WELCOME TO FLORIDA
GER F. LOUIS SULSBERGER

Jacksonville Lodge No. 221 is pleased to announce the official opening of their new Lodge building, Wednesday, February 6, 2008. They are further pleased to announce that Grand Exalted Ruler, F. Louis Sulserber, has consented to be present and assist in commemorating this important occasion. The members are justifiably proud of the distinction as the "Mother Lodge" of Florida.

The National President of the Elks will arrive on Delta flight 1244 in Jacksonville the afternoon of February 6. He will be met by Past Grand Exalted Rulers Robert Grafton, the state sponsor, and his wife Pat and C. Valentine Bates and his wife Claudia. Other Elk Dignitaries meeting the GER will be the President of Florida State Elks Association David Lake and wife Kathy; Vice President at Large Joe Ortiz and wife Rita; Past State President Michael Smith and wife Sandra, and the District Deputy to the Grand Exalted Ruler of the Northeast District, Ted Beal and wife Judy.

Following the Dedication Ceremony, the GER’S party will return to the Radisson Hotel in Jacksonville. Thursday morning the GER’S party will depart the hotel and travel by car caravan to the Florida Elks Youth Camp. Lunch will be served at the Youth Camp. Thursday afternoon the ladies will go shopping and the GER will be given a tour of the camp.

Meetings will be with the Past State Presidents Advisory Council on Friday morning, other meetings will follow on Friday and end on Saturday afternoon. A formal talk by the GER to all attending the State Major Projects meeting in the Gymnasium-Auditorium around 11:30 on Saturday.

The 55-year old Grand Exalted Ruler was educated in Flora, Illinois. After college he became an independent petroleum land man working in the Illinois Basin. He formed his own oil company, Lou-Lin-Co., Inc., in 1983 and is still the President. He later worked in the automotive industry in sales eventually becoming sales manager in a General Motors dealership. He married the former Elizabeth Marie Putbrese in August of 1988.

He joined the Flora, Illinois Elks Lodge 1659 in 1973 and eventually progressed through the many Lodge officer positions until he became the Exalted Ruler of the Lodge in 1986. He led his officers to State Championships of the Ritual for five years. In 1988 he was elected to serve his district in Illinois as Vice President and next year as District Deputy to the Grand Exalted Ruler. He was a five-year member of the Board of Directors of the state’s Major Project; the Illinois Elks Children’s Care Corporation. After serving Illinois through three Vice Presidencies he was elected as the Illinois Elks State Association President in 1998.

He served as a member of the Grand Lodge Ritualistic Committee for three years and was elected to the Board of Grand Trustees serving in various positions until he was Chairman of the Board 2006-2007.

His motto is: “Elks – United to Serve Others.” Lou and Beth look forward to spreading the message of the good works of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

ARMY OF HOPE PICNICS
Providing Support to Our Military Families

Dear Friends:

It is always a pleasure to welcome our Grand Exalted Ruler (National President) to Florida Elksdom at our February meeting at our fabulous Youth Camp.

This year we are delighted to greet F. Louis Sulserber who is from Illinois.

Lou and his wife, Beth, bring vitality and enthusiasm to our Order and we will welcome them.

Far too often we forget the sacrifices our men and women make and had made as part of their military service. We have a tremendous opportunity to do something to aid them and their families.

The Army of Hope Picnics are the vehicles to raise a significant amount of money to be used to aid families of deceased military from Florida as a result of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, aid amputees of those wars, and provide the Lodges with the ability to aid in funding for family members of military currently on duty in the two war areas.

This is one of those rare times in the history of our Country where there is debate about a war or wars in which we are involved. Imagine, please, you are in the military stationed in one of the war zones and the media keeps insisting you are in a “bad” or “pointless” war. You have family back home about whom you worry. Are they taken care of for necessities?

This is not only our opportunity to be of help; it is our responsibility to do everything in our power to make all of the young military realize our Country supports them.

Details about this important program will appear elsewhere in this issue. Your energetic support is so important.

I trust your holidays were filled with love and happiness and your new year will provide even more blessings.

FLORIDA ELKS NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION
A FRATERNAL ORGANIZATION

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We have just completed our visits to all 14 districts in our state. In October we attended the FLOE Conference that was held at the Rialto Hilton Hotel in Melbourne. It was great to hear the accomplishments of FLOE this past year and to attend the installation of their officers for the coming year. Thank you, ladies, for all you do for Florida’s children and Elksdom.

When we visited the Southwest Central District we had a wonderful barbeque beef brisket dinner on Friday evening at the Plant City Lodge which was followed by the show, “The Las Vegas Revue” with Ruby Tuesday, Keith Coleman, and Stix. On Saturday we toured Cypress Gardens followed by the official visit at Lakeland Lodge that evening.

Our next visit was to the Central District. Friday evening we had dinner at the Brooksville Lodge. On Saturday morning we had breakfast at West Citrus Lodge followed by a tour of Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park and lunch. Saturday evening was the official visit to West Citrus Lodge where we enjoyed hors d’oeuvres and a wonderful meal prepared by Chef Yannie. There was also a musical presentation by the Homosassa Elementary School that was enjoyed by all present. In the next issue of Florida Elks News I will include in my message the conclusion of our visits to the districts.

The last week of October we attended the Trust Fund Seminar followed by the New Smyrna Beach New Lodge Dedication Ceremony.

In November, our Mid-year Convention was held in Orlando which was attended by Past Grand Exalted Ruler James M. McQuillan and his wife, Karen. It was a great convention with a lot of reports and information shared with all in attendance on our progress for the year. We also welcomed onto our team Vince Como as your Endorsed VPAL and his wife Lisa. The weather was perfect and I feel everyone had a wonderful time. Following the convention, we attended the Kissimmee Lodge’s Veterans’ Day Program and barbecue.

In December we attended the Christmas Lighting Ceremony at the Elks National Home in Bedford, Virginia. While we had the opportunity to visit with the residents from Florida. We also had the opportunity to visit with other Elks from across the United States who were there attending the ceremony.

Kathy and I are enjoying this year representing you, the Elks of Florida, as we travel throughout our state promoting all of our programs and our major projects. We are ¾ of the way through our State Association year and the February Quarterly is upon us. This year we will be honored by the visit of our Grand Exalted Ruler, F. Louis Sultsberger, and his wife Beth. We will also have as our guests the State President of the Georgia State Elks Association, C. V. Alligood and his wife, Leonell.

I hope that your Lodge is working towards accomplishing all the goals that you have set for this year. Many lodges are using the “Magic Number Program” to help them in achieving their membership goal. Also let us not forget our goal of $1,000,000.00 for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund and the goal of $4.25 per member for the Elks National Foundation. Remember that by working together we can accomplish our goals and we can continue “Making a Difference In a Child’s Life.”

Thank you for your support and may God bless you and your families.

Exalter Ruler and Secretary Seminars

The Exalter Ruler and Secretary Seminars will again be held in March 2008. This is one of the most important and required meetings that officers who will be in charge of our Lodges can attend. All Lodges need the information and details presented to best perform the duties necessary to be a leader by having a successful year for Lodges in Elksdom.

The seminar staff is composed of hardworking Elks who have knowledge and work very hard to prepare for two weekends of programs for the benefit of those who can use their assistance. They are dedicated to getting you the most up-to-date information available from the State Association, Grand Lodge, and Statutes of the Order. I’m convinced if these dedicated Elks are willing to volunteer their time and travel for this program each year that there should be no reason not to have one hundred percent participation by all Lodges in the state of Florida. When the two days are finished, those attending will be better informed and qualified as an ER or Secretary of their Lodge.

On March 8-9 (Saturday 10:00 a.m. until noon on Sunday) the seminar will be held at the Florida Mall Hotel in Orlando. The next weekend, March 15-16, the second seminar will be held at the Holiday Inn in Lake City. At both locations a box lunch will be served at 12:30 p.m. Saturday. Cocktails with the State President Elect are at 6:00 p.m., dinner is at 7:30 p.m., and a free breakfast Sunday morning is at 7:00 a.m. We will have you headed home by noon on Sunday.

As Chairman of the seminars I cannot express enough to the Lodges how important this program can be to our officers. The Lodges should budget the funds and register with our State Secretary, Carl Seibert, as soon as possible when the Exalter Ruler and Secretary are elected for the 2008-2009 Lodge year. I personally have been involved since the inception of this program; as we cover material I learn something new even after fifteen years, so I encourage your attendance. It will be the best time you will spend as an ER or Secretary. If you have problems attending Orlando you can come to Lake City or vice versa. We will work with you per your schedule. I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the seminars.

Unity, Dedication, Involvement – “Let’s Communicate”

Tom Elmore—Chairman
The November mid-year meetings were held at the Wyndham Orlando Resort November 8-10. 508 Elks and guests were in attendance which was our best attendance in five years. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped to make our mid-year meetings a success. Also a big thank you to Joe Ortiz for the tremendous help of the Grand Lodge Ritual Committee. The FSEA PSP Charlie Trinowski. Mary Ann is the Alternate Delegate from the North Central District and a great job! Carl T. Seibert, PDD

The 2007 convention proceedings and annual reports books were received and distributed this year at the Mid-Year Convention. We still have a supply of the books available however we are trying to save on postage costs. The books will next be available at the February Quarterly meeting. PSPs Betty Pickenpaugh and Dolores Casella will be making the presentations for all of their hard work during the convention.

The February Quarterly meetings will be held at the Youth Camp February 7-9, 2008. Information will go out around the first of the year. Hotel reservations are sometimes hard to come by in February in the Eustis area, so you might want to go ahead and make your hotel reservations if you have not already done so. A list of area hotels is located on our web site at www.flelks.org.

The 2008 State Convention will be held May 22-25 at Disney’s Coronado Springs Resort and Convention Center. Reservation information will soon be available on our web site and will also be mailed out in early January.

Please make your reservations as early as you possibly can and please understand your room assignment has nothing to do with when you make your reservation. Your room is not selected for you until you arrive at the resort and then it is chosen from those rooms ready and available. Last year 215 of our 804 rooms checked in on Wednesday and 535 were occupied by Thursday. Since there are approximately 200 rooms in each of the five buildings we are normally housed in, the closest buildings (1, 2, & 3) are full by Thursday. If you arrive on Friday, chances are you will be housed in one of the farther buildings. It is no guarantee, but if you arrive by Thursday, you probably have a better chance of being assigned a room in one of the closer buildings. Our reserved block will sell out so please plan accordingly and do not wait until the last minute to make your reservations for the 2008 State Convention!

This month our Lodges will be electing new leaders for the coming year. I believe that one of the best investments of time and money a Lodge can make is in seeing that their new leaders are properly indoctrinated about their jobs. To assist in that endeavor, the Florida State Elks Association will be holding seminars for all Exalted Rulers Elect and all Secretaries Elect. The dates and locations of these seminars are as follows:

- **March 8th & 9th – Orlando, FL – Florida [Mall] Hotel and Conference Center**
- **March 15th & 16th – Lake City, FL – Holiday Inn**

New this year, the Harry-Anna Trust Fund will be sponsoring a breakfast on Sunday morning. Several presentations will be made during the breakfast so all attendees will be expected to attend. We will be working on dual tracks this year for a portion of the Secretaries seminar. This will allow us to offer more targeted training for the new versus experienced secretaries. We also hope to offer training on YUMA 6.0 and the new Chicago Lodge Management System (CLMS).

The seminars will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday and conclude by noon on Sunday. If the distance prevents you from traveling Saturday morning, you will want to plan to arrive for the seminar on Friday evening. If you are fortunate enough to be bestowed with the honor of Exalted Ruler Elect or Secretary Elect this month, I hope you will make every effort to attend one of these training seminars. Information has already been sent to your Lodge, and it is also available at our web site at www.flelks.org. Our goal for this training is 100% participation, and each year we come very close to attaining this goal. Let’s make 2008 the year we reach it!

Incidentally, a seminar for Lodge Treasurers, Trustees, and House Committee Chairmen is held each year at the mid-year convention. Please keep this in mind when preparing your Lodge budgets for next year and see that these officers and committee members are afforded the ability to attend this very important training.

The 2008 Grand Lodge Convention will be held in Anaheim, CA July 6th through the 10th. The Florida delegation will be housed at the Crowne Plaza Resort Anaheim which is located about 1.6 miles from the Convention Center. Hotel registration information and order forms for event tickets will be mailed in January/February and will also be available at our web site. All hotel reservations for the Florida delegation hotel must be made through the State Association office. There is no pre-registration for the Grand Lodge Convention as it takes place on-site at the convention center. If you will be attending the Grand Lodge Convention and will be making your own lodging arrangements, and if you would like to be informed of the activities and events of the convention, please notify the State Office so we may add you to our attendance list.

As in the Lodges, the next few months will be especially hectic at the State Association offices as we prepare for conventions, seminars, and a new slate of officers, directors, and committee men. Please be timely, prompt, and accurate in your responses to our requests for information and assistance. Most everything we do is now published on our web site so please get in the habit of checking there first when looking for the latest event information and updates. Also, if you would like to be notified by e-mail when new event information is posted on our web site, please e-mail us with the address or addresses you would like to have added to our database. Please remember, if you have your e-mail address, you will not receive information by regular mail.

The staff of the Florida State Elks Association is here to serve our association and its members. We value your opinion and recommendations always. Please don’t hesitate to contact me at (800) 523-1673 extension 230 or by e-mail at carl@mpinet.net.

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**FLORIDA LADIES OF ELKS**

_Beverly Messerschmidt, President_

Dear Florida Ladies of Elks and Elks,

The 2007-2008 FLOE year gets off to a great start at the Mid-year Meeting held at the Wyndham Resort and Convention Center on Orlando on November 10, 2007.

PSP Dolores Casella gave the wrap-up portion of the meeting for the 2006-2007 year. Dolores had a very successful year. Many of the chairmen gave us some very helpful recommendations for the 2008 Conference. Congratulations, Dolores, for a great job! Carl T. Seibert, PDD

The committees for the May Luncheon and the 2008 Conference were announced. Everyone seems to be ready to start on their respective committees right away. Thanks go to those ladies who have stepped forward to chair these committees. The luncheon will be held Saturday, May 25, 2008 at Disney’s Coronado Springs Resort in Orlando. The luncheon is open to everyone attending the Elks State Convention. Packets will be distributed at the Quarterly meeting in February. Committee Chairmen for the luncheon please send your flyers to me by January 15, 2008 so they will be included in the packets.

It is my honor and pleasure to serve as the President of the Florida Ladies of Elks for the 2007-2008 year. I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the Quarterly meeting, please stop and introduce yourself to me. The theme for this year is “Unity and Friendship”. Colors are navy blue and yellow. A yellow rose has been chosen for the symbol representing friendship. I have made so many friends throughout Florida over the years and I am looking forward to making lots of new ones this year. As we work together to attain unity in our lodges, districts, and the state, remember to meet the person you’re working along side of with a smile and a “let’s get it done” attitude. Why? - because “Together We’re Better.”
Florida residents of the Elks National Home gather with the Florida delegation that visited the National Home for the Christmas Lighting Ceremony.

Once again it was an honor for me to attend the Christmas Lighting Ceremony in Bedford, Virginia at the Elks National Home Retirement Center. Since 1992 after being appointed Florida Coordinator for the ENH, I have not missed one Christmas Holiday Season to visit with the Florida residents and other friends to see Christmas come to life when the guest speaker pushes the big red button to bring displays and thousands of lights to the on position. What a beautiful sight it is.

On Friday morning as has been our custom, we meet with the Florida residents at 10:00 a.m. to bring them news and events that have taken place in Florida Elkdom and to tell them about the success of our wonderful Major Projects in Florida. We deliver the stockings from the dedicated FLOE (who have delivered them to me at Mid-year for fifteen years) and other gifts for each one of our own who have so proudly that Florida Elks remember them all year long with gifts and donations to the entertainment fund to assist the staff in planning events for the residents’ enjoyment.

Those in attendance this year at the Christmas Lighting Ceremony were State President David Lake and wife Kathy; PSP, PGELDGK Tom Elmore and Pep; and PDDGER James Hollingsworth and wife Barbara.

The fruit that we ship each year is enjoyed by all residents but you can be assured the Florida residents remind the others where the fruit comes from. The trip is a real tiring one because of the distance and time involved and sometimes the conditions but it’s worth every minute when it’s known how much our residents appreciate the thought and time to remember them as Florida Elks.

If you know of an Elk who may need the use of our facility, please discuss options with them. Information is available in detail that could be the answer to problems that someone may face in the future. Being involved with other residents who all have something in common could make a difference as they live the best of their life. May the Lord bless each of you for your past and continued support. On behalf of the staff and residents I say, “Thank You.”

Greetings Florida Elks Members!

For those of you who don’t know me, I work in the State Office with our State Secretary, Carl Seibert. One of my main responsibilities is maintaining and updating the donor database for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. This means that I set up new certificates, apply payments to existing certificates, and record one-time donations. This allows me to later send out yearly invoices for certificates as well as answer questions regarding a donor’s giving history. I also mail out certificates, pins, and thank you letters to all donors. Since I work with the Trust Fund on a daily basis, I would like to refresh your memories about what the Trust Fund is and how participating in it works.

The Harry-Anna Trust Fund supports the two Major Projects sponsored by the Florida State Elks Association: the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services and the Florida Elks Youth Camp. As you know, these two projects do so much for Florida’s children.

The most common way to be a donor in the Trust Fund is to open a certificate. We have five series to choose from:

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<th>Series</th>
<th>Total Amount</th>
<th>Payment Plan</th>
<th>Acknowledgement Gift</th>
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<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td>One Time Installment</td>
<td>Certificate &amp; Current Year’s Pin (changes annually)</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>$20.00 a year for 5 years</td>
<td>Certificate &amp; Bronze Pin</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>$50.00 a year for 10 years</td>
<td>Certificate &amp; Silver Pin</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>$100.00 a year for 10 years</td>
<td>Certificate &amp; Gold Pin</td>
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<td>V</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>$1,000.00 a year for 5 years</td>
<td>Name on Donor Recognition Wall at the Florida Elks Youth Camp</td>
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Once you make your initial payment, you will receive a yearly invoice starting the following year. For example, if you start a certificate in February, you will receive your first invoice the following January. Upon completion of your certificate payments, you are mailed a certificate and pin to recognize your generosity. The same applies to those who pay their certificates in full or who make payments more frequently than the annual basis or in higher payment amounts.

We also accept one-time donations as well if it is more convenient for you to give what you can when you can instead of signing up for a yearly donation. These donations are acknowledged with a thank you letter.

Donations can be made using a check (made payable to Harry-Anna Trust Fund), any of the four major credit cards, or cash. In order to begin a new certificate or make a one-time donation, please fill out a Harry-Anna Trust Fund certificate subscription form. This helps me in processing your request. Be sure to fill it out in full, which includes providing your name, address, Lodge name and number, series type, and amount of your installment or one-time donation. They should be mailed to Harry-Anna Trust Fund, P.O. Box 49, Umatilla, FL 32784-0049. These forms are available at your Lodge, from your Lodge Trust Fund chairman, or from me. Please feel free to contact me at 1-800-523-1673 ext. 221 or at rachael@mpinet.net for assistance or to have any questions answered. I am glad to help all of you who are so kind to donate to such a worthy cause. The continuation of Florida’s Major Projects depends on generous members like you. I look forward to hearing from you!
Florida Elks Youth Camp

Summer Camp 2008

Week 1 June 15th - 21st
Week 2 22nd - 28th
Week 3 29th - July 5th
Week 4 July 6th - 12th
Week 5 13th - 19th
Week 6 20th - 26th

February BBQ Dinner

Our Past State President Advisory Council is sponsoring a BBQ Friday, February 8th, 2008. Dinner will be served buffet style from 5 PM until 8 PM. Recreations – a group of young people sponsored by Grand Lodge will perform at 5:30 PM. Come enjoy the dinner and entertainment with the Grand Exalted Ruler!

Tickets $7.00 at the door & reserve ahead by calling (800) 523-1673 (X 232). This helps us greatly in planning the dinner.

A voice mail be will set up on (800) 523-1673 extension 232 to leave your name, lodge, and number of tickets. The tickets will be available at the door.

The annual CP Camp was again enjoyed by the therapists and some of their patients. Thanks to FECTS, the therapists, the Youth Camp and staff, these kids enjoy a weekend filled with activities that they would normally not be able to participate in. Your support and donations make these weekends possible! Keep up the great work!
Daytona Beach Lodge 1141
Linda Behnke, Lecturing Knight; Jessica White; and John Faile distributed drug awareness information to New Smyrna High School in partnership with People for Drug Free Youth for Make A Difference Day.

The Lodge held its first East Central District Ride for Kids Poker Run raising $1,300 for Florida’s Major Projects.

Lodge Chairman for Veterans’ Affairs, Art Wilson, along with Lodge member Mike Linders of the AmVets 911 Color Guard, hosted the annual Veterans Appreciation Spaghetti Dinner greeting veterans from 15 nursing homes including the Emory Bennett Nursing Home veterans.

The Lodge held a children’s Christmas Party for children of members and children of the Volusia County School for the Blind on Saturday, December 22nd.

Deland Lodge 1463
A veterans’ cookout was held at the Daytona Beach Veterans’ Home on November 10th. Members continue to contribute to the “Sock It To Me” program of donated socks and lap blankets are distributed to veterans in nursing homes.

A homecoming dinner for District Vice President Tom Pollard and the First Lady of the District, Tina Pollard, was held on Saturday, November 17th at the Lodge.

The 36th annual Hoop Shoot Contest was held on Saturday, December 8th at the Deland Middle School. There was a total of 69 boys and girls that who competed from 15 different elementary and middle schools.

A breakfast consisting of pancakes, scrambled eggs, juice, and coffee honoring all veterans and their families was also held on December 8th. A veterans’ Christmas Party was held at the Emory L. Bennett Nursing Home on December 18th. They now have an e-mail address deanyeager@bellsouth.net.

Ormond Beach Lodge 2193
Red Ribbon Week was a huge success. Parents, children, teachers, and friends joined in the march held on October 24th which supported the elementary students with drug awareness materials that included 450 red ribbons, 1,000 red ribbon stickers, 200 coloring books, and 200 bookmarks.

The Annual Benefit Golf Tournament for Florida Elks Charities was held on October 20th at the Pelican Bay Country Club.

The Ladies Auxiliary sponsored an Oktoberfest on October 27th. Packages of toiletry articles, food, reading and writing materials, and puzzles are sent to our troops each by the Ladies Auxiliary. The Ladies held their annual Chinese Auction on November 3rd.

Alexia Johnson from Tomoka Elementary won first place in the Americanism Essay Contest. Her theme was on the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Exalted Ruler, Elaine Shutte, PER presented Vicky Chan to the District; the PERs; Ladies Auxiliary; and members who attended the dedication ceremony on October 27th.

Veterans past and present were honored at an annual Veterans’ Day Ceremony at the Sea Pines Cemetery on November 11th and were joined by the American Legion Post 285 of Edgewater.

The Hoop Shoot was held at the Alonzo Babe James Community Center Center on December 8th for kids between the ages of 8-13. Participating schools were Chisholm Elementary, Coronado Elementary, Edgewater Public School, Reed Patillo Elementary, W.F. Burns (Oak Hill), Sacred Heart Catholic (NSB) and New Smyrna Beach Middle School.

Palm Coast Lodge 2709
For the troops in Iraq, the Lodge collected and sent 300 pairs of socks, 70 cans of foot powder, razors, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, and other toiletries.

The Pub-Time Singers, who are Jim Bolling; his wife, Melanie; and John LaCorte, member helped raise $300 for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. These enthusiastic Elks hope to raise more money for Harry-Anna during the holiday season. This was a great job, guys.

The Ladies Auxiliary was busy with hosting a first time Harvest Ball event as well as hosting their annual rummage/bake sale and Halloween and Christmas parties.

The Lodge held its Veterans’ Day Dance on November 10th and on November 17th a veterans’ seminar with Flagler County Veterans Service Officer Sal Rutigliano, as guest speaker, who spoke on veterans’ benefits, filing claims, survival benefits, and retired servicemen family protection plan.

A Thanksgiving Grand Buffet was held on November 22nd. Hoop Shoot finals at the Buddy Taylor School were held on Sunday, December 2nd for boys and girls ages 8-13. The annual Christmas Party was held on December 12th; New Year’s Eve Party was a sell out, again this year.

The Lodge had a tree on display at one of the local libraries for the “Festival of Trees” on December 1st.

Port Orange Lodge 2723
Drug Awareness Chairman, Angelo Cretella arranged to have the district drug trailer there. Volunteers handed out packets filled with alcohol and drug information to parents and young adults. Americanism Chairman Joe Lent and his wife, Susan, rode around giving out applications for the Americanism Contest. Membership Chairman, John Ingle, Jr., handed out brochures and invitations to come and visit the Lodge.

The Lodge held its annual Open House Pig Roast on Saturday, November 10th.

Lodge Veterans’ Chairman Ed Jackson hosted a Veterans’ Day Picnic held at the Emory L. Bennett Nursing Home on Sunday, November 14th.

Russ Rice, longtime Orange Peal Editor, retired as editor to write his memoir. Susan Lent is the new editor and is doing an excellent job.

The Lodge was honored by a visit from Naval Medic Ronald Liddell who is stationed in Portsmouth, Virginia and is attached to a US Marine unit in Camp Jejune, North Carolina. Ron is the grandson of PER and Lodge Advisor Sonny Armstrong.

The Lodge is proud to be the recipient of an Impact Grant for our Meals On Wheels Program to seniors in the community designated by the Council on Aging for the past 17 years. Thanks go to Chairman Don Rambert and Lodge Secretary Vivian Rauer who wrote the grant.

The Ladies hosted a Thanksgiving Dinner/Dance, a Fall Fashion Show, a Bake Sale, and a Christmas Party.

Titusville Lodge 2113
The Lodge had its annual Adopt-A-Highway on Saturday, October 27th.

The Lodge is proud to announce a newly formed ladies group the Caribou Candos. These ladies are comprised of lady chair officers, officers’ wives and any lady who wants to be a part of this group. So far the ladies have held a walk-a-thon to raise money for the beautification of the Lodge and are holding other fundraisers and 50/50’s.

Exalted Ruler David Wggin personally thanked Nick and Kathy Skibba from Merritt Island Lodge and Deanna Wggin First Lady of Titusville Lodge, for their help in distributing approximately 180,000 red ribbons and thousands of pieces of literature and coloring books to the Brevard County School Board.

The Does held their annual rummage sale October 5th-7th. They held a Celebration Day honoring their Sister Does for more than 40 years of dedicated and unselfish charity work.

The Does’ Annual Harvest Ball was held on November 17th. A 50s Dance was held on Saturday, October 20th. The Annual Youth Camp Dance was held on December 7th as a fundraiser to send kids to the Elks Youth Camp.

The Lodge is engaged in getting names and addresses of troops in Iraq and Afghanistan to send them boxes of goodies. A November 11th Veterans Day dinner was held for veterans from the WINVET program and five families who have sons and daughters in the Iraq/Afghanistan area.
**Aripeka Lodge 2520**

In September Aripeka Lodge celebrated their 33rd Anniversary with a dinner and dance. Among the dignitaries there were Ret. Judge William Severs, Esquire and his wife. Approximately 120 attended.

As usual, Adopt-a-Highway Chairman Bill Bornsche and his six volunteers were out cleaning up SR 19; they collected quite a bit of debris. Lodge Veterans’ Chairperson Frieda Deane hosted an Ice Cream Sundae Party with Karaoke by Annie at the Baldomero Lopez State Veterans’ Nursing Home which was attended by seventy veterans. Annie and three Elks also visited a Summer Tree/Summer Brook nursing home and presented them with an American flag to be used at the facility.

Aripeka Lodge’s Blood Bank Chairman, Bill Tousignant, collected 24 pints of blood from volunteers. Hal Steffes, PDD had visited a Moose Lodge many years ago and witnessed a very special program for the mentally and physically challenged children, young adults, and siblings under ten years of age and their parents for Halloween. This so impressed him that he brought it to his Lodge and it was adopted as a yearly function. This year the Elks and volunteers along with local businesses, the Lodge hosted 350 attendees. There was a complete miniature village, pizza, franks, fries, soda, face painting, and balloon figures; everyone had a great time.

DDGER Donna Zuk visited the Lodge for the annual audit during Red Ribbon Week. All present were given a Red Ribbon to wear; approximately 120 were in attendance. On Veterans’ Day veterans were honored with hot dogs and beverages. The Lodge held its second annual Career Central Job Fair; 25 businesses were present. There were 110 veterans checking on openings and fifty had interviews.

The Aripeka Lodge’s Bingo Chairperson, Wayne Getz, donated $8,850 during the last three months to various charities. Some of these have been Pasco County Child Abuse Prevention, Elks National Home Entertainment Fund, Angelus Home for the Severely Handicapped, Dawn Center of Hernando County, Alzheimer’s Foundation, Treats for Troops, Schraeder Elementary School, Pasco County Youth Ranch, and the list goes on.

**Brooksville Lodge 2582**

Brooksville Lodge held its 29th Anniversary Ball in October. At the function were Charter Members Harry Thompson and guest, Garland and Gloria Thornton, Judge Ed and Katherine Malmquist, Central District Vice President Edward Czechowski, and Central District DDGER Donna Zuk. VP Czechowski said it was “great to see charter members enjoy the fruit of their work and see it all come about.” Approximately 180 attended the Roast Pork/Chicken Dinner.

Brooksville Lodge usually visits the veterans at the Baldomero Lopez State Veterans’ Nursing Home. However, in November they visited them twice, once to help with the National Volunteer Veterans’ Commission in putting on their Christmas Party. All veterans received gifts and refreshments. The veterans enjoyed dancing with the ladies. In attendance were Leading Knight Everett Patterson, Veterans’ Chairperson Gail Cleaves, and her committee. The Lodge also had ten veterans join them for dinner on Pearl Harbor Day (December 7).

Brooksville held a Medal of Valor night on October 17. Gail Cleaves and her committee presented an impressive ceremony for three families who have lost a son in the Iraqi War. Each family received a rose. After the prayer and Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, Betty Corbin recited a poem entitled “When Tomorrow Starts Without Me.” It was a very emotional moment. The families thanked the Elks for all they do in the community and for the veterans.

**Kissimmee Lodge 1873**

Kissimmee Lodge held their annual Veterans’ Day ceremony and picnic on Sunday, November 11. They were honored by Florida State Elks Association President David Lake’s attendance at this function. State President Lake addressed those in attendance; he announced a new Elks program titled “Army of Hope.” Fundraising efforts will be made throughout the state of Florida during this next year with proceeds being used to assist veterans returning from Iraq and their families.

The goal is $100,000.

Kissimmee Lodge held the 2007 Hoop Shoot Contest. Chairman Dan Clarke coordinated with Neptune Middle School to present the contest. He was assisted by twelve other Elks. Separate tournaments were held for girls and boys in three age groups. The first place winners will now advance to the Central District elimination matches in Hudson, FL. From there winners can advance onto State Regionals, State Championships, U.S. Regional Semifinals, and finally the National Championship to be held in Springfield, MA at the Western New England College from April 24-27. Kissimmee Elks Lodge will provide travel support to their local athletes who advance. The National Championship winners will receive college scholarship awards and their names will be recorded and displayed at the Basketball Hall of Fame.

Is this an Elksdom first? Exalted Ruler Richard Hiemenz had selected E. Loyal Knight Robert Barry as Elk of the Month for September. At the first Lodge meeting in October the ER had the Esquire escort Bob to meet him at the Alter to receive the EOM pin. With the station of the Exalted Ruler empty, Bob seized the moment and appealed to the Est. Leading Knight for permission to read a proclamation. The permission was granted and Bob read the proclamation which outlined all the good work the Exalted Ruler had done and is doing. In addition to the usual demands of his office, ER Richard and other members of his family are at the Lodge often doing the many “work details” required to keep the Lodge looking sharp and maintaining equipment. The ER is certainly worthy of high praise and with the approval of members present, Bob refused the EOM pin and instead presented it to ER Richard.

**Orlando Lodge 1079**

Orlando Lodge gave a barbecue banquet to a group of veterans from the Orlando VA Medical Center, Nursing Home Care Unit, Domiciliary, and Rehabilitation Center. Several members picked up the veterans from the center and took them back at the end of the day. The event was well attended by approximately 100 members.

**West Citrus Lodge 2693**

West Citrus started October off with the Annual PER Lobster Dinner. As usual it was a great success; over 200 members and guests enjoyed either a half-pound lobster or prime rib. They also were honored by a visit from State President David Lake and his wife, Kathy, along with VPAL Joseph Ortiz and his wife, Rita. Also in attendance were PSP Peter Naranjo and his wife, Patricia; DDGER Donna Zuk; PSP Charles Trinowski and his wife, Mary Ann; and ER O. C. Leonard and his wife, Faye. State President Lake stated FSEA’s new program “Army of Hope” and hoped that all Lodges would get involved. Edward Czechowski, Central District Vice President, was the host for State President Lake’s visit to their Lodge and did a wonderful job of making sure the president and his party were well taken care of. They visited the Homosassa Wildlife Park, the Brooksville Lodge for Friday Night Dinner, and ended the weekend with a dinner at West Citrus which was well attended.

In November, Central District DDGER Donna Zuk audited the Lodge which was followed with dinner. The annual Thanksgiving Dinner Buffet was well attended. The Lodge also held its yearly Country Western Dinner Dance which was attended by over 200 members and guests.

West Citrus Lodge donated $1,800 to the Elks National Foundation and $1,400 to the HATF. These monies were donated by Lodge members.

December was a busy month. West Citrus hosted the Citrus County Foster Parents Association Christmas Party for seventy children and 51 foster parents. Santa was there and all received gifts. On the 21st they hosted the Exalted Ruler’s Christmas Party for members and on the 22nd they held the Annual Christmas Party for all children up to ten years old. They had lunch and Santa gave each child a present a gift. As always this was a big event with about 200 in attendance. West Citrus held its Annual New Year’s Eve Ball for over 200 members and guests. Frankie D and his twenty piece band played the night away while all enjoyed a lobster and steak dinner.

**Zephyrhills Lodge 2731**

Zephyrhills Lodge commemorated Veterans’ Day in a big way; approximately 200 people attended the changing of the flag by the Jr. ROTC of Zephyrhills High School. The speaker for the program was Chief Master Sergeant John L. Hoffman, Active Air Force, US Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa. The program was followed by a lunch buffet.

Exalted Ruler Alice Perry and Drug Awareness Chairman Richard Gest visited West Elementary School for the “Great American Teach In.” They spoke to students about what the Elks do in the community and the Florida Elks Youth Camp, Hoop Shoot, Scholarships, Drug Awareness, and the Children’s Therapy Services. Handouts were given out and each child was given a Zephyrhills Elks Lodge Pin.

Zephyrhills Lodge was awarded a plaque from Frank Sellers, PER of Tampa Lodge 708 who is the Representative for the James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital for service and dedication to the Veterans’ Hospital and the Baldomero Lopez State Veterans’ Nursing Home.

Helen and Al Jenmlich and their committee of volunteers filled 28 boxes of food with a turkey in each for Thanksgiving. They were distributed to needy families on the 18th at the Lodge. The Memorial Service for the Elks who have passed in the past year was held on December 2.

Zephyrhills has donated $3,253 to various charities such as the Nursing Scholarship at Hernando-Pasco Community College, the James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital, the Zephyrhills Pregnancy Care Center, and the Neighborhood Care Center.
It seems that the smallest district in Florida may be getting smaller. News from PDDGER Barbara Heffernan of the Pahokee Lodge indicates that a joint meeting will be held with the Belle Glade Lodge for the purpose of proposing a merging of the two Lodges. Pahokee Lodge has been unable to recoup financially after the destruction from Hurricane Wilma on October 24, 2005.

They are also experiencing trouble finding officers to run a Lodge. With this merger, the district will consist of only four Lodges. Will redistricting be far ahead?

The district held a Veterans’ Remembrance Day Barbecue on April 7 at the Belle Glade Lodge. All the Lodges in the district took part along with many other local organizations dealing with veterans. Many were involved in organizing the event, with West Palm Beach’s Sam Berkowitz at the lead.

Also on November 12, West Palm Beach Lodge 1352 had planned a Veterans’ Memorial Day Cruise for the vets from the West Palm Beach VAMC aboard the Princess ship when a wreath would be sent to the sea. Unfortunately, Chairman Phil Macnak reported that the trip had to be cancelled due to the fact that the ship was too late returning to port.

On November 11 at 11:00 a.m., West Palm Beach Lodge hosted a District Flag Retirement Service under the direction of the district’s Americanism Chairman, PER Bruce Cook. The official service was conducted inside the Lodge and afterwards everyone retired to the backyard area where 350 flags were retired. The Marine Color Guard was present along with the Lodge’s Boy Scout Troop. After the burning of the flags, everyone enjoyed PER Ted Olson’s apple pie and ice cream.

Paul Mozzocci, VPSED from the Jupiter Lodge reports that on November 10, they hosted a Veterans’ Luncheon at the Lodge with nine wheelchair vets in attendance. The Boy Scouts presented the colors and led in the Pledge of Allegiance. They had 25 Elks and 25 non-Elks who volunteered to serve the veterans and make their day a memorable one.

Jupiter Lodge also hosted a community open house for the Jupiter Farms Christmas Parade on December 2. They had forty Elks help with cooking and serving food to over 150 guests and were able to sign up thirty prospective new members. They also hosted a breakfast with Santa on December 9 at the Lodge and had registered over forty children.

West Palm Beach Lodge presented 160 dictionaries to the third graders at Wynnebrook Elementary School under the Elks Dictionary Program. PER Joy Booth and Linda Jacobson who teach at the school and are members of the Lodge made arrangements for the children to receive such a valuable educational tool.

Twenty needy families from Wynnebrook were also presented with Thanksgiving baskets of food and turkeys. The members of the Lodge donated food and money to make this a success and a true “ELKS CARE - ELKS SHARE” opportunity.

Forty-two neighborhood children from less fortunate families had Breakfast with Santa on December 16 at the Lodge and each received a gift from Santa in person. The toys were donated from the Marines Toy Drive and Lodge members wrapped and put the names on each package so Santa could call out each individual child.

**AMERICANISM**

Roger L. Johnson, PER
Americanism State Chairman

The ambition and goal of the Americanism Committee is to quicken the spirit of American patriotism and to stimulate an awareness, a genuine feeling of pride and respect toward patriotism so that we as members of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will become constant reminders to the people of our nation that truly America means freedom and that Elks Care and Elks Share.

Each Lodge should take part in as many of the Grand Lodge Americanism programs as possible in order to accomplish a diversified impact for Americanism in the area.

The flag should be flown proudly in front of each Lodge to demonstrate the patriotic sense of our order. We should be vigilant in our observation of the need for a flag flying over city parks, town squares, ballparks, and cemeteries and to provide the pole and flag when possible with a promise to maintain its presence in the future. We as Elks also have a goal to provide a flag for every classroom in America with hope that it encourages each classroom to commence each day with The Pledge of Allegiance.

We should also encourage each school to have a Heritage Corner in their library which contains The Bill of Rights, The Declaration of Independence, The Constitution, The Monroe Doctrine, The Gettysburg Address, and the story of the writing of The Star Spangled Banner.

We are nearing the election of the highest ranking official of our country. As an American citizen we have many rights and privileges. With them comes a responsibility to exercise our individual right to vote. Voting for any office or issue represents the voice of the people living in a democracy.

America is based on many sound principles. Moral values are very important to the foundation of Americanism. Individual rights allow each citizen to pursue his or her chosen path in life. Individualism makes everyone primarily responsible for themselves, their welfare, and their success or failure. These rights presuppose the duty of every citizen to obey the established government and to employ only those lawful methods of reason and persuasion that are open to all of us to achieve political action. Our goal should always be for more freedom, not less.

Americanism speaks to the duty to uphold the laws of the United States and other subordinate governing bodies; to defend our country from invasion and the overthrow of our government; to encourage respect for law and order; to support those charged with the enforcement of our laws; to harbor no prejudice against anyone because of race, religion, or national origin; to maintain pride in family, heritage, and church as well as community, state, and nation; to keep informed on issues and candidates and vote in every election; to respect the rights and opinions of others; to acknowledge that responsibilities are as important as rights in the preservation of freedom and justice; and to participate in religious, charitable, civic, educational, or other activities to promote the welfare of the community.

The responsibility of every true American is to personally understand and maintain the American way of life, to honor it by his or her own exemplary conduct, and to pass it intact to succeeding generations.

**INTERLODGE VISITATION**

Mike Mongeluzzo, PER
State Chairman

The Interlodge Visitation Committee is charged with promoting visitation amongst members both at scheduled district meetings and members’ personal unscheduled visits to other Lodges. What better way is there to encourage fraternalism and strengthen the bonds between Lodges of the same geographic area? It can also be used as an educational tool to provide members a way of learning how other Lodges approach various situations.

I have been asked many times what qualifies as an official visit. The criteria for a visit to qualify as an official visit is as follows:

1. A minimum of four members must attend.
2. Ladies / Escorts are not to be counted in mileage computations.
3. The following constitute opportunities for an official visit.
   A. Regular Lodge meetings of another Lodge.
   B. Attending the Installation of another Lodge’s officers.
   C. Official visit by the District Vice President.
   D. Official visit by the District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler.
   E. Official visit by the State President.
   F. Attending the Institution of a new Lodge.
   G. District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Clinics.
   H. Official visit by the Grand Exalted Ruler.
4. The visitation encompasses any Lodge in the state of Florida. If the visit is outside of Florida, in order to qualify as an official visit, it must be confirmed by the Secretary of the visited Lodge on their official Lodge letterhead. The confirmation must be sent to the District Visitation Chairman.

Plaques for Interlodge Visitation will be awarded by the committee at the State Convention in the following categories: Lodges under 300 members, Lodges with 301 to 600 members, and Lodges 601 members and over.

As of the Mid-year with all fourteen districts reporting, the Interlodge Visitation Committee reported that the hours were almost even with last year’s totals and the miles were higher than last year’s. Considering that gas is at an all-time high, everyone is really doing a great job; keep up the good work.

Remember, visitation is not only limited to Elks. Bring a friend, neighbor, coworker, or relative to your next visitation. It’s a good way to introduce prospective members to Elksdom.
Cocoa Beach Lodge 2387

It was a day that the Lodge wanted to show respect to Veterans and Service members, and also to raise money for the Veterans Administration Nursing Home and Domiciliary Residence located in Orlando, the Veterans Transitional Homes in Melbourne and Cocoa, and the Cocoa Beach High School Army JROTC Unit (Our Future Veterans). All of the proceeds from the Veterans Day Celebration and Ceremony will go to the Lodge trust fund to only be used for Veterans.

The special tribute day began at 11 AM with a barbecue lunch that included pulled pork barbecue, cole saw, baked beans, and macaroni salad. A musical tribute to Veterans was played during lunch and included the Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard service melodies along with patriotic songs.

The Veterans Day Ceremony started at 1:00 PM and the guest speaker was Gunner Sergeant Joseph Kappus, U.S. Marine Corps 6th Motor Transportation Battalion of Orlando and the Color Guard was provided by the Cocoa Beach High School Army JROTC. After the ceremony there was Bingo, horseshoes, selling of raffle tickets for prizes and a 50/50 to help raise money for Veterans. Afternoon entertainment was provided by Phoenix entertainment with a surprise guest appearance by Patsy Cline.

There were over 130 attendees during the day, including 20 Veterans who were guests and came from the Orlando Domiciliary and Cocoa Veteran Transitional Facilities. Bravo Company from the Cocoa National Guard Unit provided a Combat HumVee and two Soldiers (Afganistan Veterans) with combat weapons on display for the event. The Lodge raised $1,934.94 that will only be used for in the trust fund of the Veterans Facilities the Lodge supports.

The following local businesses donated items for the raffle and silent auction that helped us raise the money: Publix, Kathy’s Hair Den, Burky’s, Sunset Waterfront Grill and Bar, Durango’s, Holiday Inn, Hilton Cocoa Beach Ocean Front, Wakulla Suites, Hampton Inn, Marriot Hotel Ocean Front, Florida’s Seafood, Jet Press Printing, Alliance Home Mortgage, Inc., Surf, ANN-LA, Slow and Low, Jonathans, Cocoa Beach Country Club, Cocoa Beach Kayaking, and Juice and Java.

Port St. Lucie Lodge 2658

In October, the Lodge hosted a luncheon which included dancing and singing for thirty-two guests from the local Alzheimer’s Community Care Center. This was made possible through the efforts of Paula Lobb who is a member of the Lodge. The Annual Halloween Costume Dance and Octoberfest were both sellout affairs. The Elkettes held their Pajama Party which was well attended.

In November, 23 members (which included three cooks) of the Lodge attended the District Picnic in Sebastian. The Lodge had members in attendance at the November 11 ceremony in their local Veterans’ Memorial Park. There was a good representation at the Florida State Elks Association Midyear Convention in Orlando. What would Thanksgiving be without a special “Thanksgiving Day Dinner” served to over 300 people? Joseph Pepe, Lecturing Knight distributed eight Thanksgiving baskets to needy families in the immediate area of the Lodge.

The Memorial Service for absent members was held on December 2. There were 150 members and friends in attendance; it was a beautiful service.

The Children’s Christmas party had 45 children attending along with moms and dads and grandmas and grandpas and a few great grandmas and grandpas. The next function was an Eggnog Party which was sponsored by the Lodge with a $1.00 admission; that money went towards the twelve Christmas baskets that Joe Pepe handed out to the needy in the neighborhood.

Port St. Lucie Police Officer Al Corona with “Rudy” of the Police K-9 Unit attended the DARE program at the Lodge. Both were a big hit answering questions and demonstrating Rudy’s skills.

Jack DeBell, Americanism Chairman, E.R. Mary Ann and husband Charlie Manning presented Northport School and Principal Eric J. Seymour with 70 dictionaries for 3rd grade students. Another 307 dictionaries were distributed to Mariposa School both located in Port St. Lucie.

The next big affair was a sellout Christmas Party with 275 happy folks in attendance. On December 29, Ed and Jeanette Izzo and Bill and Linda LaSalla presented their famous Mini Italian Night. The year ended with a fabulous New Year’s Eve Party for 300 members and their guests.

The Lodge has a very active Operation Desert Elk Program and they hold Charity Bingo with proceeds going to Elks Charities. Eight-Ball Pool Tournaments are held every Monday night and they hold Tuesday Night Dinners. The Lodge has a group of new young Elks and their wives who prepare the now famous monthly Sunday “cooked to order” breakfast. A new young Elk, Bruce Ore, with his crew of new members took over the breakfast and made it the success that it is. The proceeds from the breakfast go to the local police DARE Program. The Lodge held the Gary Hughes Annual Memorial 9/11 Luncheon for 150 members of the local police, fire, and Sheriff’s Departments. Gary Hughes who started this 9/11 Luncheon died in June of this year.

The Lodge has a great web site on the Florida Elks web site thanks to Joan DeBell’s hard work. Check it out and you will find out what the Lodge looks like and the good things accomplished.

Fort Pierce Elks Lodge was recognized by the Congress of the United States for their outstanding support of our veterans and military both here and abroad over the past three years. Congressman Tim Mahoney of the Florida House on September 24, 2007 issued this honor for the care packages sent to both Iraq and Afghanistan and for the support given to hospitalized veterans at the West Palm Beach Florida Veterans’ Medical Center. Florida State Chairman for the Veterans’ Committee, John Reitz, proudly presented this Congressional Record Certificate to Fort Pierce Elks Lodge 1520 Exalted Ruler John Henry.

On Sunday, November 4, 2007, the Fort Pierce Elks Lodge held a Veterans’ Dinner/Dance to uphold their solemn pledge, “So long as there are veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them.”

Honored guests were Fort Pierce Lodge Adopted Veteran and Life Elk member Cohen Leggett and his family, seven veterans from the West Palm Beach Veterans’ Administration Medical Center, and their caregivers.

Also honored that evening was a ninety year young lady, Gertrude Dovey, who made 70 lap robes. The lap robes were used for Christmas presents to our military in Iraq and to our veterans at the VA Medical Center in West Palm Beach.

An Italian dinner was prepared and served by volunteers. Music was donated by the “Lady Grayson Band.” Gifts from the Lodge were presented to each guest by Scotti McAllister, Fort Pierce Veterans’ Services Chairperson.
Christmas Party highlighted by Santa and “Crazy Carol.” Eighty special needs persons were also provided with personal Christmas presents at the recent $1,500 scholarships and three $1,000 scholarships by the Lodge. High School scholarships this year will be increased from $4,000 to $6,000 with two child in the family has leukemia and the family has had almost a million dollars in medical bills by the Lodge’s intervention.

North District continued from page 16

Venice-Nokomis Elks Lodge 1854

The members and guests who supported their first Elks American Idol contests on November 3 with Exalted Ruler Rose Corcoran and Esquire Betty Holman are thanked for the successful event as a benefit for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. The contestants were from around the Venice area and put on a very impressive performance. There were no professionals involved and this hometown flavor was enjoyed by those who attended. Cash prizes were awarded to the first three Idols out of a total of twenty who started the evening. The judges were on the hot seat all evening trying to pick the winners. An important note was that the judges represented well their counterparts on the TV show (American Idol), Randy, Paula, and Simon, down to the point that Simon was portrayed by Inner Guard Martin Varley who is English with a great English accent. The audience, contestants, and judges really enjoyed the fun filled evening for a wonderful cause.

On November 17 the Semiannual Barbecue was held and was co-chaired by two snowbird members, Lenny & Cathy Weber. The event has been named “The L & C Bar-B-Q” in their honor. Ribs and chicken with their special sauce are a sellout every time. They are planning another one for February 23 with music by “Ziggy.” The proceeds from the barbecue are divided between the various Elks charities.

Sarasota Elks Lodge 1519

The Lodge recently adopted two military families for the Christmas holidays who are members of the Sarasota National Guard and were recently deployed to the Mid East. A needy family being treated by FECTS therapist Margo Baker was likewise adopted for the Christmas holidays. The family, which has three autistic children, was extremely grateful for the Lodge’s intervention.

The Lodge also adopted an additional needy family for Christmas and throughout the year. A child in the family has leukemia and the family has had almost a million dollars in medical bills. Sarasota 4-H continues to meet at the Lodge and, as in years past, a student will be sponsored by the Lodge. High School scholarships this year will be increased from $4,000 to $6,000 with two $1,500 scholarships and three $1,000 scholarships.

Easter Seals which the Lodge also sponsors recently held their Halloween Party at the Lodge. Eighty special needs persons were also provided with personal Christmas presents at the recent Christmas Party highlighted by Santa and “Crazy Carol.”

Florida State Elks 15th Annual Softball Tournament

APRIL 25, 26, 27, 2008
SPERLING SPORTS COMPLEX
DELAND, FLORIDA

A, B and over 50 Tournament
Entry Fee is $250.00 -- this includes Softballs
Three Games Guaranteed!

Information call:
Joe B. Rogers, Co-Chairman
407-330-9339

Deadline April 1st, 2008

Christmas carols were sung in a sing-along in the lounge on Friday, December 21. Music was provided by Mr. Music, Rod Stelter. Keeping in the holiday spirit, on the 23rd Santa visited the Lodge to assist in the annual Kids’ Christmas Party. Kids could experience face painting, finger painting, the Hand Prints table, ornament painting, the Legend of the Candy Cane table, another table where kids could write letters to Santa, stockings filled with candy, and other holiday treats for the kids. Santa (Greg Davis) had some help from Mrs. Claus (Dianne Davis), by Elves Ralph and Julia Ferrell, Mr. and Mrs. Time (Carl and Dolly Ledig), Santa helpers (Claire and Michael Roy Fugler), and Yayo Kahl. Later that day the Lodge held its annual Eggnog Social which always draws a crowd, sharing holiday cheer with members and guests.

Tallahassee Lodge serves breakfast every Sunday morning from nine till noon. If you are traveling in the area, stop by and partake in a fine $5.50 breakfast buffet.

ARMY OF HOPE PICNIC

The Florida State Elks Veterans’ Services Committee will host a first time statewide picnic on May 3, 2008 to raise monies to support the Army of Hope program. Specifically, the proceeds from this program will be used to aid the families of deceased military members from Florida who served in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, to aid the amputees of those wars; and to help lodges provide aid to the families of military members currently serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The picnic will be held in seven regional Lodge locations simultaneously (Jacksonville, Warrington, Eustis, Punta Gorda, Sebastian, Pompano Beach, and Florida Keys) on May 3, 2008. In addition to the picnic, military static displays are planned and we also plan to honor families of deceased military members with the Grand Lodge’s Medal of Valor.

It should be noted that while this is an Elks event, it is open to other service organizations that may wish to attend.

John M. Reitz, State Chairman
Veterans’ Services Committee
Sebring Elks Lodge is pleased to present

The 28th Annual Florida State Elks Golf Tournament

Saturday, April 5th and Sunday, April 6th, 2007 at the Spring Lake Golf Resort.

The tournament is open to all Elks and their guests. Ladies are also encouraged to participate. The tournament will be a four person scramble. Teams will be flighted after the Saturday round.

Awards will be presented as follows:
- Low Gross
- 1st & 2nd place in flights. A thru F

The first 288 entries received prior to March 15th will be accepted and processed in the order received. Late entries will be accepted, placed on file, and processed if opening occurs.

NOTE: Last year, 288 entries were received by the 2nd Saturday in February.

Entries will be received and accepted only as follows:
- A: As a single accompanied with check totaling $110.00
- B: As a twosome accompanied with check(s) totaling $220.00
- C: As a threesome accompanied with check(s) totaling $330.00
- D: As a foursome accompanied with check(s) totaling $440.00

- Drawing for prizes Saturday night at the Sebring Elks Lodge
- Complimentary cold drinks both days on the course

Saturday dinner will be at 7:00 p.m. at the Lodge, and Sunday lunch will be after golf at the resort. Tickets must be presented for both dinner and lunch.

Registration: 7:00 - 8:30 a.m. each day with an 8:45 a.m. start.

Official score cards which will be issued at check-in.

Note: Scores must be recorded on official score cards; filled out properly and totaled. Cards not in compliance will not be considered.

Practice rounds: Tee Times as available the week of the tournament at a cost of $20, which includes 18 holes with cart.

For reservations call Spring Lake Golf Resort one week in advance at 1-800-635-7277, local call 655-0101.

Retired?

This Message is for You

Did you spend the holidays alone? Wouldn’t you have enjoyed the companionship and cheerful atmosphere of our retirement community? Learn how you can make the Elks National Home your home.

Residents of the Elks National Home enjoyed numerous parties, visitors, and other activities throughout December. Although things will slow down somewhat into the first of the year, they will continue to take part in many activities such as shopping trips, sightseeing trips, birthday parties, plays, visiting entertainment, golfing, card games, and much more. Add that to enjoying the company of friends at mealtimes and on other occasions and you can see why our residents are happy and enjoy life.

Don’t let another year go by without at least checking into this excellent retirement option. Call 1-800-552-4140 to get detailed information or to make a reservation for a visit. Any Elk may visit here for up to five days in any month for only $55.00 per night including room, meals, and tax. You can also get information on our website at www.elkshome.org.

The residents and staff at the Elks National Home look forward to hearing from you!

Elks and guests who attend the District Visitations of the Florida State Elks Associations’ President during the next couple of years will be in the viewfinder of a new photographer. VPAL Joe Ortiz has been relieved of that chore by VPAL Elect Vincent Como, PDD, of the South Southeast District and a member of Margate Lodge 2463.

Vince is presently serving as the Vice-President of the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services Board of Directors.
Gainesville Lodge 990

By now hopefully everyone has recovered from their Thanksgiving feasts and from their festive holiday seasons. The Gainesville Lodge held a number of events at the Lodge during the month to keep the members active. A fish fry was held Saturday, December 1. On December 2, the Elks Memorial Service was held for those brothers and sisters who departed us last year. A Golf Tournament took place on Saturday, December 15. The Children’s Christmas Party was December 22.

Orange Park Lodge 2605

Veterans were remembered in various ways at the end of last year with a cookout held for the Lake City VA Domiciliary with the Green Cove Springs Elks. Hamburgers, hotdogs, and desserts were served. Rockin’ Ray Lackey provided Karaoke, and all had a good time. At the Famous Fish Fry three veterans were honored from WW II as well as Korean, Vietnam, and peacetime veterans. On December 8, volunteers returned to the Lake City Domiciliary to share some Christmas spirit.

Jacksonville Lodge 221

After a long time, Jacksonville Elks have finally moved into the new building. It was a great time to celebrate this occasion; please go and visit. Grand Exalted Ruler Louis Sulsberger made a visit to the Lodge in early February and assisted in the formal dedication of the new Jacksonville Elks Lodge. A visit from the GER to the Lodge is something to be very proud to host, and with the new building and the great members and officers, he was suitably impressed.

South Broward Lodge 2830

South Broward has distributed approximately 788 dictionaries to third graders in five schools in the Miramar and Pembroke Pines area. The schools were picked based on their FCAT scores and being rated as a needy school. The project was headed up by member Mike Mammarelli. They also continued their holiday season teaming up with the South Broward High School’s Ambassadors for the Thanksgiving Basket food drive for six families. The Ambassadors also continued their tradition of performing their holiday program for the veterans at a local veterans’ retirement home. South Broward finished the holiday season off with its annual Christmas for Kids. The kids are from Kids in Distress and Women in Distress along with several other charitable organizations in the area. Santa again arrived by helicopter.

Hollywood West Lodge 2365

Hollywood West Lodge provided music and Drug Awareness information for the Driftwood Elementary School’s “Halloween Extravaganza” of traditional Halloween fun that over sixty kids enjoyed. They also continue their endeavors to save tabs that are donated to the Ronald McDonald House and the cans are saved which has produced over $3,000 of donations to Kids in Distress.

Hollywood West also sold mini stockings to raise funds for nine foster kids who wouldn’t have a Christmas without their help. The kids received bikes and MP3 players along with clothes and other needed items.

St. Augustine Lodge 829

The Appreciation Dinner honoring the public servants will become an annual event for the Lodge. Geoff Dobson; his wife, Becky; and Mark prepared the Thanksgiving dinner complete with turkey and all the trimmings.

The honorees were L-R: FF/Paramedic Johnny Rigney, Corporal Robert L. Asbill, Corporal Richard Warner, Detective Lynda Mobley, Officer Frankie Hammonds, FF/EMT Robin Doucette, and FF/EMT Robin Doucette.

The event raised $1,920 or $320 for each department charity. It was a celebration of the protection provided by the St. Johns County Sheriff’s Office, St. Johns County Fire and Rescue, St. Augustine Police, St. Augustine Fire, St. Augustine Beach Police, and Troop G of the Florida Highway Patrol.

A “Person of the Year” was honored from each department. The honorees each received a plaque, a congratulatory letter from US Senator Mel Martinez, and a check for $100. Each was selected for this recognition by his or her respective department.

Green Cove Springs Lodge 1892

Lodge members celebrated the veterans beginning early on November 11th by having breakfast at the Elks Lodge in Palatka and then an annual walk across the Memorial Bridge in Palatka with the Veterans of Foreign Wars only to be followed by entry in the Putnam County Veterans’ Day Parade and finally to the Local VFW for lunch. If that was not enough, the members ventured back to the Lodge and had an enjoyable dinner and honored Elks members who are veterans by giving each of them a flag pin to wear. They were served a complimentary dinner prepared by wonderful volunteers. In addition, care packages were sent to the service men and women currently serving overseas.

Palatka Lodge 1232

The Palatka Elks Annual Golf Tournament was a success with a full field of players. The weather was perfect and the meal after was great.

There are three Elks, Ron Dennis, John Taylor, and Frank Crosby, who dedicate their time to ensure everything is in order. The amount raised was $10,200. Some of the charities to benefit are The American Cancer Society, Rodeheaver Boys Ranch, the local Elks Scholarship Fund, Elks National Foundation, and Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services.

Hollywood West Lodge also helped a single mother with two kids this holiday season. The family was given enough food for about three months in addition to the gifts for Christmas. At the party Santa arrived on a fire truck for all the kids.

West Broward Lodge 2273

West Broward members found out that the local schools were holding Dental Hygiene Awareness and the kids had to share toothbrushes, so the members went around and collected donations from their members along with some from Hollywood West to purchase 600 toothbrushes and toothpaste.

Pompano Beach Lodge 1898

The Inaugural Water Angels First Responders Appreciation Luncheon was held at the Pompano Beach Elks Lodge on Thursday, November 15, 2007. The event was organized by Michael Miller of the Water Angels charity which promotes pool and water safety for children. The final count of attendees exceeded 350; the board members were overjoyed.

The First Responders of Broward County were welcomed by over 200 students from Pompano Beach High School, Pompano Beach Elementary School, and Little Flower Montessori School. The children brought posters and banners and held them proudly. The Pompano Exchange Club handed out American flags.

The various First Responders groups displayed an interesting array of vehicles in front of the Elks Lodge including fire trucks, rescue vehicles, a Marine patrol boat, mounted police, a SWAT armored vehicle, and motorcycles.

Event sponsors in attendance included King Toyota, Lowes, Exchange Club, Rotary Club, Pompano Beach Elks Lodge 1898, and the Men’s Club from St. Coleman’s. Some of the sponsors jumped in to help the volunteers which included the Does, a ladies group from the Elks.

Awards were presented to the Lifeguard of the Year, Fireman of the Year, and Law Enforcement Officer of the Year. A Year of Service to Broward County Plaque was also given to the new sheriff, Al Lamberti.

Daniel Davis, Exalted Ruler received a plaque from fellow Elk Michael Miller for the Lodge’s support.
North Fort Myers Lodge 2742
North Fort Myers continues with their extraordinary veterans’ assistance and now they have been recognized for their efforts. Not only have they won Grand Lodge Veterans’ Commission awards, but they have also won Congressional Recognition. On November 1, 2007 the Honorable Connie Mack presented the following in the U.S. House of Representatives: See the photo of the award on page 11.

Port Charlotte Lodge 2153
Port Charlotte held an Elks National Foundation fundraiser featuring Bobby Hubcat as entertainment. For over three months the event co-chairs worked tirelessly securing donations and making plans for the entertainment and raffles. Without this dedication they could not have made the event successful.

Punta Gorda Lodge 2606
Punta Gorda Elks Lodge held its 3rd Annual Veteran Appreciation Parade on November 10 with over 100 units participating in this year’s parade. An open house was held at the Lodge to honor all veterans.

Technical Sergeant Kim Lovejoy and Lodge member was this year’s Grand Marshall. She is assigned to the Air National Guard’s 202nd RED HORSE Squadron at Camp Blanding and earlier this year she returned from her second Middle East tour with her unit.

A check for $1,000 was presented to Joan Jacobson for the Residence Fund at the Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Port Charlotte by Bob Hahn, PER from Punta Gorda Lodge. Lap blankets donated to the Elks were also given to some residents at the presentation.

Punta Gorda Lodge made its quarterly delivery of clothes, shoes, and toiletries in value of $4,300 to Bay Pines VAMC.

Additionally a Christmas check for $1,000 was presented to Tom Coleman, Bay Pines Elks VA Representative, and assistant Gil Pace by Carl Rehling, PER.

Rotonda Lodge 2710
The Lodge delivered Thanksgiving turkeys and food baskets to 20 needy families.

The Lodge held a huge Christmas parade on December 2 and collected over 1,000 lbs. of food and $400 which was distributed to two church food banks for needy families.

The Lodge delivered toys, clothes, and Christmas supplies in the amount of more than $10,000 to 50 underprivileged children in Charlotte County.

The puppy was delivered and many hugs later the boy said, “Look mom, I got what I always wanted.” It is nice to see the Christmas spirit in action and a special thanks goes to the Elks and Elizabeth Jacobs who donated the puppy.

Bonita Springs Lodge 2753
A sold-out golf tournament on November 17, 2007 was able to raise funds for charities within the local community. One of those charities is sponsored by the Lee County Sheriff’s Department and is called “Adopt a Family.” This program enables the deputies to seek families in need and see that they receive assistance especially during the holiday season.

The Bonita Springs Elks are very proud to participate with the Sheriff’s Department and recently presented a sizable donation towards helping a family enjoy the holidays.

From left: Bonita Springs Lodge Loyal Knight and Golf Chairman Ravis Prueitt; Captain Morgan Bowden, Lee County Sheriff’s Department; Helen Kralj, Lee County Sheriff Voice Volunteer; and Exalted Ruler Richard Cooke.
**Lodges of the NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT**

**Reporter, Walter Mabie, PDDGER**

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**Clermont-Groveland Lodge 1848**

12th Annual Veterans’ Day Barbecue

Veterans’ Day holds a special place in the hearts of all Elks. It is a time to remember and honor those who have served in the past, those who serve today, and those who will serve in the future.

Clermont-Groveland Elks Lodge was proud to again honor our country’s heroes with this year’s Veterans’ Barbecue. The event was held on Saturday, November 10. With the aid of more than twenty Elks volunteers, many of whom are veterans themselves, cooked and served a traditional Veterans’ Day meal: barbecue chicken, baked beans, and macaroni salad all topped off with some good old ice cream cones. The meal was served at the Westminster Nursing Home located in Clermont, FL, where over 38 veterans and family members enjoyed the patriotic atmosphere.

The singing of “God Bless America” and the national anthem followed by The Pledge of Allegiance brought tears to many faces. Each of the veterans was presented with a gift basket containing essentials such as Christmas cards, socks, tissues, playing cards, shaving cream, stamps, a tooth brush, and several other items.

Boy Scout and Cub Scout Troop 133 presented the flag, handed out the gift baskets, and promptly shook the hand of each veteran thanking them for their service. Lt. Paul King of the Florida National Guard and Elks member served as Master of Ceremonies.

God bless America and God bless the Elks.

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**Silver Springs Shores Lodge 2730**

Silver Springs Shores Lodge 2730 had an all around good time enjoying the Veterans’ Christmas Party with dinner, entertainment, and gift stockings for all. Lots of food was donated also to fill the Lodge’s annual Charity Baskets for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

**Inverness Elks Lodge 2522**

Inverness Lodge raised over $3,400 from their annual Christmas Charity Raffle. All proceeds were given to local charities including Citrus United Basket. They wish to thank everyone for their continued generous support!

**Winter Park Lodge 1830**

Members of the Elks and their auxiliary Does recently presented dictionaries to eight local elementary schools. Randy Harper, the Youth Activities Chairman, spearheaded this year’s activity. This was done as part of the national program to distribute dictionaries to as many third graders as possible.

Winter Park Lodge proves that “Elks Care...Elks Share.”

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**Veteran Services’ Recognition**

The Ladies of Inverness Elks Lodge 2522 held their second annual “Hats on for Hospice” Holiday Winter Wonderland High Tea Saturday, December 8 at the Lodge. They had a great turnout and raised over $1,000 to be given to Hospice of Citrus County. Inverness Lodge members’ hats go off to the ladies!

**Ocala Lodge 286**

The annual Drug Awareness Poster Contest was held at Oakcrest Elementary School. Each of the six winners was given a gift certificate and a certificate of appreciation.

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**John Markiewicz and Doug Alger, Exalted Ruler of Jacksonville Lodge 221 receive the Congressional Recognition Award for their outstanding service for the past three years to veterans from Chairman John Reitz, left.**

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**Elks Care - Elks Share**
The evening of the Male Fashion Show was a great success. It was filled with laughter and friendship. Looking around the room, tears could be seen running down faces with joy. Applause is given to the Activity Chairman, Pam Weeks, and her assistants, Mary VanDyk and Lynn Feehan. It was a great event. Appreciation goes out to all the male contestants. Congratulations go to the first place winner, Mr. Leo Allen. The room was decorated beautifully with a red runway that the male contestants walked down. Each contestant was dressed so beautifully. Ha ha. Thanks go to all the visitors from the Northwest District Lodges and also to those who entered the Male Fashion Show. Special thanks go to all who brought the delicious food and desserts. Rick Mase played outstanding music as the Male Contestants walked down the red carpet as well as during the evening.

The Lodge provided a veterans’ container for supplies that was used to give to the Veterans’ Hospitals and Christmas stockings that were filled for the veterans. (Thank you for giving to those who gave us freedom.) Also, the Northwest Florida Blood Center is in great need of your gift of life.

A special thank you goes out to Bill White and all of his crew for the wonderful job he does with the Drug Awareness trailer. He did a spectacular job at the Navarre Beach Art Festival. Children of all ages were going around with red ribbons displaying the “No to Drugs” motto. The Lodge appreciates all of his hard work and dedication.

Destin Lodge 2688

Message from Exalted Ruler: “Thanksgiving is here and gone and was a wonderful time to ‘break bread’ with our fellow Elks. We were blessed to have an abundance of great dining selections, including two large turkeys and dressing, along with many dishes and desserts of your favorite food. We appreciate everyone’s help. We also were visited by our ‘Up-North’ visitors who returned. Welcome back, Dennis. A great time was had by all.”

If you have old cell phones, please donate them. Each phone allows thirty minute free calls for our troops in Iraq.

Pensacola Beach Lodge 497

A recent Lodge weekend drawing raised $4,500 to help defray the expenses of Todd Little who has been undergoing treatment for a brain tumor. He is the son of Elks member Jim Little and his wife, Carolyn. The winner received a week’s stay at the beach house of Jane Hubbard.

Pictured are Todd Little and Stacy.

Volunteers who did all the heavy lifting of this very successful endeavor were Sandi Huggins, ER; Jane Hubbard; Carolyn, Todd’s mom; Rick Vermehren; Kay Turner; and Patti Vermehren.

The annual Veterans’ Day Parade was held on Sunday, November 11. Members came out and supported our service men and women. The parade started at 1 p.m. with food and refreshments following after. Some of the Lady Elks were featured in The Pensacola News Journal waving and handing out small American flags to add to the festivities.

The Lodge invited 35 students from NAS Pensacola to a free Thanksgiving dinner at the Lodge on Thanksgiving Day. A beach trolley was chartered for transportation of the troops to and from. Thanks go to all for their support. Thanks to and from. Thanks to all for their support.

Ft. Walton Lodge 1795

Every Lodge will soon be approaching the last quarter in this Lodge year. Time flies!
The North District and specifically District VP Janet da Silva from Live Oak Lodge hosted the visit of State President David Lake the last weekend in January. Regardless of the weather, they extended a warm welcome to President Lake and his entourage.

Lake City Lodge 893

DDGER James Hollingsworth made his final visit to his home Lodge in Lake City in late September. Four new members were initiated that night. The Lodge is working diligently to increase its membership and meet the goal prescribed.

The Lodge continues with its ongoing maintenance program and is working on a new roof. With a building that exceeds 100 years in age, there is always something that needs repair. The Lodge stays focused on these needs and solicits assistance from its talented membership to help keep costs down. The roof replacement required a contract with a roofing contractor.

As a service to its members, the Lodge offered a Safe Driver Class through AARP for drivers over the age of fifty. A certificate of attendance was awarded which could help in obtaining an auto insurance discount. Classes covered topics including safe driving tips, good driving practices, avoiding crashes, and changes in Florida laws. The fee for the class was only $10.

The Lodge sponsors an annual Christmas charity drive. Tickets are mailed to members for sale, and money raised provides for food baskets for needy families. Baskets were delivered on December 22. Members also provide gifts for these families through donations of toys. A member brings in a toy valued at $10 or more and receives a meal of comparable value at the Lodge. Toys and goodie bags were delivered to area children on Christmas Eve.

A homecoming dinner was held at Lake City Lodge for DDGER James Hollingsworth on December 15. About sixty people attended from around the North District in recognition of the good job that James is doing for the district on behalf of the national organization.

A golf tournament was held February 2 as another fundraiser for the Lodge. This was the weekend before the Super Bowl, so no conflicts were had.

Live Oak Lodge 1165

Live Oak Lodge was pleased to sponsor a District Ritual Clinic on September 13. The Lodge’s Anna Miller Circle provided a luncheon for those attending the Ritual Clinic.

DDGER James Hollingsworth visited the Lodge in October along with members from Tallahassee, Perry, and Lake City Lodges. A catfish and fried chicken dinner was served to those attending the visitation. A Halloween Dinner and dance was held on October 27 with prizes awarded for the best costume.

The Lodge is involved now in its Winter Season Fundraising project. A Shineray dirt bike has been donated and a drawing was held on December 15 for one lucky person to go home with the dirt bike. The last fundraiser was a gun raffle, and the winners were Brad Bracewell and Kyle Hartley.

Improvements in the lounge include reupholstering the bar rail and working on the bar stools in the lounge and billiard room. Other Lodge activity included the Hoop Shoot competition held December 8. The annual members’ Christmas Party was held December 15. Donations were accepted to purchase Christmas gifts for veterans in the domiciliary at the Lake City Veterans’ Center. A list of suggested items was posted at the Lodge to help in selection of donations.

The Memorial Service was held on December 2 with refreshments served afterward in the dining room.

Madison Lodge 2205

The Madison Elks Lodge hosted a Halloween Party for the residents of its adopted nursing home, Pine Lake of Greenville. Vast assortments of ghoulish snacks were served and trick or treat bags were furnished for the residents to hand out to the trick-or-treaters who came calling.

Madison Elks recognized Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October with an open invitation to those in the community who had been affected in some way with breast cancer. Elks helped with refreshments, all pink, and assisted the residents in hosting guests.

November was a busy time. The Lodge helped organize the Fall Festival and Veterans’ Day activities at Pine Lake. Members furnished fifteen cakes for a cake auction and cake walk, a dunking booth, and sold tickets. Lodge members always enjoy visiting with new friends at Pine Lake.

Madison Lodge built a float for the Country Christmas Parade on Saturday, December 8. The nursing home residents were so excited to get to ride on a float where they could be seen and wave to all the parade watchers.

Perry Lodge 1851

Perry Lodge experienced a great loss when its newsletter editor, Kyle Jones, passed away unexpectedly. He had a gift for writing, subtle wit, and always had a smile. Kyle was a two time PER, worked on several Lodge committees including Bingo, and was a district chairman. Much of the newsletter information was on Kyle’s home computer without backup information readily available to the Lodge. When a newsletter is prepared outside the Lodge building, there should always be backup at the Lodge.

The Lodge was happy to welcome DDGER Hollingsworth in September for his official visit. A fried fish dinner was the menu for the evening in the dining room, and the ladies provided homemade desserts.

As an event every fourth Thursday, the Lodge holds a covered dish dinner followed by a live band performance. Members and their wives bring in covered dishes, while the Lodge provides the meat. There is a nominal cost for the meal and the band. On Fridays, the Lodge serves fresh mullet dinners (a popular local fish here in north Florida).

The Perry Lodge awarded $500 scholarships to two local students. In addition, the Lodge has set up a $1,000 scholarship at Taylor County Technical Institute to be available to a local student needing financial assistance. Also on a local note, the Lodge participated in sponsoring the Police Bike Rodeo in conjunction with the Perry Police Department and the Taylor County Sheriff Department. More than forty kids attended the event which included bike inspections and a riding safety course. Each child took home a free bicycle helmet and was served a free lunch.

A fundraising effort was undertaken in November to raise money for veterans for Christmas. The event included a covered dish dinner and bingo with proceeds including donations earmarked for the Veterans’ Christmas Charity Fund.

The Lodge conducted its annual Soccer Shoot on November 24 with sixteen kids in the competition. Seven winners in the age categories were planning to go on to Umatilla to compete in the Regionals. The Lodge has a large, flat front yard for this contest, and the yard is used for soccer games during the year by local kids.

Breakfast with Santa is an annual event that Perry Lodge sponsors for local children. This year the date was December 15. Last year more than 300 children attended and had a visit with Santa, and it was hoped to have another big crowd this year.

Marianna Lodge 1516

Marianna Lodge has purchased a new LCD flat screen television for the enjoyment of the Lodge members. The new screen has been placed in the lounge area. This is a welcome addition to the Lodge and has helped to kick off the football-viewing event held on Saturday nights.

Three students were awarded a total of $3,800 in scholarships from the Marianna Elks Endowed Scholarship Fund at Chipola College. The money can be used for tuition or books as long as the students maintain a 2.5 GPA. Two of the students were children or grandchildren of Lodge members, and the third student was a nursing student needing some financial assistance.

The Lodge was pleased to welcome DDGER James Hollingsworth for his visit on October 22. Members from other Lodges in the district attended and the meal served was great.

Tallahassee Lodge 937

Tallahassee Lodge was visited in October by DDGER Hollingsworth. The Lodge always enjoys a visit from the District DD or VP as well as the fellowship that accompanies the visit.

The annual Chili Cook-off held October 13 netted $2,800 which was passed on to the local chapter of the Florida National Guard. The Guard has a family readiness group called HOOAH (Honoring Our Own American Heroes), which is available to provide assistance to families who have a mom or dad serving overseas.

The Lodge’s annual Halloween Party brought out some scary characters. Prizes were given for the best costumes. Special appetizers and cocktails were provided.

The Lodge has adopted the local Refuge House, a safe haven for women, as the recipient of donated items monthly. A box is placed in the lounge foyer, and each month a new theme of needs is posted on the box. Items solicited include make-up, hair products, and personal care items. Each month the items are transported to Refuge House.

A Veterans’ Day program was held in the lounge on November 11 conducted by new members Constance Higinbotham and Gregory Davis. The program included a PowerPoint presentation honoring our nation’s veterans. A barbecue chicken lunch was served after the program.

December kicked off with the Lodge’s annual poinsettia delivery to widows of Elks on December 1. Two dozen volunteer route drivers delivered about 130 plants to homes. This annual event brightens the homes of our Elks widows for the holiday season.

The annual Memorial Service the next day brought about 65 folks to the Lodge for this moving ceremony. Refreshments were served in the dining room after the service in our Lodge room.

North District continued on page 10
West Palm Beach Lodge 1352 performed the Flag Retirement Ceremony inside and outside of the Lodge on November 11, 2007 as part of the Americanism Committee Special Ritual for the B.P.O.E.

Honor Guard from the General A.A. Vandegrift Detachment Marine Corps League of the Palm Beaches presented the Colors and Taps for the ceremony. Lodge sponsored Boy Scout Troop No. 199 of West Palm Beach participated in the burning of the unserviceable flags.

In total there were 36 Elks and 45 non-Elks (including 5 Marines and 10 Boy Scouts).

Following the ceremony, Ken Allfrey and the House Committee presented cold cuts and salad for lunch, and Ted Olson, Lodge Esquire/Chef made an American apple pie and ice cream that was large enough to feed all in attendance. My sincere thanks to the following people who helped make this event happen: PER Phil Macnak, PER Gary Sterling, PER Ted Olson, House Chairman Ken Allfrey, ER Bobbi Woodell and all her officers, the Lodge members who attended and their guests, to Southeast District VP Paul Mozzocci for attending, and special thanks go to the Marines and Boy Scouts who added significantly to a fine rendition of the Flag Retirement Ceremony.

In total approximately 375 American and POW/MIA flags were retired and burned outside in a very impressive ceremony.

A total of 235 Elks hours were given to the Flag Day Ceremony and the cost was $300 for the food, $125 for the DJ, and $100 for the supplies. In addition I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the following people who helped make this event happen: PER Phil Macnak, PER Gary Sterling, PER Ted Olson, House Chairman Ken Allfrey, ER Bobbi Woodell and all her officers, the Lodge members who attended and their guests, to Southeast District VP Paul Mozzocci for attending, and special thanks go to the Marines and Boy Scouts who added significantly to a fine rendition of the Flag Retirement Ceremony.
Below is a 5-year schedule for the meetings of the Florida State Elks Association. Please be advised, this is the best estimate of the dates. As these dates may change in the future FSEA Secretary Carl Seibert will provide updates of this schedule on the Florida Elks Web Page.

### Florida State Elks Association

#### Five Year Schedule of Future Meeting Dates

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<td>Feb. 5-7, 2009 Umatilla, FL</td>
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<td>Feb. 11-13, 2010 Umatilla, FL</td>
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<td>Feb. 9-11, 2012 Umatilla, FL</td>
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<td>ER Seminars - Orlando</td>
<td>Mar. 8-9, 2008 FL Mall Hotel</td>
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<td>Mar. 7-8, 2009 Marriott, Lake Mary</td>
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<td>Mar. 10-11, 2012 TBD</td>
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<td>ER Seminars - Lake City</td>
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<td>Grand Lodge Convention</td>
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Lake Placid Lodge 2661

Lake Placid Lodge hosted the visitation of District Vice President Mike Carney and his wife Diane on September 15th. The Vice President has awarded Lodges with the most new members attending the visit with a $50.00 award for the purchase of a Harry-Anna Certificate. Lake Placid has won the award four times this year.

The Lodge also received a grant of $3,700 from the Elks National Foundation for use in establishing a “Meals on Wheels” in the Lake Placid area. Lake Placid Elks will provide volunteers to deliver the meals to those needing the service.

Volunteers from Lake Placid participated in the cookouts at the Veterans’ Nursing homes in the Tampa and St. Petersburg area.

Bill Renton a Lake Placid Elk since 1989 has been an Elk for more than 60 years. He originally joined the Bluefield, West Virginia Elks Lodge in 1948.

Lake Placid Ladies of Elkscollected food and made up baskets for seven needy families for Thanksgiving and again for Christmas plus delivering toys to 21 children.

Wauchula Lodge 1700

Even though the Lodge has limited funds, with help from Noey Flores, donations were given to the Special Olympics, and Hardee County High School Yearbook. The Lodge also provided the use of the dining area on two Saturday mornings to the Hardee Soccer League for registration and to Hardee County Bass Anglers to meet on one Monday each month.

The Lodge is collecting items for use by the Veterans in the VA Nursing Homes.

The funds raised at the Torrey Oaks Golf Tournament in November will benefit the local youth in the community, veterans, and local charities.

The Lodge received two anonymous $500 donations for use in repairing the Lodge air conditioning. Thank you very much.

Arcadia Lodge 1524

The Annual Arcadia Golf Tournament held at the Bluffs Golf Course had 21 teams of golfers. It was a successful event despite the inclement weather. Larry Furr was the chairman and did a fantastic job.

The “Great Duck Race” was held on November 10th with hundreds of plastic ducks being released into the Peace River; the first three winners won $500, $250, and $150. The funds raised went to benefit the ARC/DeSoto, Inc. Association of Retarded Citizens. It was a great day of fun for all who participated.

Sebring Lodge 1529

Each month the Sebring Elks Veterans Committee and volunteers visit more than 90 veterans in the local nursing homes, rehabilitation facilities and hospitals, bringing them goodies, cookies and candy and most of all a chance to talk to someone besides the staff.

This same committee coordinated with the Alan Jay Automobile dealership and 15 local schools to send cards and letters from the students to service personnel overseas. The goal is to send out more than 3,000 letters.

Sebring Lodge had an extra special Elks Memorial Service by inviting the pastor of the First United Methodist Church of Zolfo Springs to deliver the message and the Avon Park High School Show Choir to share in their musical talents.

Twenty-seven kids from the Sebring area participated in the Sebring Hoop Shoot contest.

Lakeland Lodge 1291

Thanks go to the efforts of Wes Cox, Chris and Harry Burhmeser for the improved looks of the lodge with the new paint they applied to the Lodge in September.

Brandon Lodge 2383

Brandon Elks are proud to be the home Lodge of Beverly Messerschmidt who is the President of the Florida Ladies of Elks. She has married to PDDGER Elmer ‘Smitty” Messerschmidt for 23 years.

The Past Exalted Rulers of Brandon Lodge held a huge Flea Market in October generating a sizable donation of more than $2,178 to the Lodge. Many of the members donated unwanted or unused articles for sale and cleaned out their closets as well.

Brandon Lodge hosted a Military Thanksgiving Dinner for the families of those stationed at MacDill Air Force Base serving overseas.

The Lodge is collecting old, used and unneeded cell phone to be recycled and given out to homeless children, teenagers and young adults out on the streets through a National Stand Up For Kids Program established by the US House and Senate.

Brandon Lodge members, Ladies of the Elks, and members of the Brandon High School National Scholarship Honor Society distributed over 170 Christmas gift bags to veterans at the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital in Tampa Florida.

The Brandon Elks and Ladies of Elks held fundraisers to fill the gift bags from the Elks, and the Brandon High School National Honor Society members raised the money for their gift bags.

From left to right are Lodge member & VA fundraiser coordinator Barbara Matthews; James A Haley Veterans Hospital Recreational Therapist Eileen Jimenez; and Lodge National Honor Society coordinator Mark Fox.

Winter Haven Lodge 1672

The Winter Haven High School Jr. ROTC students served the dinner for the DD/VP visitation at the Lodge on October 20th. They earned more than $250 in donations for use in their projects.

Elks member Ted Cox has donated his woodworking skills by building dog houses for police dogs in different communities and he is also building trays for those confined to wheelchairs. So far he has built and given away 375 trays.

Lake Wales Lodge 1974

More than a dozen Lake Wales Elks participated in the Annual Bay Pines Barbecue for Veterans on November 18th. It was good to see so many of the other District Lodges helping with the cookout. The Veterans certainly appreciated the event.

The “Good Ship Lollipop” float was entered into the Christmas parade in Lake Wales. Laura Ransom was the chairman and she collected many stuffed animals to throw out to the children along the parade route.

The Lodge has a “Circle of Friends” group that ministers to handicapped children. An application for a grant was sent in but we did not receive it. However the lodge still hosted a party for the kids with members adopting a kid for that day to receive gifts.

Plant City Lodge 1727

A loss for Plant City Lodge is the departure of Jerry and Carol Yates who have moved to Arizona for their retirement. They will be missed by many in Elkdom for their untiring volunteerism.

The Lodge recently donated two wheelchairs to a Plant City High School program that is a cooperative effort between the school, South Florida Baptist Church and the Plant City Fire Department.

The Annual Casino Night held in October. Again this year it was very successful, thanks go to all of the many volunteers manning the tables, setting up, and preparing for the party. Steve Bonds was the Chairman and he can be proud of such success in managing and coordinating the numerous volunteers and collecting the numerous prizes donated by the businesses.

During Red Ribbon Week, the “Making Healthy Choices,” event was bigger than ever. Plant City High band members beat drums to the chant, “Say No to Drugs,” and cheerleaders marched alongside the youngsters in the parade.

The Knights Elementary School guidance counselor, Lisa Carlsen, arranged such activities as a parade, display of firetrucks, and a performance by the Plant City High School percussionists and cheerleaders.