Place to Miami and 3rd Place to West Central District. PSP R. Elizabeth Wise gave out Program Booklet Awards: Most Ads was won by Punta Gorda and Largest Boosters was won by Fort Pierce. PSP Wise then read the beautiful poem which she wrote for the Program Book this year, “The Installation Dance.”

Thanks again go to everyone involved in this most wonderful Conference.

FLOE Continued on Page 15
## FLORIDA LADIES OF ELKS DONATIONS TO FLORIDA ELKS CHARITIES, TRUST FUND AND FLORIDA ELKS CHILDREN’S THERAPY SERVICES*** & FLORIDA ELKS YOUTH CAMP**

The following donations are from the period April 1, 2006 through March 31, 2007 and include contributions to the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services, Youth Camp, Trust Fund and Elks Charities.

A combined total of $119,245.87 was donated to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund, Elks Charities and the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services***.

Another $37,938.00 was donated to the Florida Elks Youth Camp**.

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## NORTHCENTRAL DISTRICT | $ |
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Florida Ladies of Elks $3,879.78

**GRAND TOTAL OF 161,063.65**

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Lee Weigle, Senior Delegate from Miami, accepts the award for Most Money Per Capita for the South Miami/Coral Gables Shels and later received the Yearbook First Place Award for Miami Elkettes 948.

Bess Still, left, and Kathryn Burroughs, right, of Cape Coral Ladies accept awards from Lynn Warburton for Most Money ($3,700) to Florida Elks Youth Camp for sending the Second Most Campers.
Dear Elks:

I hope you will take the opportunity to read the attached letter from the parent of a patient being treated by one of our therapists. As you read this letter it is important to keep in mind that without the support of the Elks of Florida these good works could not be accomplished. Our patients and staff extend their most sincere appreciation for all you do to support this most necessary charity.

To: Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services

I am writing a letter of thanks and appreciation on behalf of my child and my family. My son, Adam, has been receiving therapy through your organization. Without the help of the Florida Elks my son would be without the much needed therapy he has been receiving by Mrs. Elizabeth Maina. She has been the most wonderful asset to my son and me. She has not only been very informative but very patient with Adam as he does not take change of any kind very well.

Just to give you a little history and let you know, Adam had a very rough start in life. He has had to face so many challenges in his short five years of life. He was born premature weighing only three pounds at birth with a long extensive NICU stay and having to call the hospital home for the first three years of his life. Adam never experienced a lot outside of a hospital before age three due to pulmonary, digestive, immune system, and physical/neurological issues.

Just when we thought we were coming home to stay, it was always false hope; something always seemed to happen and we ended up back for another hospital stay. Adam was diagnosed with Autism at age two and a half. Along with all the other struggles we had been through, this was really hard to accept, but we knew in our hearts something wasn’t right. We have worked with Adam to try to overcome some of the many battles he has faced and I do not regret anything that we have tried. Some things have been difficult but well worth the outcome!

I had a hard time seeing him struggle over just the little things most people take for granted. Adam was diagnosed around six months of age with failure to thrive due to feeding issues and a pulmonary birth defect. At this time he was about six pounds and I was doing everything possible to help him. They had informed me that he needed a trachea and feeding tube to help sustain him. I was against it and was willing to try anything to avoid having to go through this drastic measure. I went to see a nutritionist to help me with this. We increased his calories and I basically was getting formula down him with a syringe because he did not drink well from a bottle.

I kept a journal of his intake and was lucky to get 10 ounces down him in a day. This was trying almost every hour to get formula down him with sleeping very little. The only break I did get was during his multiple hospital stays because I had nurses who would help since the family was afraid to feed him due to aspiration.

The specialist told me that if he was gaining some weight and it was steady that we could avoid the medical interventions, so it was up to me to keep this going! With sleepless days and nights I did it. We avoided what I feared the most. At one year he weighed 13 pounds which was really small to most people but was a huge accomplishment for Adam. We had overcome the worst at that point. Then I was having to deal with the realization of what the doctors had told me months prior, which was Adam may not ever walk or talk and they were not sure of his outcome.

Adam still had very little muscle tone, avoided any eye contact, and had feeding issues and many other problems we were dealing with. I wanted to give him every opportunity to get through all of this and I put in the back of my mind the outcome of what doctors had been telling me. I was determined that my child would be as great as he could be no matter what! We worked with him through different therapies that did help but we could no longer afford due to my husband’s health insurance changing. I felt so discouraged because I did not know where to turn until I talked to a good friend of mine who has been in my child’s life since birth. I met this wonderful lady in NICU who has helped me in so many ways I would not be able to even remember all of them.

This wonderful lady’s name is Lane and she has been one of the best assets in my child’s life. She gave me the information about the Florida Elks Therapy Services and I checked into it. I then met the most wonderful therapist who has helped my child in so many ways and myself as well. I have learned more from her than I could even begin to list. Adam has grown to love her and enjoys seeing her come! This is by far the best therapy service he has ever received!!!!

Not only does she work with Adam but she also shows me what I should be doing and how to help improve the things that I was previously doing! No one has been more patient and willing to explain and listen to Adam as well as myself! Mrs. Elizabeth is Adam’s angel. She has recently introduced music therapy to Adam, which I was a little skeptical of at first, but I have seen the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Adam at age five is still in diapers and has never initiated going to use the potty on his own. We have tried to take him on a schedule, but it was pretty much a hit or miss on that note. He never really knew when he had to go. Since starting this new therapy with him we have seen some extreme changes. He has asked to go potty which was the best present anyone could have given to me because he had never asked to go before. We have good days and bad days, but overall I am just happy that he is even aware that this is part of being a big boy!

We have just recently taken a family vacation to visit some really good friends who live close to Disney in Orlando. They invited us to go to Disney since they could get us a pass to get in for no charge. Most people would be excited to go, but I was very hesitant because of Adam. He had never been anywhere like this and I wasn’t sure how he would react. Since it was practically free I decided we would give it a try. I am so glad I did. He did very well. This was the best trip we had ever taken with him. He did not lose control nor did he hold back like he normally would do in this kind of environment. He also got into a swimming pool for the first time ever. He has always been afraid of pools. I just cried when I saw him want to go and when I saw his little eyes light up with amazement at Disney. No words could ever describe how this made me feel. We even stayed for the parade and fireworks which we would have never even attempted to do before because of Adam’s fear for all of this. I know in my heart this is from the music therapy he is getting and it would not have been possible without the help of the Elks!

I felt like I needed to let you know how much my family appreciates the gift that you have given my child and how much it means to us! If I were rich I would owe you everything that I own. I am not, but I hope letting you know the gratitude of what you have given to us is worth everything. Thank you so much Elks and Mrs. Elizabeth Maina for giving my son the best gift he could ever receive.

From Adam’s Mom

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Elks National Home

Tom Elmore, PGELDK

As we prepare for the winter season and the holidays it seems only a few days since our last visit to the Elks National Home Retirement Center to visit our Florida residents who have decided to live the rest of their lives at a beautiful facility where everyone is an Elk with common goals for our Order. We all look forward to being together for another Christmas Season.

It has been an honor to represent the state of Florida as the Coordinator for the best kept secret in Elkdom. Since 1992 I have looked forward to the Christmas holidays when I take gifts and news to all Florida residents. When we have our meeting on Friday morning it is a time when we see the appreciation and thanks to all Florida Elks in the eyes of those we treasure. The fruit has been purchased, the Florida Ladies of Elks have given me stockings they have prepared, and others have given funds or items of interest to be delivered at this special time. On Friday evening when the lights are turned on it is truly the beginning of the Christmas Season in Bedford Virginia.

We are asking for participation in the Christmas Card program as well as gifts of money for the recreation fund that is used all year to entertain our residents. If you have never been to the home in Bedford you owe yourself a treat, and while in Bedford you can also visit the D-Day Memorial that pays tribute to those who have given time and life so that we may enjoy the freedom we enjoy today.

I would encourage your participation and prayers not only for all Elks and their families but also for our service personnel who are giving of themselves on our behalf. Think about what a great country and fraternal organization we have, working together as one family with true understanding of our principles; we can and will have a wonderful future.

May God Bless each of you and your families with good health, happiness and a happy Holiday Season.
Daytona Beach Lodge 1141

Summer fun at our Youth Camp was had by Tyson West who experienced a week of fun and excitement. Tyson sent a letter of appreciation for giving him the opportunity to attend the camp. He is the grandson of Roy & Peggy Belanger, members of the Lodge. Linda Behnke and Phil and Linda Engstrom helped put on “The Knights of Doo Wop” on August 11, with music of the 50s and 60s for 200 members and their guests. East Central District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Stan Suess and his lovely wife, Mary, also attended the event.

The Public Relations Committee held a school supply drive on Friday, August 17 delivering school supplies to the Bonner Elementary, Palm Terrace Elementary, and Westside Elementary schools.

Lecturing Knight Linda Behnke has organized a first-time East Central District Ride for Kids Poker Run to raise money for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. Several Lodges in the District have lent their support for this worthwhile event along with the Corvette Club.

Deland Lodge 1463

The Lodge held a “Green Games” in August, whereby members and guests enjoyed a round of golf and horseshoes. The Lodge was honored and privileged to receive accolades from several Lodges in the District have lent their support for this worthwhile event along with the Corvette Club.

Deland Veterans’ Service Program Chairperson Rick Phelps, along with volunteers every month, visit the Emory L. Bennett Veterans Home where they play bingo with the residents and serve refreshments.

There is a donation box in the Lodge where members can donate personal items, games, puzzles, books, white socks, and lap blankets. These items are usually given to the veterans at the home around Christmas time.

Merritt Island Lodge 2650

The Lodge donated over 300 pairs of brand new socks and several dozen new T-shirts to the VA Hospital in Orlando. Lidia Skibba, daughter of Kathy and ER Nick Skibba, prepared a special dinner to raise money for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. Lidia and her school mate, Dallas, served a delicious pork dinner. Attending the special dinner were PSDVP Sonny Armstrong; EC DDGER Stanley Suess and his wife, Mary; PSP Mike Phillips and his lovely wife, Kathy; PDDGER John Lesko and his lovely wife, Marcie; JER David Wiggin and his lovely wife, Deanna; and Mary Ann Bucci, ECD Reporter. She raised over $1,000.

I was born on April 26, 1938 in new Britain CT. I attended school in new Britain and also the University of Maryland while stationed overseas.

I served 23 years in the military both active and reserve. I am also a retired manager from the U.S. postal service and was an auxiliary state trooper with the Connecticut State Police Dept.

I joined the New Britain CT Lodge 957 in 1973 and served on their house committee for 15 years. I transferred to Deltona Lodge 2739 in 1995 and was elected house committee chairman. I have received Elk of the Year and served Tiler, Inner Guard, Exalted Ruler for the term 1998-1999. I was Officer of the Year for 1999-2000. I have served as ECD Chairman for Lodge Activities for 2 terms, Americanism, Credentials and New Lodges. I served the State Association as State Chairman for Resolutions in 2000. I have served as Trustee, Chairman of the Trustee’s and Secretary of the Lodge. I was the District Esquire to the District Deputy 2003-2004 and District Auditor for the ECD. I was Vice President if the East Central District 2005-2006.

I am a member of the Marine Corp League, Marine Corp Assoc, American Legion, Amvets, DAV, Viet Nam Vets Assoc, NCOA, National Assoc of Postal Supervisors and the Connecticut State Police Academy Alumni Assoc.

I am married to the former Mary L. Luppino of New Britain CT who is also a member of Lodge 2739 and we have two children, Maureen and Jeff. We also have two grandchildren, Molly and Dylan. Jeff is also a member of Lodge 957.

I am a volunteer firearms instructor & assistant armorer with the Volusia County Sheriffs Dept.

Ormond Beach Lodge 2193

The Lodge held a Christmas in July for veterans and raised $520.

The Ladies Auxiliary has established an Adopt-A-Platoon program, chaired by Cecie Dougherty and Rosalie Watts, mailing boxes of food, clothing, games, and toiletry items to our veterans overseas with the help of a special Elk angel who takes care of all the postage for all the mailings.

Palm Coast Lodge 2709

The Flag Day ceremony was attended by 125 members and guests as well as the Flagler County Marine Corp League #876. The response was given by Col. Jack Howell, also an Elk. Past presidents and officers of the Ladies Auxiliary presented the flags along with Boy Scout Troop #270.

Drug Awareness Chairpersons Tom Brand and John Brailsford have distributed over 2,000 pieces of material throughout Flagler County utilizing coloring books, book marks, Frisbees, pamphlets, and speakers to get the message out. They also met with School Resource Deputy Calvin Grant at the Sheriff’s Office to deliver more Elks Drug Awareness pamphlets.

Port Orange Lodge 2723

The Lodge held its annual 4th of July Picnic attended members and their guests feasting on hotdogs, hamburgers, salads, and desserts.

In memory of September 11th, a Freedom Walk was held in Port Orange sponsored by the AMVETS Post 911 on Sunday, September 9th Americanism Chairperson Joe Lent and his wife, Susan, attended, representing the Lodge. The Lodge is also getting ready for its annual “Port Orange Family Days” event held at the Port Orange Civic Center.

Angelo Cretella, Drug Awareness Chairperson, made arrangements for the district Drug Trailer to be there, along with handout packets of information on alcohol and drug abuse. Joe Lent, chairperson for Americanism and his wife Susan, membership Chairperson John Ingle, Jr. will be on hand giving out applications for the Elks Americanism Contest.

Sanford Lodge 1241

On October 5th, the Lodge started collecting donations for the United States Marine Corps Toys 4 Tots Drive.

Mike Prokosch, Veterans’ Services Chairperson, held a luncheon on October 21st to honor the Florida National Guard’s “B” Company, 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment. Over 80 service men and women were served a pork/chicken dinner with all the trimmings.

Titusville Lodge 2113

Titusville Lodge continues its efforts to provide goods and services to the veterans and organize a highway cleanup.

Former Marine and Lady Elk Tanya Kulik, has helped organize local Elks and merchants to send over 500 care packages to our troops in various military theaters, and a reception for the service men and women stationed in Afghanistan was held at the Lodge.

Exalted Ruler, Dave Wiggin and his lovely wife, Deanna, working with Merritt Island Elks Lodge, have established a relationship with the Brevard County School Board for Drug Awareness. The School Board agreed to distribute literature to all the schools in Brevard County. So far this year, they have distributed 44,000 pieces of literature; 4,000 bookmarks, 5,500 coloring books, 18,000 bags, 150 Drug Awareness manuals, and 120,000 red ribbons for a total of 191,500 pieces.

Very young cook at Merritt Island Lodge

Lida is shown with PSP Mike Phillips, left, and District Deputy Stan Suess, right.

New Smyrna Beach Lodge 1557

The Lodge celebrated Flag Day with the American Legion Post 285 performing a very impressive ceremony in honor of our flag. They are happy to announce the Lodge has received all its licenses and are now officially open for business. We welcome all in the District to come and visit with us. They had dedication ceremony on Saturday, Oct. 27th.
Aripeka Lodge 2520

Aripeka Lodge hosted a “Career Central Seminar” breakfast regarding hurricane preparedness for agencies in Hernando and Pasco Counties. Some of the agencies involved were Bay News 9 Chief Meteorologist, P&H County Emergency Management, and GRY Information Solutions, Inc. Approximately 60 business representatives attended the affair.

Bill Borrusch, Adopt-A-Road Chairman, and his band of 10 volunteers collected approximately 160 lbs. of trash along a two-mile stretch of SR19. The Lodge blood bank chairman, Bill Toussignant, collected six pints of blood for donation to the blood bank. Carl Dobbs, Lodge member, collected 21 boxes of golf balls for the Youth Camp.

Frieda Deane, Lodge Veterans’ Chairperson, hosted 14 veterans from Baldomero Lopez State Veterans’ Nursing Home to a delicious afternoon of hamburgers, chips, cake, and drinks. Annie and some members provided Karaoke for their entertainment. Wayne Getz, Lodge Bingo Chairman, donated $250 towards the Treats for Troops to assist with the postage needed to send packages to Iraq. The Lodge also sent $500 to Shriners and $1,000 to The American Cancer Society.

Kissimmee Lodge 1873

PER Bob Barry, Esteemed Loyal Knight and Chairman of the Public Safety Appreciation Night, sent letters to all area police and fire departments and visited each requesting their selections from their departments of who was worthy of special recognition. The Lodge hosted a dinner/dance where award winners were presented with a suitable plaque. This gave the members the opportunity to join in honoring these very special Osceola County, Kissimmee, and St. Cloud Public Safety heroes. Esteemed Lecturing Knight Fran Barry was an award presenter. She also obtained the gifts and decorated the dining room. Exalted Ruler Richard Hiemenz greeted the award winners and their families. PER Paul Daniels served as Master of Ceremonies.

A group of Elks and Elkettes visited the Veterans Health Care Center in Orlando to conduct an evening of bingo. They also took soft drinks and other gifts to the disabled veteran players who live there at the nursing facility.

West Citrus Lodge 2693

West Citrus Lodge was pleased to do its part in the collection of donations for the new Citrus County Children’s Abuse Center (named for Jessica Lunsford) during the past months. Under the supervision of Jean Marchese, Chairperson, and her group of ladies, they collected $6,531. This money was turned over to Citrus County Sheriff Jeff Dawsey by Exalted Ruler O. C. Leonard.

Through the efforts of Patrick McLaughlin, the Lodge had a Beach Party Weekend at Daytona Beach. All who attended had a great time. This weekend brought (through donations) $950 for the Elks National Foundation.
The Southeast District has been very busy since the Quarterly Meeting in August. The Jupiter Lodge hosted the State President and VPAL the following weekend. On Friday night the group was treated to a casual dinner and dance at the West Palm Beach Lodge. Saturday, Jupiter Lodge arranged a visit to the Burt Reynolds Theater and Museum followed by a cruise on the Intracoastal Waterway to view the “Rich and Famous” houses along the waterway. Dinner was held at the Jupiter Lodge with District VP, Paul Mozzocci, acting as host.

The district was very pleased to present the President, David Lake, with $5,200 worth of certificates to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. The District Chairman, Les Szirbik, PER, had the pleasure of doing the presentation. The weekend proved to be a great success. Thanks go to all those involved in the planning and carrying out of the event.

Unfortunately, the Pahokee Lodge is still not opened and they are struggling with getting the funding to advance the rebuilding of their Lodge home. Kenny Usher, PER reports they are ready to do the electrical work as soon as they can find a contractor and the insurance check comes in.

It has been a long, hard trek for them and they are to be congratulated for keeping Elksdom alive in Pahokee.

District Advisor Tom Elmore, PGEDGK, is recovering from knee replacement surgery at home. We wish him well and a speedy recovery. We also wish Pep a vacation after caring for Tom.

PDDGER Ernie Basil will be hosting a Ritual Clinic for the District at the West Palm Beach Lodge. This will hopefully help all the chair officers improve their ritual performances.

West Palm Beach Lodge will host a Flag Retiring Ritual for all Lodges in the District on November 11th at 11:00. All District Lodges will bring old flags to the Lodge and they will be disposed of properly by burning.

The program will be under the direction of District Americanism Chairman Bruce Cook, PER. This will be the day after we return from the Mid-Year Convention in Orlando.

Belle Glade and Pahokee Lodges will have a Veterans’ Affair Party in Belle Glade with veterans from the VA Hospital attending. A cruise is also being planned for veterans under the guidance of Sam Berkowitz.

SOUTH DISTRICT

North Miami Lodge 1835

North Miami Lodge’s Youth Camp fundraiser raised $2,000 to help send boys and girls to camp this summer. The Annual Ball will be held on December 8, 2007. This year promises to be a gala event with an expected large attendance; all Elks are invited to attend and help the Lodge charities.

Raymond Martinez was elected as Lodge Secretary recently. Mario Catalano, Harry-Anna Chairman, and Don Kaminska, National Foundation Chairman, continue to do an excellent job and they urge your support by buying a certificate. National Night Out was held on Tuesday, August 7, 2007. North Miami Mayor, Kevin Burns, is collecting book bags and school supplies for elementary children. There is a collection bin on the 2nd floor lobby of City Hall.

Miami Lodge 948

Miami Elks Lodge had a beautiful and elaborate Flag Day ceremony. Included in the program were Americanism essay award winners reading their prize-winning essays, several sing-alongs, instrumental patriotic solos by local musicians, numerous vocal patriotic solos sung by talented Elks, and of course a fabulous performance of the History of the Flag by Boy Scout Troop 22 scouts and leaders.

A dancing honoring all Lodge PERs was held with the legendary jazz great Bob Estelle and his band performing. The next dance will honor all Elks of the Year; Earthshine will perform, and judging by advance ticket sales, a good turnout is expected.

Miami Lodge played host to the teen VA Medical Center volunteers and VAVS personnel. This is the second year to have the annual awards ceremony at the Lodge. A picnic style lunch was served to the teenagers and adults present. John Reitz, State Chairman for Veterans’ Services, was on hand to help present awards, gifts, and encouragement to these teens for their remarkable accomplishments and to thank them for giving up their summers to help veterans.

Yearlong Membership Drive events continue to be successful. Monthly, a wine tasting is held on the 4th Wednesday and a classic auto show is held on the 4th Saturday. So now their ranks include a number of wine aficionados as well as auto enthusiasts.

A family magic show brought people out on a Sunday evening to be entertained by four top local magicians. They began by going table to table and performing private shows for individual groups and ending with a stage show finale.

Blood Drives have risen slowly but steadily in participation. The latest had 33 volunteer donors.

Despite the usual seasonal lull, the club continues to have nights of record attendance at dinner time. Tuesday pasta night has become a staple for many families, and the dining room is especially lively on Blood Drive nights which are held every other month. Blood donors receive a free spaghetti dinner and many have friends or family tag along. Thursday nights have become as busy as Friday nights used to be, Friday nights are even livelier, and the Saturday steak nights have attracted a sizable core group of devotees.

Members have been cleaning up at the Miami Lodge! Outdoor spaces have been pressure cleaned such as the pool deck, courtyards, front entrance, and tennis courts. There is a beautiful new dance floor in the lounge and they have been checking off a long list of smaller maintenance and repair items that are typical of a building this age.

Some of this is done on Saturday mornings, but the process has considerably sped up thanks to a group of volunteers who come in a couple of times throughout the week when the building has fewer people.

South Miami/Coral Gables Lodge 1676

On Saturday, June 16th at the South Miami Children’s Clinic the Lodge partnered with Brian Keeley, President and CEO of Baptist Health South Florida, and his wife, Suzanne Keeley, PhD, President of the Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention at South Miami Hospital, for a great Community event. Along with Gate Program Peer Counselors Carlis Moore, Lamar Joseph, Leonard Johnson, Joel Tavarez, and Gate Graduate Marquel Moore, the Lodge fitted 38 helmets. The helmets were provided by a grant South Miami/Coral Gables Lodge was awarded for the second year from the State of Florida Dept. of Health Safe Kids Injury Prevention Program.

Veterans Bingo is BACK! When: November 3rd, 2007. Where: VA Hospital – Nursing Home 1201 NW 16 Street. Time: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Who: Elk Members, Gate Program Peer Counselors, and anyone wishing to come to aid those in distress at the nursing home. There is no need to bring your bingo cards or balls; the supplies will be there ready. The vets love it when the Elks go play bingo there! Everyone gets together, takes some snacks, drinks, and prizes and we play bingo! The look on their faces when the Elks show up is priceless. If you wish to be a part of this group contact the Lodge office and them know. The effort involved is small but the reward is huge. (Joey Glickman, ER, Leading Knight Dolores Leach, and the Gate Program Peer Instructors will attend this event.)

Marathon Lodge 2139

Many thanks go to Gary Brink, Leading Knight, and others who contributed to the beautiful patriotic float for the Fourth of July Parade. Thanks also go to Third Generation Plumbing for furnishing the trailer, and to Gary for pulling it, and to Linda Byars for providing the patriotic music and the CAMP chorus for providing the vocals.

There was a great team of loyal and dedicated Elks who contributed to the success of the benefit for Joe Ortiz, Endorsed State President for the coming year. The auctioneer, Bob Gil, offered himself for a “pie in the face,” and thanks to E.R. Bob Rankin for being a good sport and adding to Joe’s Fund. The Lodge contributed $6,510 plus a pledge of $1,800 and $1,000 from their Calendar Dinner. Last year they came from 112th in the State to 9th place. Marathon’s per-capita is $15.163 and they are 65 proud of the improvement.
A very successful fundraiser occurred in August to raise money to help finance a trip for the local Gretchen Everhart school kids to go to the Florida Elks Youth Camp in September. This is the third year the Lodge has sponsored that trip. The fundraiser involved an outside organization that offered to hold a poker tournament and jointly sponsor a fishing tournament with all the proceeds going to this event. The total raised for the two tournaments on one weekend was more than $4200. A big tip of the hat is given to Trustee Denise Bond given by the State.

Because of the Drug Committee’s efforts the Lodge received the Best Youth Activities Program Award from the Florida State Elks Association at the State Convention.

Tarpon Springs Lodge 1719
The Tarpon Springs Lodge has continued its commitment to its community’s youth this quarter with the sponsorship of 11 classrooms at four area elementary schools totaling over $1600 in donations. In addition, the Lodge was responsible for over $2000 in donations to local youth sports programs through direct donations, fundraising, and use of the ENF Gratitude Grant.

St. Petersburg Lodge 1224
The St. Petersburg Lodge annual Golf Tournament held in September was one of the most successful yet with over $3000 raised with proceeds to be donated to the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services. The Lodge is only beginning its Fall season fundraisers which will benefit many more charities as well as our state projects.

North District continued from page 16

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Labor Day brought another cookout and cakewalk for the Lodge membership to enjoy. Of course FSU played Clemson that night, so many folks were watching that game in the lounge. While the outcome was disappointing to the FSU fans, the daytime events made for a great day.

The Third Annual Chili Cook-off was held October 13th at the Lodge. The event has previously been held to raise money to donate to HOOGH (Honoring Our Own American Heroes), an arm of the Florida National Guard that assists the families of the active duty guardsmen overseas in times of need. HOOAH helps its families with the cost of home repair expenses and other family needs.

West Central District
Reporter: John Farrar
WC District Publicity Chairperson

Dunedin/Clearwater Lodge 1525
Congratulations to the Dunedin/Clearwater Elks as they have officially opened their new Lodge. In addition to showcasing this new facility at functions such as the Vice President and District Deputy visitations, they made headlines with an article in the St. Petersburg Times.

Tampa Lodge 708
About a month before school started, Tampa Drug Awareness Chairwoman, Linda Reid and the Drug Awareness Committee, hosted a free back to school party at the Lodge for kids aged from 6 to 15 giving away school supplies, and giving out information about the dangers of substance abuse. Approximately 100 children attended the event.

“We want them to know how to say no and do more productive things with their lives. It is fun,” Reid said, “If you can save one or two kids from getting into things that will ruin their lives, it’s worth it.”

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Holiday Isles Lodge 1912
The Lodge hosted the 2nd place winner in the state Americanism Essay contest, Connor Miles and his parents, at a dinner where the Lodge presented him with a plaque and a $500 Savings Bond given by the State.

The Lodge along with sponsored Boy Scout Troop 417 held a Court of Honor ceremony and dinner in recognition of Lee Fritz making Eagle Scout, he was presented with a new $100 bill from the Lodge.

A dinner was held honoring 32 Students of the Month from two schools. Each was presented a plaque. Four students were chosen Students of the Year and presented a $200 savings bond.

The Lodge held its Third Annual Super Grouper Dinner. All proceeds ($1,049) went to “The Haven,” a local shelter for women of domestic violence.

The continuation of spaghetti dinner and entertainment monthly for at least 15 patients from Bay Pines V.A. Hospital is sponsored by the Lodge.

A benefit was held raising $1,433.57 for the Elks National Foundation. Buffet and music provided a fun evening for all.

Largo Lodge 2159

North District continued from page 16

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ELKS WINTER RV RALLY

At The Florida Elks Youth Camp
Coincides with the Grand Exalted Ruler’s visit
Open to all Elk’s and their guest, 50 spaces available

RALLY MASTER, MIKE CARNEY
863-521-4002
Email: sandcastle12@verizon.net

Package Includes
Thursday—February 7, 2008
Get acquainted 5:00–6:00 pm—beer & hors d’oeuvres—Dinner 6:00 pm

Friday—February 8, 2008
Breakfast 8:00-9:00 am—Meetings 9:00-11:00 am—Lunch 12:00-1:00 pm—
Elks meeting 1:00-3:00 pm—Get acquainted 5:00-6:00 pm—Dinner-6:00 pm—
Live entertainment country music 7:00 pm with dancing to follow

Saturday—February 9, 2008
Breakfast 8:00-9:00 am—Elk meetings to follow—
General meeting with the Grand Exalted Ruler 11:00 am-12:30 pm—
Lunch with the Grand Exalted Ruler 12:30 pm—
Happy Hour—5:00-6:00 pm—Dinner 6:00-7:00 pm—
Live entertainment “Las Vegas Revue” 7:00 pm with dancing to follow

Sunday—February 10, 2008
Breakfast 8:00 - 9:00 am— Departure

This is dry camping; so come with your tanks empty and your water tank full.
There will be waste pick up provided.

PACKAGE PRICE; $70.00 PER SPACE 2 PEOPLE—$35.00 PER PERSON EXTRA

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE—Harry-Anna Trust Fund
Mail to: Mike Carney……539 Lake Bonny Dr. E…Lakeland, FL 33801

Name _____________________________
Address ___________________________
Phone _____________________________
Email _____________________________
No. of spaces @ $70.00 _______ No. of extra persons @ 35.00___________
Amount Enclosed_________________
All the Lodges in the Southwest District are supporting the effort to establish a new lodge in rapidly growing area of Lakewood Ranch, FL. A family/membership picnic was held at Summerfield Park in Lakewood Ranch on August 25th, and 12 new members completed applications or transfer documents. Committed members now stand at over 40.

South Hillsborough Lodge 2672

The Lodge sponsored their annual ENF dinner dance fundraiser with Karaoke on October 13, 2007.

A donation box has been placed in the lounge for items needed by our disabled veterans. A sign-up sheet has been placed in the lounge for all those interested in bowling.

Sarasota Lodge 1519

The Lodge this year will again provide the building for the administering of flu and pneumonia vaccines on four different dates. The cost is free to Medicare patients. Music and dinner on Friday nights continue to be a hit with the members. “Feather Your Nest Now” is now on Tuesday nights at 7 pm. Octoberfest was held on September 29th.

Manasota Lodge 2734

Recently Nicole McDowell was awarded a $1,000 college scholarship and Nadia Hunt was awarded a $500 scholarship by the Manasota Lodge 2734. The Lodge has also donated $300 to the local Boy Scouts, $200 to Daughtry Elementary School to be used for school supplies, $250 to the Bayside School cheerleaders, along with $500 to both the Harry-Anna Trust Fund and Elks National Foundation. A golf tournament was held in July raising $5,000 which was applied to three year old Matthew Zuckerman’s medical expenses.

Bradenton Lodge 1511

Bradenton Lodge reviewed 186 submissions from local middle schools for this year’s Americanism essay contest. This year’s subject was “Why I’m Proud to Be an American.” Awards were made to six students from various schools in grades 5-8. The winner was Daniell Wall. There were also winners from Sugg Middle School and Family Life Community School.

Palmetto Lodge 2449

Palmetto Lodge, the Southwest District and Florida Elkdom mourn the loss of David Vergason, Past State President.

REST IN PEACE

By Judy Vergason

David E. Vergason

On August 22, 2007 David E. Vergason took his last breath as he embraced the hand of God. Dave had a relatively short illness. He was diagnosed with lung cancer at the beginning of July and passed away six short weeks later.

I would like to share with you a few of his last thoughts as I sat with him both in the hospital and in hospice. Having been on almost every board either as a Member at Large, Vice Chairman or Chairman, Elkdom was very near and dear to his heart.

In the wee hours of the morning, his thoughts went to the Quarterly that was being held in Umatilla. Dave wondered if the contracts were approved for the upcoming Mid Year and for State Convention. After a short nap and waking up, he reminded me that we had a five star publication and next year we would do the same with Raleigh Whiteman at the helm.

The thing that was on his mind the most was the children as well as the Scholarships and the Children’s Therapy Services and the Youth Camp. With tears in his eyes he said, “Who will take care of them?” I assured him the children would never be forgotten.

On Tuesday, August 21, 2007 he gave me a smile the best he could and a kiss. He told me to always remember that the Elks always take care of their own. He reminded me I would be in good hands. On August 22, 2007 David’s work for Elkdom was done. We lost a great Elk and leader that day. Those of you who are reading this short article remember David in your own way. I thank each and every one of you for your cards, calls, e-mail, donations and so many other expressions of love. You have been a comfort in this very difficult time.

My Darling David

Our road was short but magical.
Our road was filled with joys and pain.
I walked with you as far as I could.
On Wednesday I could go no farther. I had to place your hand in God’s.
I can no longer see your eyes with my eyes,
but I can feel your heart with my heart.
Rest now knowing all that you asked of me has been done.
You have been my boyfriend, my lover, my husband, my rock, and my friend.
Some day I will see you again. Until then, go with my love.
To quote a famous author, “Parting is such sweet sorrow,
until we meet tomorrow.”
Goodby My Love!
Ft. Pierce Lodge 1520
Fort Pierce Elks continue to support the “Desert Elk” Program. Since the new year, April 1, 2007, we have mailed 61 packages of items to Iraq and Afghanistan with a total estimated value of $4,400. Children from one of the local 4th grade schools’ classes drew pictures and they were included in one of the packages. We have received 10 “thank you” messages from our military. These messages are posted on the military bulletin board for all of the members to read. The Lodge continues to support the Veterans Administration Hospital in West Palm Beach with donations of books, magazines, and playing cards. They recently held a T-Shirt Drive and donated 319 shirts to the Homeless Veterans Program at the hospital.

Melbourne Lodge 1744
The Lodge thanks the dozens of volunteers who have worked so hard making Friday night dinner dances, special events, visitations, fundraisers, and other activities successful. One of the many reasons members are smiling is their chef, Jim Black. He gets five stars. Congratulations go to Lucile Richardson and the Ladies Auxiliary who recently held a Western Dinner Dance. The dining room was packed with cowboys and cowgirls dressed in western duds.

Melbourne Lodge will celebrate its 60th birthday in 2008. If you have any news articles, photos, or items to loan or donate, please send them to the Lodge. The address is 211 South Nieman Avenue, Melbourne, FL 32902-1416, or call Tom and Mary Sullivan at 321-723-1316 or Exalted Ruler Sam at 321-768-1744.

By the way, by the time this publication is mailed, the 18th Annual Golf Classic will have passed. Scheduled at Baytree National Golf Course.

Beulah Christie, their oldest member, and possibly the oldest Elk, celebrated her 106th birthday, and of course, she was the center of the ‘Beulah’s Night Out’ party held at the Lodge. Along with Beulah, they also honored PER Raymond Blaquiere, a life member who has contributed and supported Lodge. Along with Beulah, they also honored PER Raymond Blaquiere, a life member who has contributed and supported the Lodge and Elkdom locally and nationally.

Port St. Lucie Lodge 2658
In July, the Lodge hosted their 16th Annual Port St. Lucie 4th of July Parade with over 2,000 onlookers. After the parade, they took part in the Freedom Fest 2007 activities in Lyngate Park. In addition to these city activities, they held their Annual 4th of July Lodge Picnic and Bake Sale hosted by the Park. In addition to these city activities, they held their Annual 4th of July Lodge Picnic and Bake Sale hosted by the Park. In addition to these city activities, they held their Annual 4th of July Lodge Picnic and Bake Sale hosted by the Park. In addition to these city activities, they held their Annual 4th of July Lodge Picnic and Bake Sale hosted by the Park. In addition to these city activities, they held their Annual 4th of July Lodge Picnic and Bake Sale hosted by the Park.

They are happy to announce the initiation of their new young members who are forming a team to cook the last Saturday night dinner and the new DARE Breakfast which will be held on the last Sunday of each month. They are a great bunch of family-oriented guys who work and have families but will take the time to help their Elk’s Lodge. The Lodge certainly welcomes them all aboard as well as the other 18 new members. Port St. Lucie hopes they are starting to obtain quality and not just quantity members. It looks promising.

The Lodge attended the installation of their 18th Eagle Scout, Douglas Gifford, on August 11th. They feel they are very fortunate to have these great young American citizens in their midst. In September, they honored District Vice President Chris Carlisle with a gala dinner/dance. There were 250 members and guests in attendance, and a good time was had by all. They held their Lodge inspection in September with DDGER Lenny Smallacombe and his team. During the evening at the meeting, twenty new members were initiated into the Lodge.

The Lodge continues to have a very active Operation Desert Elks Program, Charity Bingo with proceeds going to Elks Charities, 8-Ball Pool Tournaments every Monday night, and famous Tuesday Night Dinners. If you are ever in the neighborhood, drop into the Lodge and say HELLO. They will be glad to see you. Remember, God Bless the Military, God Bless the Veterans, and God Bless America!

Dignitaries, Firefighters, and Sheriff and local Police Depts. were treated to the 5th Annual 9-11 luncheon at Port St. Lucie, FL Lodge #2658. Approximately 120 local heroes were served roast pork with all the trimmings. Pictured are: Port St. Lucie Mayor Pat Christensen, Chief John Skinner, Vice Mayor Jack Kelly; Sheriff Ken Mascara, and police officers of the City of Port St. Lucie.

Exalted Ruler, Mary Ann Manning of Port St. Lucie Lodge 2658 with some local heroes in attendance at the 5th Annual 9-11 luncheon. Approximately 120 were served roast pork with all the trimmings. Pictured are: Port St. Lucie Mayor Pat Christensen, Vice Mayor Jack Kelly, and several local EMT and Paramedics.

Sebastian Lodge 2714
Sebastian Lodge has started to hold Sunday dinners once a month and it has caught on quite well. Their summer vacationing members and friends have returned and were welcomed with an Elvis impersonator on September 15th.

Oktoberfest was held on October 14th, and a golf tournament was held on October 20th with a country western dinner dance that same evening. SEC District Vice President Chris Carlisle’s homecoming was on October 27th and they had their Polish dinner on October 28th.

Sebastian Lodge hosted State President David Lake and Kathy to the SEC District visitation on September 21st and 22nd.

There were more than just a few Elks and guests on hand awaiting arrival of President David Lake and wife Kathy to the Southeast Central District.

After lunch at the Sebastian Lodge, President David Lake, left, presented an Eagle Scout Award to Timothy Faillace, with Exalted Ruler Dennis Freese, right.

Stuart-Jensen Lodge 1870
On September 8th, the Lodge hosted a Girl Scout recruitment day. The Lodge hosted the event with Lowe’s, the Resource Dept., the Red Cross, the Martin County Fire Rescue, and Martin County Sheriff K-9 Unit. Over 300 participants came out to sign up for Girl Scouts, and enjoy a day of games, food and demonstrations. Elks volunteers Jim Howse; Betty Tweeksbury; PER, Lisa Potvin; PER, Jack Storandt; PER, Suzi Gordon; Chuck Osleber; and his table set up crew were on hand to help with the event. Also, thanks goto Betty and Bob Corrigan for heading up the Lodge’s Back to School Drive. They collected so many school supplies that they needed the Lodge Secretary’s SUV to deliver all the goods to JD Parker Elementary. They collected so many school supplies that they needed the Lodge Secretary’s SUV to deliver all the goods to JD Parker Elementary. The school was so grateful for all the supplies. Our State President’s motto is “MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN A CHILD’S LIFE.” With what they collected, they will make a difference for many needy children at JD Parker Elementary.
The Lodge held its “Second Annual USO Show” presented by the VFW Ladies Auxiliary September 29th. They have added several new acts to the show this year and this should be the best show ever. The Elks Motorcycle Club participated in a 911 Memorial Run sponsored by Red Knights Motorcycle Club Chapter 11 of Palm Coast at Heroes Park. All donations will benefit the 911 Firemen’s Fund.

St. Augustine Elks Lodge conducted a Celebrity/Charity Bingo on behalf of St. Johns County/St. Augustine Law Enforcement and Fire Rescue charities Saturday, June 30, 2007 with 98 Elks and guests in attendance. The celebrity callers included the Sheriff’s Office Chief of Staff, Joel Bolante, St. Johns County Fire Charity Coordinator, RJ Sluman, SAPD Chief Loran Lueders, and SAF Chief Mike Arnold.

A few years ago I was given the opportunity to evaluate the Memorial Day Service brochures. I was fairly apprehensive when accepting the assignment as all 2,000+ Lodges are eligible to compete. It was not until the deadline for sending in the entries that I was relieved but somewhat disillusioned because 1,885 Lodges did not send in entries.

While the Memorial Day Service is a Grand Lodge mandated service, it was apparent that many Lodges are not proud enough of what they do or have so little participation from the members or officers that they have nothing to submit.

Getting as many as 10% of a Lodge membership to attend an Elks Memorial Service likely falls very short of that goal. Getting all of the the officers to attend is about the best effort put in by most Lodges. Seldom were invitations sent to outsiders other than the immediate family of those who have passed on. Often Elks dignitaries were not invited nor have special speakers been asked to attend and speak.

To become competitive the Memorial Day Service must be documented very thoroughly on all key points in order to get a high enough score to win within the division entered. The entry must include the Lodge name and number, with verification of number of members; Show that the service was advertised in the November, December, and reported in the January Lodge bulletins; Verify with documentation that personal invitations were sent to family; Documentation by photo and letters that guests were made to feel comfortable and that transportation was offered to those who needed such; Documentation how the auxiliary or spouses participated; Show that the brochures content and effectiveness is a fitting tribute “To our Absent Members;” Document with photos any pre or post-service reception; Document that efforts were made to include and invite Elk dignitaries and that the city, state or other organizations were invited; Document any media coverage or that they were informed; Show the music or vocals; Speaker documented; photo of the Altar and other special touches; Entry presentation should show the overall effort by the Lodge; The photos should be clear, bright, and effective in illustrating the Elks Memorial Day service.

Each of these documents is rewarded with from 1 to 10 points. Leaving out any one loosens from 5-10 points. Those Lodges that get recognition at the Grand Lodge Convention greatly deserve that recognition because they have given a fitting tribute “To our Absent Members.”

Is your Lodge up to the task?

Elks should not let this very impressive tradition slip by the wayside as has the Initatory Ritual in many Lodges.
Port Charlotte Lodge 2153

Port Charlotte Lodge take veterans at the Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans Nursing Home out to lunch once a month. The Lodge has also adopted Liberty Elementary School as a support project and recently held a pizza party to recognize their Safety Patrol Kids. The Lodge also purchased hospice carts for the hospital and one member donated a specially built custom wheelchair for a young lady.

Bonita Springs Lodge 2753

Bonita Springs Elks Lodge participated in the Annual 4th of July Parade with a float.

Fort Myers Lodge 1288

Fort Myers Lodge recently donated $1,000 to the VA Hospital at Bay Pines, FL and another $1,000 to the VA Clinic in Fort Myers. They also donated $500 to the Nations Organization, which is a local Fort Myers outreach program which provides aid to the poor and the homeless. The Lodge is also supporting our troops on active duty throughout the world. They are collecting items that are greatly needed and appreciated by our brave men and women. The Lodge has joined together with Lynx Services to defray the cost of delivery. Fort Myers at the District Vice Presidents visit, presented 23 $50 Harry-Anna Pins to members representing a $1,150 donation.

North Fort Myers Lodge 2742

North Fort Myers continues with their ongoing support of the homeless and homeless veterans with 18 to 20 volunteers feeding the homeless every Tuesday. Not only do they provide meals but also personal care items and food. The Lodge had donations of bikes, backpacks, clothing and some canned food.

Lehigh Acres Lodge 2602

Members of Lehigh Acres Lodge collected $147 for the Back to School Program of Lehigh Acres Community Services.

Naples Lodge 2010

Naples continues to support the low income families of Immokalee who receive support through their soup kitchen, clothing programs, and the over 1,000 children who receive educational services through their early childhood education, after school tutoring, and adult education. Last year, the center provided shoes, socks, and backpacks for over 500 children through their Guadalupe Center’s Back to School Shoe Program. This program helps the parents who live in poverty to send their children off at the start of the school year with new shoes.

Punta Gorda Lodge 2606

Punta Gorda participated in the Shoes for Kids Program to provide shoes for needy children going back to school. The Lodge also provided a new American Flag to Baker Center School. Baker Center School was destroyed by hurricane Charley and has just reopened. The flag was presented during the reopening ceremony by PER Robert Hahn. Donations were also made to Sallie Jones Elementary School and Punta Gorda Middle School to assist with special needs.

Greater Pine Island Lodge 2781

Pictured are Don Wiederhold, Richard DesChamps, Truman Bass, Ed Smith, Carl Sturm, and Wesley Phelps.

SSW District VP Don Wiederhold built a golf ball game and sent it to the Florida Elks Youth Camp. They liked it so much they asked for 40 more. At the Bonita Springs Visitation Don told the story and asked if anyone could help defray the cost. $697 was donated that evening. Since then a crew from various Lodges has assembled 28 games.

Rotonda Lodge 2710

Rotonda Elks welcomed over 75 firemen, deputies, and their families to their Annual Appreciation Day. They were treated to dinner and drinks and awards were presented to Deputy John O’Sullivan, Deputy Frank Mackall, Fireman Keith Madvar and Fireman Michael Conner.

Lodge Activities Committee

Chris Gariepy, PER
State Chairman
Lodge Activities Committee

The Lodge Activities Committee is charged with implementing the programs of the individual Lodges as well as the State Association and the Grand Lodge. At the Lodge level, this means investigating and recommending ways of maintaining interest in meetings, projects, and Lodge sponsored activities, including community and social activities. At the state level and national level, this means encouraging the proper observance of mandatory activities such as Flag Day and Elks Memorial Sunday, promoting the ritual, supporting programs such as the Most Valuable Student contest, encouraging fun and fellowship through interlodge visitations among many other activities.

The work of this particular committee is “all encompassing” in that it deals with just about everything a Lodge does. Many of these activities also have an associated State or National contest that the Lodge can participate in...examples include the All American Lodge contest, the Community Service/Image brochure contest, the Elks Memorial Service brochure contest, the Lodge Bulletin contest and the ENF Per Capita contest, just to name a few. In addition to these, the Elks Training Program, the Citizen/Elk/Officer of the Year, and many other programs all fall under the umbrella of Lodge Activities.

Some key objectives that can be realized by local Lodges through a good Lodge Activities program include community support, new member involvement, decreased lapsation, improved attendance, better family participation AND membership gains!

I would like to encourage each member to seek out their own Lodge’s chairman to discuss new ideas, improve “old” ideas, and promote activities that benefit the Lodge as well as enhance our image by promoting the “Good of the Order.” Each Lodge Chairman has a valuable resource in their District Chairman that they can tap into, as well as get information from our state’s Vice Chairman, Robert Hagler, PER of Winter Haven Lodge 1672 or myself. There are 112 Lodges in our State Association with 70,000 members. Imagine what good can be done, both within our own Lodges and in our communities, if we set our minds to it!
Apopka Elks Lodge 2422

Apopka Elks Lodge held its fourth annual Community Dinner and Open House. The event maintains its focus on its community needs with this year’s proceeds benefiting the Greater Apopka Area Habitat for Humanity and Apopka Elks Youth Camp Scholarships.

The Lodge also sold sponsorships to cover the cost of serving “Teacher Appreciation” meals to the teachers and staff at seven local schools on their preschool weekdays.

Apopka Elks held the 4th annual C. M. “Mac” Walters Senior Memorial Golf Outing September 15th. There was a great turnout with all proceeds donated to the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services. The feeling we get in our heart when a handicapped child thanks us for something we have done to make their day a little brighter cannot be put into words. Remember the sign that was displayed in the old Elks Hospital in Umatilla, “No man stands so tall as he who stoops to help a child.”

Winter Park Lodge 1830

Winter Park Elks Lodge has an ongoing collection of used cell phones, 97 of which were recently turned over to the Orange County Sheriff’s Department. They will be converted to “911 Emergency” phones for seniors and battered women. Thanks to all who participated and keep turning in their phones.

The Winter Park Does drove 86 gave the Elks $1,000 to buy dictionaries for third graders in Seminole County schools. This is a national project and has been supported by many other Elks Lodges. Get on board and educate a child for a brighter future.

Winter Park Lodge has also been very active in activities supporting our veterans in the community and at the Orlando VA. At a pizza and Karaoke party in the homeless vets domiciliary sponsored by the Veterans’ Services Committee, Deputy VAVS Representative Walter Laverty learned that the new residents needed socks and underwear. The Lodge donated $1,000 to provide for that need. Sandra Boza, Chief of Voluntary Services, accepted the donation from Exalted Ruler Pat Fuehrer and Chaplain Louise Dykstra at the presentation at the VA.

During the Memorial Day BBQ, the Veterans’ Services Committee through their chairman Walter “Ski” Stolarski, planned for eight of the Orlando VA wheel chair-patients to attend the Lodge and enjoy music and food at the ceremony honoring veterans. They were warmly welcomed by over 100 members and guests.

The Lodge’s Flag Day included over 60 veterans. Ceremonies began with the officers of the Does Winter Park Drive 86, led by President Carolyn Laverty, performing their ceremony that included a reading of “Old Glory” by First Counselor Barbara Moyer. The officers of the Winter Park Elks Lodge performed their Flag Day ceremony led by Exalted Ruler Pat Fuehrer with a reading by PER Fred Kortum and included the historical flag presentation by Troop 823 of the Boy Scouts of America. Event Chairman John Campbell prepared the flags to be retired with dignity. Each old and tattered flag was prepared for cremation with the ashes sprinkled at cemeteries. Then each Boy Scout was presented with a flag and pole for his personal display.

Ocala Lodge 286

Ocala Elks Lodge hosted its Annual Rib Day on Saturday, October 13th. It was a huge success as usual. Thanks to all who participated to help support the funding of the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services, the Florida Elks Youth Camp, and the Harry-Anna Trust Fund.

Silver Springs Shores Lodge 2730

The Flag Day Program was a great success from the stunning patriotic decorations through the delicious luncheon concluding with the history and presentation of the flags. This held the audience captivated as each flag was brought in by a visiting veteran from Ft. McCoy. Katherine Jadlowe, PER, presented the flags to the Lodge for a permanent display along with the table for the POW/MIA Memorial.

Air Force veteran and resident of the Ft. McCoy home, Charles Dilley, presented a plaque to Chairlady Katherine J adlowe honoring the ongoing service to the veterans of the home.

Elks National Foundation Certificates

Robert Barry; State Chairman

Where did it all begin? It began at the Grand Lodge Session in 1928 in Miami, Florida. The then Grand Exalted Ruler, John F. Malley, envisioned a plan that would “unite the forces of the Order into a mighty army for the service of mankind.” His call to service inspired delegates to take action by voting to establish the Elks National Foundation with an initial $100,000 grant.

The mission today of the Elks National Foundation is to help Elks build stronger communities. We provide tomorrow’s leaders, our youth, with a healthy beginning and honor our Elks pledge to never forget the veterans. We provide the state major projects with monies to help operate these programs.

Since inception, the Foundation has received more than $165 million in contributions and bequests. All donations go into a permanent endowment fund where each gift earns interest for a lifetime. Only the income earned by the fund can be used to support the charitable programs. Today the fund has 180,000 active donors and an endowment fund valued at $420 million. The Fund has contributed $271 million towards Elks charitable projects nationwide, supporting three college scholarships, Drug Awareness ($598,000), Hoop Shoot ($683,000), National Veterans Services Commission ($787,000), and the Community Investment Program (budgeted $25,000).

The Foundation reserves a total of $3.066 million for its three scholarship programs: The Most Valuable Student contest ($2.16 million), Emergency Education Grants for children of deceased or totally incapacitated Elks ($350,000), and ENF Legacy Awards ($500,000).

As you can see, the Elks National Foundation is a very worthy charity, but at times it seems we are in competition with the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. We of course should support our state’s major projects, the Youth Camp and the Children’s Therapy Services. By supporting both charities we can only bring more monies to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. In the year 2005-2006 the Florida Elks donated $299,333.65 to the ENF and received back $453,211 for our major projects; that’s $1.514 for every $1.00 we sent in.

As of January, Florida’s total donations and bequests to ENF were $294,759.30 for a per-capita of $4,217. Our GER Frost has set a pre-capita of $4.00. This places our state with 69,979 members at number 30 nationwide. The districts that have met this goal and their chairmen are, Central, Joan Phillips, East Central, Patrica Heller Jackson; North Central, Robert McCarthy; North West, John Leatherwood; and South East Central, William Orblchy. Leading individual Lodges and their membership grouping and per-capita are: 0-300 Lake Whales, $10.34; 301-500 Seminole, $8.07; 501-700, West St. Lucie, $6.58; 701-1100, Fort Pierce, $12.51; 1101-1500, Miami, $4.07; and 1500+, Punta Gorda, $6.00.

We of the State ENF Certificates, State Chairman Robert Ware and myself thank all of the District and Lodge Chairmen for their efforts during the first three quarters of this year.

HOTEL ARRANGEMENTS

An Exalted Ruler about to go to a visitation wrote a letter to the hotel he planned to stay in while there. He wrote, “I would very much like to bring my dog with me. He is well groomed and very well behaved. Would you be willing to permit me to keep him in my room with me at night?”

A reply came shortly from the hotel management that said, “We have been operating this hotel for many years. In all that time we have never had a dog steal towels, bed clothes, silverware, or pictures off the walls. We’ve never had to evict a dog in the middle of the night for being drunk or disorderly, nor has a dog ever run out on a hotel bill. Yes, indeed, your dog is welcome at this hotel and if your dog will vouch for you, you’re welcome to stay here, too.”
Holley-Navarre Lodge 2787

Congratulations go out to Jane Ponkratz for receiving the Citizen of the Year award from the 2006-2007 Exalted Ruler, Allen VanDyk, for the outstanding support that she has given not just to the Exalted Ruler but to the Holley/Navarre Lodge as a whole. Jane does so much for the Lodge and asks so little. She is at almost all the functions that she can attend, including the VP and DD visitations. She helps with the preparations of the meals, serving, and the cleanup. Even though she is not an Elks member she does more for this Lodge than 98% of the members. The Lodge is so grateful to have such a wonderful caring person.

Who would you like to hit in the face with a pie? The Past Exalted Rulers graciously volunteered to receive a “Pie in the Face” from some lucky person. The PER who receives the most points will get the pie in the Face. From September 1st - 30th, members were able to buy tickets at the bar and vote for the candidate of their choice to receive a “Pie in the Face” on October 6th at the PERs dinner. The person whose ticket was drawn from the candidate with the most votes will have the honor of delivering the pie. Winners names were not available at press time. All proceeds went to the Elks National Foundation.

Destin Lodge 2688

August was a very busy and productive month as the Harry-Anna Trust Fund has brought the Lodge into the number one position in the Northwest District! Members donations and activities have helped many children and brought the Lodge into 13th in the State.

Florida State President David Lake visited the Lodge Friday September 14th. The dinner was great and the comments inspiring. Many were on hand to meet the State President.

Members requesting a memorial service must call the Lodge Exalted Ruler before setting a date and time for a Memorial Service. It is necessary that the Exalted Ruler contact all the officers involved before a definite date and time can be scheduled. The phone number for Exalted Ruler David Bryant is 859-650-5525.

Pensacola Beach Lodge 497

The Exalted Ruler had the privilege of representing the Lodge at the National Convention held in Charlotte, NC July 8th-12th and had a wonderful experience. He reports that to be in a convention center with over 7,000 Elks from around the nation watching as the new Grand Exalted Ruler was installed for the 2007-2008 year was exciting.

On the home front, he thanks Lance Keennan for taking care of business here in his absence. Everything ran smoothly. Friday night dinners have been going extremely well. Unfortunately, on Friday the 6th of July because of a food shortage the Lodge had to turn about 30 people away. The Exalted Ruler apologizes for any inconvenience this may have caused you. The kitchen crew tries to anticipate the number of people they may serve on a Friday night but it’s difficult this time of year. No one expected to serve over 100 dinners that night. It was also great to see so many new faces that weekend. Appreciation goes to all the new members who are coming out to support the Lodge. Thank s go to Steve for doing such a fantastic job in the kitchen!

The Blue Angel weekend was also a busy one. A thank you is given to all who came out to watch the air show from the patio and boat slips. The weather was great and as always, the Blues inspired all. Pensacola Beach Lodge is very fortunate to be the Blue Angels home base so near and the Elks greatly appreciate what they do for their community.

Fort Walton Lodge 1795

In late July the Lodge served over 80 people a spaghetti dinner to raise money for the Charity account. Special thanks go to Chuck and Jan Izzo, Chris and Shelby Howland, Kenny Salter and Jimmy Bromely for volunteering their time to come out and help in the kitchen and serving the dinners. A special thanks goes to Jamie Clemons for donating over 50 quarts of homemade spaghetti, meat-balls and sausage.

The House Committee has elected to institute a new policy which requires members to pay $1.00 to the Lodge Charity Account if they use the buzzer to gain entry. This is also another way to ensure members have renewed their annual dues. If a member refuses to pay, he/she will not be served a drink. The only legitimate excuse for using the buzzer is if you’re working an outdoor function and/or carrying items into the Lodge. This should not be viewed as a penalty, but another means to raise money for the Charity Account.

Crestview Lodge 2624

In case you missed the article in the local paper, Crestview Elks in partnership with the Spanish Trail Cruisers built a gazebo for the residents of the Crestview Manor complete with a beautiful fountain and colorful flowers.

A very special thanks goes to Danny Labado who spent countless hours installing the fountain which is the central focus of the gazebo. The colorful potted plants were done by Ernestine Byrd, Darlene Strickland, and Jim Cauley. The ferns that completed the whole picture were hung by Danny Labado and Jim Cauley. In the courtyard of Crestview Manor, the residents now have a gazebo that provides them with a beautiful as well as a peaceful place to gather and enjoy the outdoors.

At the dedication of the gazebo using funds provided by the Cruisers, the Lodge prepared various appetizers that were enjoyed by the Manor’s residents and all guests who attended this special event. Thanks again to Ernestine Byrd for organizing and heading up the preparations of some really good food. The kitchen help for this event included Darlene Strickland, Annette Anglin, and the Exalted Ruler Betty Clark. Marcy Labado was very helpful in setting up and cleaning up after the celebration. Crestview Elks continue to do good things in their community.

Warrington Lodge 2108

The Drug Awareness program was a huge success at the Labor Day Picnic. The Drug Awareness trailer was at the picnic thanks to Frank Cabigting, Sr. picking it up from Holley-Navarre Lodge. After signing a pledge to Say No to Drugs, the kids received their choice of a soccer ball, basketball, or a stuffed patriotic elk. District Chairman Bill White and PDDGER Frank Hayes distributed the Drug Awareness materials.

On October 23rd Red Ribbon Day was held at NAS. The school district had between 3,500 and 4,000 fourth and fifth graders from area schools attending. All volunteers were welcomed and appreciated as the Drug Awareness Trailer was taken to this event. The community saw that Elks support “Just Say No to Drugs”. Thanks go to all who assisted this committee.

The big Halloween Dance in October for our ARC clients was great fun. Margaret Hollingshead collected stuffed animals and hats for the clients. The Elkettes provided for the food. This was a night the ARC clients look forward to. It warms the heart to watch them dance, hardly ever sitting down; the dance floor was always full.

VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

On Thursday, November 8th, the district will be hosting a special event at the V.A. Clinic, in honor of Veterans’ Day. Small American flags will be given to the Veterans along with juice, fruit, coffee and doughnuts. Dennis Pochell and Chris Woods will be in charge of the Lodge “Wall of Honor for Veterans.”

Remember, if you have ever served in the military, you are a veteran and we are proud of you!

The district is still collecting playing cards to send to the VA Home, but no longer collecting soap or toothpaste.

FLORIDA LADIES OF ELKS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

On another note, Sam and I had the pleasure of attending some more of State President David Lake and Kathy’s visitations. We attended the East Central District’s Visitation Dinner held in Deland Lodge 1463 where we were warmly welcomed and had a wonderful dinner. We attended the West Central District’s Visitation and spent a weekend being treated like royalty. Friday night was held at Dunedin/Clearwater Lodge 1525; their new Lodge is coming along and is going to be beautiful, their dinner was excellent. Saturday we visited Safety Town which was amazing; we had Lunch at Tarpon Springs Lodge 1719 which was very good. That night we had dinner at New Port Richey Lodge 2284, they had a “Camp David on Lake Kathy” theme with a meal highlighted by franks and beans and a skit which was hilarious. Sunday I was taken on a tour of Tarpon Springs by ladies from the District which was an end to a perfect weekend. Lastly, we attended the Southeast Central District’s Visitation. It was held in Sebastian with Friday night at Vero Beach Lodge 1774, Saturday was a cruise on the river and lunch and dinner were at Sebastian Lodge 2714. The lunch included an Eagle Scout award which was very impressive and the dinner was actually the best I remember ever having in an Elks Lodge.

Please attend the next meeting of FLOE if you are eligible. It will be held Saturday, November 10th, at the Windham Hotel in Orlando at 8:30 a.m.

My thanks to everyone for making this past year the most wonderful experience I have ever had. God bless each of you and God bless America.

Dolores L. Casella, Past State President of FLOE
The North District is proud to recognize its current DDGER, James Hollingsworth, from Lake City Lodge 893. James is in the midst of his visits to the Lodges, conducting the business of his office, and sharing information from the Grand Lodge.

A big thank you goes to the Tallahassee Lodge for competing in the Grand Lodge Ritual competition in Charlotte, North Carolina at the Grand Lodge Convention on behalf of the Florida Elks and giving a good showing. Tallahassee earned a very respectable score and placed seventh in the Eastern Division.

**Lake City Lodge 893**

Lake City Lodge had a July 4th cookout at the Lodge in honor of Independence Day. Later on in the month the Lodge held its third birthday dinner/Karaoke night on July 21. Singing, dancing, and the dinner fare of chicken and rice were a big hit. Attendance was good and it was great fun for all. A big thank you was given to PSP Tom Elmore for helping out with the music.

The Lodge once again held its annual Elks Picnic on Saturday, August 4th at the home of Jim and Carol Martin on the river. Families were invited to bring their swimsuits and appetites. Every year Jim and Carol invite the Lodge members to come and spend the afternoon at their home, and it is always a great time spent with fellow Elks.

The Lodge has placed a jar on the bar to solicit donations for its charity account. Money is spent on Elks programs as well as county youth programs, scholarships for high school seniors, Easter eggs for the elementary schools, and Christmas food baskets in December. A suggested donation of at least 25 cents each time a member visits the Lodge helps to raise money for this endeavor.

On September 26th, sports personality Brady Ackerman aired a live broadcast from the Lodge’s lounge. The focus was a Q & A session during the live sports program. Lake City is essentially Gator Country (“a Florida man needs no introduction…”) and the Lodge loves its Gator fans. There are four rooms in the Lodge with televisions, so it is easy to find a nice spot to watch the game.

Bids have been received for the re-roofing of the Lodge building and the job should start in a few weeks. Lake City’s Lodge building is more than 100 years old, and the Lodge makes a great effort to stay on top of the maintenance issues that crop up.

**Live Oak Lodge 1165**

Live Oak Lodge kicked off July with a family fun, games, and dinner night on July 14th. A spaghetti dinner was served with special prices for couples and families. Games included the Not So Newlywed Game, remote control car races, a hula contest, and horse racing. The Lodge’s ladies organization was responsible for this evening of fun-filled events.

Live Oak Lodge is very pleased to announce that some outside improvements to the Lodge have been completed. The exterior of the building was repainted and a new sign was installed in front of the Lodge. The Lodge also hosts a bingo game twice every week, and that too is advertised on the sign.

The Lodge enjoyed hosting the homecoming visit of District VP Janet DaSilva on August 21st. There was a good turnout from other Lodges in the district, and the fried catfish dinner for which the Lodge is known was once again spectacularly good.

It’s time again for the annual gun raffle at the Lodge. Tickets have been printed and will be available soon for the Benelli 12 gauge shotgun 3rd and a Browning semi-automatic rifle 308. Tickets are $5 each. This event is always a successful fundraiser for the Lodge.

**Madison Lodge 2205**

Madison Lodge distributed Drug Awareness materials to area schools, churches, medical offices, the Madison County Sheriff’s Department, and the City Police station in July. They were all very happy to receive the brochures. Due to budget cuts, the Sheriff’s and Police Departments did not have funds to purchase these materials and were elated to receive them from the Elks. The officer in charge said that they were frequently asked for the information contained in the brochures.

August was a busy month! The Madison Elks began their Adopt-a-Nursing Home Program at Pine Lake Nursing Home visiting with the residents, many of whom are veterans. The Lodge furnished refreshments and judged the home’s annual talent show which all the residents enjoyed.

This year many of the local schools enforced a strict uniform policy. The Madison Lodge was notified of a needy family with five children that needed help purchasing their school uniforms for Pinetta Elementary School. Members of the Madison Lodge donated funds to help these children purchase their school uniforms for the upcoming school year.

DDGER Hollingsworth made his official visit to the Lodge on September 10th. Two new members were initiated that evening, and since April there have been eleven new members.

The Lodge, with the help of its House Committee, is making an effort to rally the members to come out to the Lodge on Saturdays to watch football. Snacks are provided and beverages are available.

**Marianna Lodge 1516**

Marianna Lodge had a cookout on July 4th serving hot dogs and hamburgers all at no charge to the Lodge members. There was a big crowd of folks attending. The last event in July was a breakfast on the 28th with food fit for kings and queens, for only $5 a person.

The Lodge has made some changes in its club operation including hiring a new chef and updating its menu choices. To do something a bit different the Lodge is planning monthly event specials, the first one was a Low Country Boil held on August 15th. More than 100 folks came out to partake in the event. It was a great time for fellowship, and one of the Lodge members commented, “This is what Elks are all about!”

The 115-inch television in the club facility will be tuned in to NASCAR and football this fall for the convenience of the members. It’s a nice, comfy area to sit and take in the race or the game with plenty of complimentary popcorn too.

**Perry Lodge 1851**

The second annual Perry Elks Lodge Pool Tournament was held July 28th. The format was 8-ball call shot with a double elimination tournament. Registration was only $10 and the first prize was $25 in Club Bucks.

Perry Lodge is another one of the Lodges in the North District that conducts a bingo game every week. In a recent newsletter, the Lodge featured some of its faithful Bingo volunteers. The current Chairman is Earline Neeley, the past Secretary of the Lodge. Past Chairman David Lloyd, PER, had run the game for several years, and his wife Tammy sells Bingo paper on the floor. Rocco Shefield, PDDGER, also sells paper on the floor, and is always willing to fill in for someone who cannot be there to work. The Lodge encourages husband/wife teams to work one month to help staff the game. Bingo is a great way to raise money for charitable events.

**Tallahassee Lodge 937**

The Lodge began summer with a number of fundraising events to help garner a few dollars to send the ritual team onto the national competition without the officers having to dig into their own pockets. While the Florida State Elks Association provided the Lodge with a significant donation, it did not cover all the costs of travel and lodging. Several dinners and a raffle were conducted to raise money.

Tallahassee Lodge was another Lodge in the district to hold a July 4th cookout and celebration. The Lodge events began with a Flag Retirement Ceremony held in the lodge room, with the support of a local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troop. The ceremony was concluded with flag disposal in the front yard including a fire to burn the flag coupled by a Girl Scout reciting the steps taken in proper disposal of a flag. The local newspaper featured front-page coverage of this event with photos and a news story. Members and guests retired to the inside of the building after the disposal ceremony to partake in burgers and hot dogs. The ladies organization, the Elketts, featured a cakewalk after the food and earned a few bucks for their toil.

A family cookout was set for July 21 on the patio for all Elks to come and bring their families to the outside patio. Each person was to bring something to grill for themselves and a side dish to share. ER Keith White stood like a soldier at the grill and cooked whatever was brought to him. The event was a resounding success.

The Tallahassee Lodge is pleased to announce a scholarship award to Travis Crosby, a local high school graduate. Travis is now attending Lake City Community College and will major in golf course maintenance, a three-year program at the school. With matching scholarship money from the college, Travis will receive $1,000. Travis had applied for an ENF scholarship, and when he did not advance in that review to team on to the national competition without the officers having to dig into their own pockets. While the Florida State Elks Association provided the Lodge with a significant donation, it did not cover all the costs of travel and lodging. Several dinners and a raffle were conducted to raise money.

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The Lodge’s PER Association held a cookout in late July featuring a half pig on the grill. While the pig is not the secret ingredient, the Lodge also served a side dish to share. ER Keith White stood like a soldier at the grill and cooked whatever was brought to him. The event was a resounding success.

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Indoctrination: to teach. Teach: to help to learn; to show how.

These are so important to the survival of our Order and the reason our committee takes that commitment seriously. Each Lodge should examine their existing program and its effectiveness.

Grand Exalted Ruler, F. Louis Sulsberger, in his acceptance speech, highlighted the importance of membership retention and our ability to make these members active and knowledgeable about our Order. This is why Indoctrination is the key to that goal of membership retention. We have the task to ensure that each new member is taught the three “Ps” – Protocol, Procedures, and Programs of our Order ensuring the ability of these members to be the future leaders of our Order.

To accomplish the goals set by our Grand Exalted Ruler, each and every Lodge must become involved – most importantly, the Officers of the Lodge and Ladies Organization (if applicable). In addition there should be at least six committee chairmen, including the Harry-Anna Trust Fund and National Foundation Chairmen. This is most important due to the apprehension of some new members when they learn of the multitude of jobs and activities of the Lodge and throughout the Order. These new members mistakenly believe they are expected to join all areas of the Lodge. By being there to showcase your committee and answer questions, you are helping these new members decide on specific activities and programs they feel most comfortable becoming involved in.

For a successful program, we must be prepared from Invitation letters to the candidates to a “kit” of informational Elks publications. This information, along with suggested supplies and agenda, has been sent to all Lodges. Please use them and together we can operate as a team effectively presenting a revitalized Indoctrination program.

Please contact me or Vice Chairman Robert Carroll if we can be of any help or assistance with your program.
I joined the Elks because my buddies were members and I wanted to be able to be a part of the fun they had there on the weekends. A member of that tight knot group asked me to join and I accepted that invitation.

Shortly after my initiation, we formed a Sunday Brunch Crew, working from 7 a.m. until noon, which I enjoyed. About a year later, I became dissatisfied with something in the Lodge and was frustrated because I didn’t know how to change it. I planned to let my membership lapse.

When a friend who was Esquire designate for the coming year asked if I was interested in becoming Inner Guard, I asked if I would have any say in how the Lodge was run. He said not much at first but that I would later on. I said I would take the position and he introduced me to the Exalted Ruler Elect.

He said he would appoint me to that chair and explained when our first ritual practice was and that I was required to be there. I still didn’t know what an Inner Guard was, so I showed for the practice without a clue.

Our coach, Rich Lane, had to walk me through that practice word by word and step by step. When I asked why he was so particular and picky about how I was doing the part, he said I had to do it that way for the competition. That stunned me! I said, “what competition?” He explained how every district had a contest to determine the Lodge whose officers perform the Initiation the best. The winner goes to a state contest where they compete against the winners of the other district contests. The state winner goes to a Grand Lodge competition with all other state first place teams.

When I asked what I had to do to take first place, he said just do what I tell you to do. That wasn’t enough. I said that the rules must be written down somewhere. So he gave me a copy of the Ritual and the Ritualistic Manual. That was my first ritual practice.

We started in January practicing once a week. The Lodge PERs performed the initiation in February so there was no problem with the continuing officers getting their old and new parts mixed up. By initiation night in March we were ready for our first appearance before the Lodge. We called it “step-up night” because most officers simply moved up one chair to their new position to perform the initiation. We all knew our parts well enough to impress the candidates though there were a few small mistakes. About a week later we were installed as the new Lodge Officers.

Practice continued once a week. By the time Initiation night came in April we were polished and ready, or so we thought. We looked good with just a few hiccups.

Two weeks before the district contest in May we started practicing Monday through Friday at 5:30 a.m. At that time of day no one had an excuse that they couldn’t be there. Rich had the Lodge room set up by the time we arrived and we started “on time.” Forty-seven minutes later we were finished and Rich critiqued the officers who had to leave for work first. We were all out of there before 7 a.m. After two weeks of that the District contest couldn’t come soon enough.

All 12 Lodges in the district competed in the contest and it took a day and a half for all of them to be judged. I had a great time socializing with the other Lodge Officers and met Elks all over the district who will be close friends forever. At the awards banquet on Saturday night our Lodge was awarded most of the 1st place plaques and we won that contest. I was fortunate to take 1st place Inner Guard and I became “snake bit” on Ritual Competition.

Our coach, Rich, couldn’t have been more proud of the team in spite of a scare by the Exalted Ruler leaving out a rap of the gavel.

When we returned home on Sunday we talked about a new practice schedule to prepare for State Competition in June. Two weeks before the contest we started the 5:30 a.m. sessions again five days a week. We were not too grumpy about it this time.

Just before we left for state, reality set in and I got nervous. “What if I came in last after all the confidence and support that the Lodge members had shown?” I sure didn’t want to let them down. Rich assured me I would not be last. As it turned out, we won 1st place in our division and were in the final four. Again, the Exalted Ruler had omitted a gavel rap; a different one this time. His wife dubbed him “The Rapless Wonder”, a name that has stuck with him to this day.

Back at the hotel we asked if they had a vacant conference room we could use for an hour. They were very accommodating and we had one more practice session. We must have needed it because we won the finals by about only .01 points. Wow! But what a high! The next day a happy team headed home with a huge trophy. Rich was right – I was All-State Inner Guard with a plaque to prove it.

We had about a month to prepare for the national contest. Rich gave us a couple of days off and we were back at it again. A couple of the Lodges in the district asked if we would come to their Lodge and initiate their new members. We readily accepted the offer, wanting to get in all the practice and experience we could. One very benevolent lodge surprised us with a check for $500 to help defray the cost of our trip. We couldn’t thank them enough.

We found out that that small lodge had held fundraising activities for a month to raise the money: Brotherly love in action!

We again started the 5:30 a.m. practices a couple of weeks before we headed for the national contest in Atlanta. This time we knew we needed it. The competition would be fierce as they were all first place winners in their state. But one item of note about every contest we were in: Every team always wished the very best to every other team as they headed for the contest room. Is that camaraderie or what?

The contest in Atlanta was one I’ll never forget. There were literally hundreds of spectators in the contest room and they came to see us perform. What a rush! We didn’t win the contest but it was an experience I will never forget. That did not stop me from working hard in the following years to get to national again, and we did, thanks to our coach, Rich Lane. His enthusiasm for ritual was contagious. And he’s still coaching over 20 years later.

I have been involved with ritual in one form or another for the past 20 years either as an officer; coach; district or state committeeman; or as a judge. Compared to some other coaches and judges, I’m still a rookie, but I still love it!

I love seeing a candidate getting initiated and expressing his thanks for a beautiful ceremony that obviously requires a lot of effort from the Lodge officers.

The Ritual of Initiation sets us apart from other organizations. I appreciate the opportunity to sit in for an officer when he is unable to be at a Lodge meeting particularly on initiation night. But I sure miss being in a contest.

Hey, come to think of it, I never did compete as a Chaplain. Hmmm!

Written by Beryle Farmer, PER of Lompoc, CA Lodge 2274.
Currently a member of Holley-Navarre Lodge 2787 and State Ritual Committee Vice Chairman.
Winter Haven Lodge 1672

Winter Haven Elks Exalted Ruler Ryan Sanders gives an appropriate quote that should be applied to all Elks in their everyday activities; “People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

Some 14 Winter Haven Elks had the opportunity to express that quote on August 18th when 21 Orlando Elks while on their Mystery Trip made a stop at the Winter Haven Lodge and were treated to an afternoon Mystery Luncheon. ER Sanders says, “this should remind us that we are not just a Lodge; we are a collective of Lodges throughout the nation. While new membership is important we also remember our existing members, and the time and effort they put in on an event like this with such short notice. Hats off to all who helped make the visitors welcome.”

As of September 1st, the Lodge has received two different forms for Elks scholarships for 2008. The Most Valuable Student Scholarship is for any senior in high school continuing on to college. The other scholarship program is for members of Elks families. All you have to do is stop by and pick them up. The Winter Haven Lodge judges the application based on a point system dictated by national guidelines. Then the applications are passed on to the district evaluation to be compared with the other applications and finally to the national for the final decision. The Lodge has to have the applications in by January and you need to get reference letters, etc. The Elks are only second to the government in awarding scholarships nationwide.

Plant City Lodge 1727

The Plant City Lodge recently donated two wheelchairs to the Health Science Department of Plant City High School (PCHS). Steven Hancock is the President of the HOA at the Plant City High School and he received these chairs on behalf of PCHS which is one of a few high schools that offers clinical trials in cooperation with South Florida Baptist Hospital here in Plant City and the local Fire and Rescue team from PCFD. HOA is the Health Occupation Science of America. These chairs were presented to HOA by a Lodge Trustee, Frank LaBarbara, who cleaned them up with the help of Elk volunteers and proudly delivered them to Steven in time for the new school year. Plant City Lodge received a grateful letter of appreciation from Bobbi Fortner who is the RN and Health Science teacher at Plant City High School who stated they were lacking funds to purchase suitable chairs for their classes. Plant City Lodge is happy to share this story with the SWC District.

Sebring 1529

Due to deteriorating health, Exalted Ruler Jack Kalish had to resign his position. Members all wish him the best in this time of serious medical problems. Past Exalted Ruler Dick Stover accepted the nomination to replace brother Kalish and was elected by the membership in August.

The Lodge received a $300 award from the Elks National Foundation for exceeding the GER’s per-capital goal per member with $4.20 per member and a total of $3,430 donated. The $300 is to be used for charity only and the Lodge gave it to the Veterans Council Relief Fund at the July 4th Salute to Veterans. Sebring Mayor George Hensley made a speech at the 9:30 am program.

During the first week of Instant Bingo pull-tab sales, $800 of tickets were purchased with many of the smaller winners parlaying their winning into more purchases. All of the proceeds go into the Bingo Charity account.

Lake Placid Lodge 2661

A little known occurrence happens at the Lake Placid Elks Memorial Day ceremonies. The American flag that flies on these days has flown before in the United States Capitol. Jerry Pasqino acquired the flags from Senators Bill Nelson and Bob Graham. He also donated a flag the once flew over the USS Arizona at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 2002.

Bob Moran, the Lodge ENF Chairman presented the PER Association a framed certificate as Honoree Founders for having donated $1,000 to further the Foundation’s purpose and ideals.

Arcadia Lodge 1524

Thanks to the generosity of two anonymous members and another who obtained prizes for a raffle for additional money for campers and along with the FSEA camper scholarships, Arcadia Lodge sent eight kids to camp this summer.

A very generous member, Bob Vaughn, donated an air conditioner for Secretary Nancy Higginbotham’s office. Her husband, the secretary, the secretary, Al, made the installation.

The Lodge put together a box of goodies for CPL Joseph Newton, who is serving in Iraq. He recently sent the Lodge a thank you letter for remembering him and his fellow soldiers over there.

Lake Wales Lodge 1974

The Elkettes of Lake Wales Lodge raised over $3,000 for the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services. The money was raised by the Elkettes through various fundraisers during the year. The climax was a silent auction that raised over half the amount. The money was presented to Ben S. Brown, Administrator of the Children’s Therapy Services, by Exalted Ruler Henry Seay and Elkette President Charlotte Winger.

The Southwest Central District is represented in Florida Elkdom with Beverly Messerschmidt from Brandon Lodge, she is the 2007-2008 Florida Ladies of Elks President and Past State President Donald Sansoussi from Lake Placid Lodge.

Brandon Lodge 2383

In addition to the camper scholarships provided by the Florida Elks Youth Camp the Lodge along with the Brandon Ladies of Elks sent eight other youngsters to the Florida Elks Youth Camp this past summer. C.J. McKinney and her volunteers drove the kids to and from the campgrounds.

Brandon Lodge received the following awards at the State Convention: Best Opening and Closing in the SWC District; Best Youth Activities Programs Division III; First Place Division III Lodge Bulletin, “The Bugle,” and Highest Per-Capita Division III Harry-Anna Trust Fund.

Wauchula Lodge 1700

Wauchula Lodge lost one of its hardest working Elks in March. Ramon “Buck” Disharoon had been an Elk for 38 years and served as the club manager, on several committees, and as the Lodge Secretary. The Lodge will miss him. Keep his wife, Wanda, and his family in your prayers.

Wauchula’s August bulletin has an advisory about matching donation to the Elks National Foundation as part of a corporate giving program by Bank of America, Enterprise, JC Penney and Pfizer and possibly other employers. They will match your donation to Elks National Foundation with no additional cost to you on your payroll deductions from your paycheck.

Wauchula Lodge sponsored the Southwest Central District Golf Tournament in August and had over 50 Elks and non-Elks playing. It raised over $4,000 which will be used for the district hospitality room at the convention.

Two $1,000 scholarships went to Jared T. Arnold who is attending South Florida Community College.
The following list of donors is the first to be added to the Florida Elks Charities Donor Wall. Each succeeding issue of this publication will include the names of new donors or those donors who have reached a new donor level. The 70,000 readers of the Florida Elks News express their deep admiration for the extraordinary generosity to our charitable endeavors. NOTE: This new program of recognition began on January 1, 2007 and does not include donations made prior to January 1, 2007.


**Patrons** - $10,000 - $24,999 - Catherine Anderson Trust, Albert Dupont Trust, Walter F. Goodnoough Trust, E. Ruth Grant Trust, Punta Gorda Lodge #2606, Ft. Pierce Elks Lodge #1520, FL Elks State Golf Tournament

**Benefactors** - $25,000 - $49,999 - Estate of Arthur Bonenfant, Estate of Ruth R. & Milton B. Palen

**Visionaries** - $50,000 and up - Amedee J. Legoaix Trust, Helen Fisher Trust, Lillian I. Warnock Trust