AN ELKS SUCCESS STORY

By Alexandra Sartor

Let me introduce myself, my name is Alexandra Sartor and I’m 18 years old. I’m known as the Elks Baby of Seminole Lodge 2519.

When I was barely two, (1993) and was just learning to walk, I started out on the “wrong foot”, by that I mean I was tip-toeing instead of walking on my feet. My pediatrician suggested I see an orthopedic doctor to be evaluated. This doctor suggested several surgeries to correct my foot problems. By now my mom and dad are concerned what is going to happen to their little girl.

My mom spoke of my situation to my baby sitter Mary Gillhespy. Mary said, “My husband Eugene is a member of Seminole Elks Lodge 2519. They have a program that helps children like Alex with orthopedic disabilities and rehabilitation. Let me speak with him and get the information for you.”

In the meantime, my parents had contacted the Shriner’s for help, and at the same time the Gillhespy’s were trying to get us into the Elks program. We were invited to the next Elks meeting where we met Exalted Ruler Jesse Stewart (1993) and other members to notify us that they were sending our application to the hospital for acceptance.

Within a short amount of time, we received a letter from the Elks Hospital in Umatilla to come for an evaluation of my left foot, to see if they had a solution other than surgery. We arrived at the hospital promptly at 7am. Through the doors we went and to my surprise was a HUGE Mickey Mouse in a wheelchair, what a welcome surprise! The Hospital staff was kind, understood our concerns and knew we were all scared. They made our visit so comforting that we did not feel like strangers.

After my x-ray, we then went into a room while the doctors came in and told mom and dad, “Well...this is what we have come up with.”

By Alexandra Sartor

STATE LEVEL SCHOLARSHIPS

By C. Valentine Bates, PGER

Florida Elks are always striving to find ways to do more for our youth, veterans, and those less fortunate. Our accomplishments are unequaled in the U.S., our mobile Children’s Therapy Services is second to none and our Youth Camp is the envy of Elks everywhere. Our Harry-Anna Trust Fund is growing, even in a down economy.

Should we be complacent, relax, and rest on our many laurels? Not the Elks of Florida!! We’re here for the long haul and exist to make the best even better.

It occurred to me we could start a youth scholarship program on the state level that wouldn’t conflict with Lodge or Elks National Foundation programs or with the Van Duren scholarship. The purpose, of course, would be to recognize and reward outstanding students who might not otherwise have the opportunity to attend college.

For some time, I have admired and followed the Alabama Elks’ scholarship program. I think we could easily modify the format of the Alabama scholarship program to fit our purposes here in Florida. In addition to making monetary awards, the Alabama Elks invite the scholarship recipients to their state convention and have them speak to the assembly. It is quite impressive and makes everyone in attendance proud to be a member of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

Accordingly, I have asked our State Secretary, Carl Seibert, to set aside $50,000 from last year’s ENF Grant to start a fund for this scholarship endeavor. President Vince Como has agreed to work to get the program up and running. I’m sure with Vince’s help, and the continued generous donations to the Elks National Foundation and to the new scholarship program, Florida Elks will once again lead the way to help others in need. I look forward to discussing this with all of you at the November Mid-year Meeting in Lake Mary.

Don’t forget our Grand Exalter Ruler, Jim Nichelson, and his wife, Mary Carolyn, will be attending our February Quarterly at the Elks Youth Camp. I urge all Elks and Elks Lodges who wish to make a donation to the Elks National Foundation to do so at that meeting so that we can show our Grand Exalted Ruler that when it comes to “Elks Care – Elks Share,” no one in any other state cares or shares more than the Florida Elks.

See you all in November,

Alexandra Today

Mom and dad were asked to go with me to be evaluated by the doctors, then off to x-ray. We then went into a room while the doctors discussed what they thought was the best plan for me. After a short while the doctors came in and told mom and dad, “Well...this is what we have come up with.”

Alexandra’s Story continued page 15
As of this writing, Lisa and I accompanied by your VPAL James Hurst and Julia, and the entire H.O.P.E. team have had a whirlwind tour of our great state.

We have completed 8 of 14 district visitations. The courtesies we have received from all of you have been truly remarkable as we promote this year’s motto: Helping Others Promotes Elksdom.

We went to Portland, Oregon for the 146th Grand Lodge convention where I had the honor to present our State’s colors before the delegates assembled from all 50 states, the Philippines, Guam, Panama and Puerto Rico. The delegate from Puerto Rico presented our Association with a check for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund and another for the Elks National Foundation. As usual, our delegation was well represented with 200 members and guests in attendance. A special note of thanks to our State Secretary Carl Seibert, his hospitality room team for all the “behind the scenes” work in providing the food and beverages to welcome and entertain our Florida members as well as the many visitors from across the nation. Great job!

By the way, if you’ve been hiding under a rock since the convention, we, and a sizeable contingent from Florida went to Seattle to board on a cruise to Alaska. What magnificent sights to be seen! Where else could one see America’s national symbol, the bald eagle, a brown bear cub in a tree, a sable salmon, and humpback whales, all in one week? It was the cruise of a lifetime and the gambling wasn’t too bad either.

The weekend of August 07-08, we visited with the East Central District and Daytona Beach Lodge No. 1141, where I had the pleasure of having my son Vincent, the Marine and daughter Andria in attendance. They were awestruck by the displays of protected wildlife and the private tour of the Harbor Beach Oceanographic Institute. It was amazing to see the displays of protected wildlife and research being conducted to protect our wildlife and water supply. At the Saturday evening dinner at Ft. Pierce Lodge No. 1520, hosted by Vero Beach Lodge No. 1774, I presented the first two pins to Ers Miki McMurtry and Charles DeLauder. I also received some very substantial contributions to our Harry-Anna Trust Fund.

I am happy to report that as of September 30, I had to order another 500 “canoe” pins for sales by our State office and State H-A Chairman PDD Jerry Carter. Although sales are slightly behind last year, in great part, due to our present national economic situation, I feel confident that the second half of the year will produce more revenue toward our goal.

We are looking forward to our remaining 2009 visits: October 09-10, South Southwest District followed by the Fall Harry-Anna Trust Fund seminar at the Youth Camp, the Mid-Year Convention, November 12-14 in at the Lake Mary Marriott, which should have a great turnout especially for the Board meetings, General Session and Major Projects meeting on Saturday. We look forward to seeing all of you there as we share that Elk pride in all we do as Florida Elks.

Remember seek out ONE new qualified candidate to join our great Order and help cut our membership losses to an absolute minimum.

Finally, don’t forget to thank a veteran when you see one, or it is they that have given us that which is not free – our freedoms.

Lisa and I look forward to seeing you all soon, until the Winter issue.
A MESSAGE FROM THE STATE SECRETARY

Carl T. Seibert, PDD

The past few months have been very busy at the State Association and I am very fortunate to have a staff of uniquely qualified and hard working individuals. Over the past few months our office has begun to undertake a couple of new efforts aimed at assisting our Lodges to better position themselves for membership growth. Exactly one year ago, you might remember, I dedicated my entire message in the Florida Elks News to raising the awareness of our members to our declining statewide membership. Over this past year I have stated often that I believe we are in need of an effort in membership, one that will prove to be as historically significant in the years to come as the formation of the Harry-Anna Trust Fund was to our Association some fifty plus years ago. This summer we have been aided by a Grand Lodge pilot program of publicity and public relations that has provided us with numerous membership leads.

We have formed a network of Lodge Ambassadors throughout the state to follow these membership leads and we are now beginning to reap some of the rewards from this effort as Lodges convert these leads into new members. Coordinating this effort on behalf of the Association has been the newest addition to our staff, Jenny Box. Elsewhere in this newspaper you will find an article written by Jenny that will provide more information on this program entitled, “Thank you Elks.”

As this publicity and public relations program has been implemented we have had the privilege of working with some industry professionals both in and out of state. Realizing that their assistance will be short-lived, as the Grand Lodge pilot program of publicity and public relations that has provided us with numerous membership leads.

We have formed a network of Lodge Ambassadors throughout the state to follow these membership leads and we are now beginning to reap some of the rewards from this effort as Lodges convert these leads into new members. Coordinating this effort on behalf of the Association has been Rachael King. Rachael has also written an article in this edition of the newspaper that will provide you with a little more information on these efforts.

I hope by our actions and staffing dedication that you will see how serious we perceive our membership decline to be and that you will work with us in your Lodges to implement these programs as they become available. Fraternal change is inevitable. Will ours be planned or accidental? Only time will tell!

Now for a more traditional message:

Our August Quarterly meetings were held at the Youth Camp August 13-15 and as always, the meetings were well-attended and very informative. Thank you to all who attended! The barbecue on Friday night was held in the new multipurpose shelter in the rough camping area of the camp. The food and fellowship were enjoyed by many as was the dunk tank fundraiser for our endorsed candidate for National President/Grand Exalted Ruler, Mike Smith. The February 2010 meetings will be held at the Youth Camp the 5th & 6th. It is recommended that reservations for the February meetings be made early as room availability is always limited in the Umatilla area during that time of the year. A list of area hotels can be found at our web site at www.flelks.org.

In late September, I was privileged to attend the annual conference of the Florida Ladies of Elks (FLOE). This conference recognized the ladies’ achievements over the prior year, a highlight of which was their never ending support of our major projects. During 2008-2009 our Ladies Organizations donated over $112,000 to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund and our major projects! Congratulations go to FLOE State President Joan Fritz and her officers for a great year, and best wishes are given for an even better year to incoming 2009-2010 State President Enid “Sam” Simpson and her officer team! Ladies, we thank you!

The cutoff date for reservations for the Mid-year Convention has now passed and at this writing it appears that our attendance will be down a bit from last year. Our new online procedure for pre-registration and name badges was well received and I remain thankful for our members who allow us to continually introduce the use of new and modern technologies into our Association workings. The convention will be held November 12-14, 2009 at the Orlando Marriott Lake Mary.

The 2010 State Convention will be held once again at Disney’s Coronado Springs Resort May 20-23. More information on the State Convention will be available in late December/January.

Speaking of conventions, plans are now under way for the 2010 Grand Lodge Convention in Orlando, Florida July 4-8. As in 2006, the Florida Elks will again be the hosts for this convention and it will again require many volunteers for the week. In addition to our many duties as the local hosts, the Florida Elks also have the distinct honor and privilege to have the endorsed candidate for National President/Grand Exalted Ruler, Mike Smith from Plant City Lodge 1727. Mike will be elected at approximately 10:55 a.m. on Monday, July 5, 2010. Our plan is to hold one of the largest and best demonstrations for Mike that Grand Lodge has ever seen. To do this it will require hundreds of Florida Elks. It is hoped that Lodges will plan bus trips to Orlando for the day. Florida will again be housed in the Rosen Center hotel directly across from the convention center and lodging information will be available soon. Keep an eye on our web site at www.flelks.org for the latest information pertaining to this and other events of the Florida State Elks Association.

Now that we are at the halfway point for the year, all Lodges should be well on their way to at least meeting one half of the Lodge’s “Magic Number” membership goal! Monthly progress updates are posted on our web site.

I hope you will visit our website often and that you have seen the continuing improvements that are being made to it. My thanks go to our Web Master, Steve Harmon, who has been working very hard in its maintenance and development. Our web site address is www.flelks.org.

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

Elks Launch Major Publicity Campaign to Attract New Members

By: Jenny Box,
FSEA Staff Member and Campaign Coordinator

In a perfect world, there would be no need to promote the good deeds of the Florida Elks. People would be chomping at the bit to join an organization as selfless and altruistic as this one. Unfortunately that’s just not the case. While 69,000+ members are very impressive, the fact of the matter is just not the case. While 69,000+ members is very impressive, the fact of the matter is that number is rapidly declining. As many of you already know, in an effort to increase membership within the Florida Elks, Grand Lodge launched a statewide media campaign entitled, “Thank You Elks” Membership and Recruitment Campaign.

The campaign took place during the months of July through October. It consisted of media exposure in magazines, on billboards, on the radio, on the backs of transit buses, and on the web. While the campaign was off to a slow start, leads began to pick up significantly in mid-September. To give you a brief summary, during the months of June, July, and August, Elks advertisements generated about 30 leads, which means 30 individuals throughout the state viewed Florida Elks advertisements during those months and contacted the FSEA for more information. Those individuals were promptly contacted by the Lodge Ambassadors within their areas. Once again, I’d like to extend a big thank you to all of the Ambassadors who pursued those prospects. While 30 leads over a period of three months sounds a little discouraging, we didn’t give up just yet. As a result of some funding changes, things began looking up in mid-September. Edmonds Associates, the organization hired by Grand Lodge to develop and implement the campaign, shifted some of the funds from radio advertisements to more online ads. Drastic changes quickly followed that shift. In the two weeks period immediately following that change, over 190 inquiries came in. That’s more than six times the amount of leads that were received in the 3 months prior to the funding shift. It is our hope that over the next few months many of those leads will develop into memberships. After receiving a welcome packet outlining all of the wonderful programs that the Florida Elks have developed and maintained, I can’t imagine too many people turning away. We anticipate that the online ads will continue to produce inquiries at this rate throughout the remainder of the campaign. Let’s hope so!

I understand that this campaign has surfaced mixed reviews but many view it as a success or a first step toward a future abundant with eager Elks making a difference in the lives of those in need. If anything, we here at the FSEA view this campaign as an eye opening experience to the many opportunities that lie ahead to promote the Florida Elks for their good deeds. Post-campaign plans are already in the works and it is our hope that we will develop the tools necessary to utilize our resources and positively impact the growth of our organization. Thanks again for your support and cooperation throughout the campaign. For more updates and information, check out the Florida Elks web site.
Dear Florida Elks,

My name is Rachael King and I have been a staff member at the Florida State Elks Association office for six years. If you already know me, it’s probably because we’ve communicated in one way or another about the Harry-Anna Trust Fund! I take care of all Trust Fund donations for the entire state of Florida.

However, I would like to talk to you now about a different subject, and it is one that I hope will spark an enthusiastic response from many of you. Recently here at the state office, we’ve been putting our heads together in order to determine how to better promote the Florida Elks. As I’m sure you’ve heard often, we do so much good for our communities, yet many community members don’t feel like they know us or what we’re about. Well, we think we’d like to talk to you now about a different subject, and it is something that will make you feel proud of being a Florida Elk.

Here is what we have decided to do: by promoting the Florida Elks, we will, at the same time, increase our membership that sadly and unfortunately declines more and more every year. As many of you know, the Grand Lodge has been funding a membership campaign for our state as well as Washington state. We are now near the end of that campaign, but we don’t want the goal of this campaign to end, so we plan to carry on the mission of growing our membership even stronger. As Florida State Elks Association President Vincent Como’s motto for the year states, “Helping Others – Promotes Elksdom.” Let’s prove that motto!

We have participated in a very insightful and helpful workshop with a professional in the marketing industry and have taken away key elements to elaborate on. Whenever a Lodge holds a newsworthy event (one in which someone or a group benefits - not, for example, an event where only Elks members are involved or invited, such as a weekly dinner), we want to help you gain exposure prior to the event so that you can be recognized for the difference you are making. The more people who hear that we accomplish some amazing things, the more people who will be inspired to learn more and possibly become a member in order to be a part of the good work we do. To gain this exposure, we will assist you in getting noticed by the media, including having articles published in newspapers and magazines or even getting your story on television. We will help you with the entire process from writing press releases to knowing who to ask for when you call a publication. More details and guidelines will be established soon, so if this isn’t clear to you right now, don’t worry!

Here is where YOU come in! We are now looking for members to volunteer their services for this marketing campaign to get our news stories out where they can be heard by future Elks. If you have any sort of background in marketing, public relations, journalism, etc., we’d love to have you become part of our team. Even if you don’t have this specific background, we would still welcome your services just the same. Please keep in mind, however, that certain guidelines will have to be followed in order to get the job done; just make sure you are up to learning new methods and putting them into practice. We need dedicated members who will take this seriously and who will be willing to give it their all so that our messages will reach as many people as possible. We look forward to getting you on our team and becoming part of our “Think Tank” as many call it. We need volunteers from all Lodges so that we can keep stories local also.

For those of you who are interested or might like to learn more about this, please feel free to contact me at 352-669-2241 ext. 237 or at rachael@mipinet.net. Our state office staff is eager and excited to see this new project implemented with hopefully quite positive results. The Elks have never been known to promote themselves or focus on membership drives; you could be part of the first team to see this through. If that is as thrilling to you as it is to us, I await your call or email!

Rachael A. King

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**FLORIDA LADIES OF ELKS**

**Joan Fritz, President**

“Old Glory will light your way”

The 46th Annual Florida Ladies of Elks Conference was an experience beyond words, in more ways than I meant. To stand before a crowd of close to 300 and say good morning and see a sea of red, white, and blue, the colors of our nation, took my breath away.

I want to thank the Port Orange Elkhearts #2723 for all their love, kindness, and support throughout the year. The ladies who chaired committees in May and September are the reasons for our successes this year and the officers and Advisory Council members were always ready to help and advise along the way.

You cannot do the President’s job without all their love, support, and encouragement.

Our yearly Memorial Service presented by the East Central District Port Orange Elkhearts #2723 was beautiful and moving.

Edward K. Jackson, Chairman of the Veterans’ Services Committee and Chairman of the Army of Hope Committee, was the guest speaker. He gave a brief history of the Elks involvement with Veterans Affairs and the Army of Hope. Ed discussed the many problems families of both deceased and wounded veterans encounter. The Army of Hope was formed to help remedy these problems, with all funds raised going to families in the state of Florida. He urged support for the fourteen picnics to be held in the spring of 2010 and hopes the members of FLOE will be involved.

Yearbook Awards went to the following: 1st Place – Brandon #2383, SWC District; and 2nd Place – Miami #948, S District. Membership in Attendance was awarded to St. Augustine #829, NE District. Mileage was awarded to Punta Gorda #2606, SSW District. Attendance was awarded to Punta Gorda #2606, SSW District.

Elizabeth Wise, Past Lady President and Program Book Chairman, presented certificates to Fort Pierce for most money raised through ads, to Punta Gorda for most money from boosters, and to Merritt Island for the second most money from boosters.

One of the highlights of my entire year was working with the ladies in Deland to become a member of FLOE. On July 11, 2009 it was my distinct honor to be the Installing Officer and with Senior Delegate Marcie Lesko as Installing Chaplain and Junior Delegate Sally Kone-Braden as Installing Marshal, the ladies became the Deland Delites #1463 in the East Central District. Congratulations, ladies!

As this is my last quarterly column, I would like you all to know that I thoroughly enjoyed writing it and thoroughly enjoyed my year as your President. In addition, I would like to report that upon arriving home from the conference, I, with George in full agreement, decided to retire from public speaking after committing three faux pas at the conference. I seriously hope “Sam” Simpson enjoys her year as much as I enjoyed mine. As a prize for working to the Presidency, my reward is four years on the Advisory Council. So you see, you’re not getting rid of me.

Bye,

Joan
The following donations are from the period April 1, 2008 through March 31, 2009 and include contributions to the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services, Youth Camp, Trust Fund and Elks Charities. A combined total of $86,802.88 was donated to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund, Elks Charities and the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services. Another $43,772.99 was donated to the Florida Elks Youth Camp.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port St. Lucie Elkettes</td>
<td>710.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuart-Jensen Anna Miller Circle</td>
<td>250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sebastian El Does</td>
<td>645.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viera Elkeutes</td>
<td>124.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Haven Elkettes</td>
<td>200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District totals</td>
<td>6,119.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dawn Pochel, Senior Delegate of Warrington Elkettes accepts two Plaques; Most Money to FEYC ($7,100) and Most Children Sponsored to the Youth Camp (23) from Lynn Warburton Florida Elks Youth Camp Director.

Brandon Ladies of the Elks won First Place yearbook Award from Ladies Chairman Jerry Yates, center, on left is PLP and Brandon Ladies of Elks President Beverly Messerschmidt and on right is Yearbook Chairperson Jane Moon.

Eustis Anna Miller Circle received the award from Ben Brown FECTS Administrator, for Most Money donated to the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services, ($1,383.29) they also received the Most Per Capita ($119) with 95 members.

Maggie Phillips of the Punta Gorda Elkettes accepted the Most Members and Traveling Award from Ladies Chairman Jerry Yates.
It all began back in September 2008 when PER Hugh Sewell of Fall River, MA Lodge 118 printed out hundreds of flyers trying to get people who own motorcycles to get together and form an Elks countrywide group. Hugh had moved to Florida in 2004 and began riding in 2006. Everywhere he went he would meet Elks members who shared the joy of riding. After spending several months researching different Elks Lodges across the country, he found that there were Elks riders groups already in existence for years. He decided to try and organize a riders group on the west coast of Florida with the hope of uniting all these different groups as one over time.

He visited all the Elks Lodges up and down the southwest coast of Florida from Naples to Brandon. He also faxed flyers to all these Lodges in an attempt to stir up interest. It was a long and sometimes discouraging task when he only received responses from a small number of interested Elks members.

Even more difficult was getting a Lodge to allow him to hold an organizational meeting. Finally, he met with then Exalted Ruler, Debra Hargrove, at the Port Charlotte Lodge 2153. She was definitely in favor of allowing him to use the Lodge to hold the first meeting. Her thought process was by allowing the meeting to be held at the Port Charlotte Lodge, it would hopefully bring in new members. She was right about that. Port Charlotte Lodge has gained 22 new members since the Elks Riders USA was started.

The meeting was held on Saturday, January 24, 2009. Sixteen members of the B.P.O.E. from different Lodges throughout the area met and formed a riders group to be known as the ELKS RIDERS USA. As of today, membership is 81 members.

District Vice President, Carl Gerace, was elected President of the group. David Rockow, Linda Sewell, and Ken Greenhorn were elected Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Elks Riders USA Charter Members

Como, FSEA President, visited Port Charlotte Lodge 2153, he was presented with a vest bearing the Elks Riders USA colors and was made an Honorary Lifetime Member.

Many of the new members now joining the Elks Lodges because of the attraction of the Elks Riders USA are younger with fresh new energy and ideas. This is a good sign that Elksdom will carry on for many more years to come.

To learn more about the Elks Riders USA, visit the website at www.elsridersusa.com, send an email to elksridersusa@verizon.net, or just look around you and speak to one of the members personally.

THEY ARE SHOWING UP EVERYWHERE!!

The Elks Retirement Community

Don't stop reading! Every Elk member needs to know about the Elks National Home. Even if you are not of retirement age or considering a move to a retirement community, the Home could be in your future or that of a family member.

It's hard to describe on paper the atmosphere you will find at the Elks National Home. It is definitely not a nursing home, but a place where you have independence and freedom to enjoy friends, hobbies, activities, and life! In addition, you have the security and peace of mind in knowing that the caring staff is there for you if you do need assistance. (And, yes, we do have some vacancies. Contact us today.)

The best way to understand the unique family atmosphere at the Home is to make a visit. If that is not possible, take a mini tour by visiting our website at www.elkshome.org. There you will find full information on the Home, including prices and application forms. You can see the golf course, dining room, and lobby - see the Home lit up for Christmas - take a peek inside one of the apartments or a residential room - learn about the history of the Home - browse through the gift shop. Then imagine being a resident in its future with your support — or by becoming a resident.

You can help by sending your donation to the Elks National Home, 931 Ashland Ave., Bedford, VA 24523. You can specify the General Fund (to be used as needed), Special Care Benefits (for the care section), Modernization (for improvements, repairs, and renovations), or Entertainment (for activities for the residents). Bequests are also a wonderful way to support the Home and they are greatly appreciated. The Elks National Home is a 501(c)3 and 509(a)2 non-profit organization, so your gifts are tax deductible.

Thank you for reading this. Now that you know more about the Elks National Home, we know you will want to share it in its future with your support — or by becoming a resident.

Lap Quilts for Veterans

Plant City Lodge 1627 Elk members, Ladies of the Elks and volunteers are busy making lap quilts for men and women residents at Baldomero Lopez State Veterans Nursing Home in Land 'O Lakes.

Eighty-four quilts are needed by December 1. The Lodge would welcome help from the community. We can use donations of material, flannel, batting, thread, etc. as well as volunteers to help cut, sew, clip and quilt; especially any quilting guilds that may be interested in helping with this project. For additional information and any questions, please contact Bobbi Franklin at 813-752-5328.
Plant City Lodge 1727

Plant City is the home Lodge of Past State President Michael Smith who will be representing the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks as Grand Exalted Ruler during the Elks year 2010-2011. He and his wife, Sandra, will be traveling throughout the United States as they visit the nation’s Elks and spreading the good deeds of Elkdom. Mike is also serving as the Chairman of the Grand Lodge Board of Trustees and will continue in that position this year.

Elks throughout Florida are encouraged to aid in supporting them with fundraising events and other means of collecting donations to help in the expenses they will incur during their year in that very prestigious and important position.

Plant City Ladies of Elks recently presented the Wilson Elementary School Physical Education Coach with a treasure trove of athletic gear: four basketballs, four volleyballs, four soccer balls, four footballs, four hula hoops, four kick balls, sidewalk chalk, and sports cones. The Ladies of the Elks used money from their charitable fundraising projects to buy the equipment.

Jerry Yates, Exalted Ruler expresses his appreciation to the many members of his Lodge and their spouses who were very helpful in making the Southwest Central District hospitality room at the State Convention successful and more enjoyable during the many rain showers which hampered the music festivities in the courtyard.

Brandon Lodge 2383

Brandon Lodge, under the leadership of Jim Turner, PER, is taking part in The Dictionary Project, a nationwide project sponsored by the Grand Lodge.

The sole mission of this program is to distribute dictionaries to as many 3rd graders as possible. This project is a wonderful community project. This is an excellent literacy project, relatively inexpensive, and it opens the doors of our schools to our Lodge paving the way for other youth projects.

This year we will be providing free dictionaries to all 3rd graders in Altai, Nativity, and Nelson Elementary Schools to a total of 300 students.

The Dictionary Project at Nativity Catholic School in Brandon: Left to right, Jim Turner, PER; Mrs. Andrea Kennedy; Ms. Lincy Kandarappuli; and Tom Tennant, Americanism Chairman.

Well over 120 people attended the recent Army of Hope Indoor Picnic on Saturday, June 13 in the Brandon Lodge. The event will be an annual project to raise funds for deployed military families who might encounter financial hardship while their loved ones are serving our country. This year over $2,000 was raised for this Florida Elks Charities managed fund. Thanks go out to Plant City Elks who came and joined us in this endeavor.

Arcadia Lodge 1524

Members of Arcadia Elks returned from the State Convention with a First Place Award in the State Scrapbook Contest. It displayed all the events they have done in the community for the year. Jackie Tucker, PER was proud to accept the award for the Lodge.

The Lodge received much acclaim from the local newspaper with eleven photos and stories about the Elks Memorial Day Service at which more than 75 people attended. Assisting with the ceremony were Boy Scout Troop 39, Cub Scout Pack 39, and Veterans Council 39.

It is regrettable to report that Wauchula Lodge was unable to continue to stay open due to financial difficulties. Wauchula Lodge will merge with Arcadia Lodge 1524 which is about thirty miles south.

Lakeland Lodge 1291

Taking advantage of the slow and hot months of summer, Lakeland Lodge completed remodeling the kitchen with hardworking volunteers and donations of more than $17,000 after the loss of the water heater. While they were without a kitchen, Leading Knight, Rod Hamlett, and Jacquie Moore worked out a schedule to keep everyone fed. Just as the kitchen was completed, wouldn’t you know it, the freezer shut down and all of the contents were lost. September began with a full schedule of events using the newly renovated kitchen.

Winter Haven Lodge 1672

The Brotherhood Ride is a 413 mile, six day bicycling event organized to honor Fort Myers police officer, Andrew Widman, who was shot and killed when he responded to a disturbance in the early morning hours of July 18, 2008.

Winter Haven Lodge was the second stop they made after leaving North Naples Fire Station 45 on July 18. A fundraiser spaghetti and lasagna dinner was held at the Lodge and the proceeds ($800) go to the widow and his three children.

Kyle Hardaway, grandson of Elks member, Frank Kopp, was the recipient of a $4,000 Elks National Foundation scholarship. Kyle was one of 299 students out of more than 1,500 applicants to receive the award.

Winter Haven Lodge is assisting the Kiwanis Club in collecting school supplies for needy children with a box in the lounge for members to contribute items, checks, or cash.

Sebring Lodge 1529

Sebring Lodge has lost a great Elk. Fred Jenkins, Chairman of the Golf Committee and Florida State Elks Golf Tournament for the past nine years, lost his battle with cancer. He will be missed by many.

A group from the Tanglewood community regularly volunteers many hours in helping the Lodge in numerous ways and help in keeping the Lodge on an even keel. Exalted Ruler Carl Rochelle, rather than pick out just one of the more than twenty Tanglewood volunteers, awarded all of them Elk of the Month for August.

Sebring Elks Lodge was bequeathed two motorized wheel chairs. Mr. & Mrs. Clyde Briggs, recently living in the Palms, willed them to the Sebring Elks Veterans’ Services Committee with instructions to be given to disabled veterans. Bud Marple, Committee Chairman, with the help of the Sebring Elks and the Sebring Purple Hearts, presented them to the two deserving veterans. The recipients wished to remain anonymous.

The Lodge presented the Highlands County Veterans’ Council Relief Fund a check for $500 which was a grant from the Elks National Foundation.

It may not be possible, but it is reported that Joe Bryant is retiring as being the Head Chef for the Lodge.

Lake Placid Lodge 2661

Lake Placid Lodge combines Flag Day with the Father’s Day Celebration each year. This year Darrell Bramkamp was the Chairman of the Flag Day ceremony and the Ladies of the Elks presented the flags in the patriotic ceremony.

Vince Connell and his crew of volunteers provided the Father’s Day breakfast.

Lake Placid High School Senior, Alannah Lopes, was awarded a $4,000 Elks National Foundation scholarship. Two other seniors, Silvia Monroy and Nichelle Curtis, were awarded a Lodge scholarship of $500 each.

Lake Placid Middle School fifth grade students entered the Americanism Essay Contest, “What Freedom Means to Me.” The essay by Shelby Edwards won First Place with a $100 Savings Bond. Second Place and a $50 Savings Bond went to Elijah Weber and a $20 Domino’s pizza gift certificate was given to the Third Place winner, Myra Espinosa.

One of the Lodge’s card players, Bart Wahl, qualified to be in the World Series of Poker in Las Vegas, NV on July 6, 2009. Lake Placid card players have contributed over $238 to the Elks National Foundation since April 1, 2009. During last year a total of $591 was donated to ENF.

Lake Placid Ladies of Elks hosted a hospitality room at the Florida Ladies of Elks Conference held in late September in Lake Mary, FL. Exalted Ruler John Holbrook, PDD and his wife, Marge, PLP, along with Jerry Kinsey, PER and his wife, Sally Kinsey, Lady President, co-chaired the room.

During the Caladium Festival, the Ladies’ strawberry booth raised over $2,000 for their charities.

Lake Wales Lodge 1974

June 7 was a day of remembrance for David Winger, a great Elk, volunteer, and entertainer. It started with a campfire toast, included a day of golf, and ended with the Memorial Service.

A $1,000 scholarship was given to Frostproof High School senior, Desiree Pellerin.

Lake Wales Lodge supported the Second Annual Breast Cancer Walk of the Lake Wales Medical Center. Scores of members signed up and paid $10.00 each to participate.

September 19 the Lodge held an open house inviting the local community to attend and learn what the Lodge is doing to support the community. Members were encouraged to bring their neighbors and friends and introduce them to Elkdom. Efforts were made to locate and invite stray Elks.
Bonita Springs Lodge 2753
Bonita Springs helped sponsor the 2009 Brotherhood Ride dedicated to Officer Andrew Widman who was shot and killed responding to a domestic disturbance in Fort Myers. The ride undertaken by law enforcement and fire personnel traveled 413 (413 was Officer Widman’s badge number) miles by bicycle in six days. Bonita Springs hosted a spaghetti dinner fundraiser for the ride and also hosted a windup dinner after the ride was completed. Other Lodges supporting the ride were Winter Haven, Punta Gorda, and Cape Coral.

Cape Coral Lodge 2596
Cape Coral Lodge held a Labor Day Picnic with between 250 and 280 people in attendance. There were plenty of games and there was a water balloon pitch which raised $114 for charity.

Fort Myers Lodge 1288
Fort Myers held a Christmas in July with the added attraction of the Calendar Girls. Their cause was Paws for Patriots. They took donations to go to the program that purchases K-9 Dogs for our service personnel in Iraq.

Buddy Byrne and Mike Foye were pelted with water balloons, while Phil Gersbach was the pie eating champion.

Christine Voss, Kitchen Manager and Lodge Esquire for the Port Charlotte Elks Lodge, resupplies the food line while her staff feed the people during the Homeless Coalition Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon.

Port Charlotte Lodge 2153
Port Charlotte Lodge invited and provided tickets to Boy Scout Troop 543, Daisy Girl Scout Troop 92, and veterans from Port Charlotte VA Nursing Home. The Lodge provided financial assistance to Military Heritage Museum located in Punta Gorda, FL. The museum is open daily and has displays from past and present conflicts. Punta Gorda provided support to the Brother Ride by donating their cabins for the riders to sleep in and served the group a spaghetti dinner and breakfast.

The Punta Gorda Lodge dock was the departure point for a Peace River cruise during the President’s visit to the SSW District. From left SSWVP Carl Gerace and Cathy; VPAL Jim Hurst and Julia; Boat Captain Louis Desguin; Florida State Elks President Vince Como and Lisa.

Lehigh Acres Lodge 2602
Five seniors of Lehigh Acres High School received $500 scholarships, from left, Exalted Ruler Quinn Jerring, Rosa Wengryn, Alyssa Smith, Linesay Laban, and Mary Jane Thomas. Not shown are Luis Giraldo and Melissa Lucas.

AMERICANISM
Bruce H. Cook, State Chairman
FSEA Americanism Committee
GUIDELINES FOR LODGE AND DISTRICT CHAIRMAN

The purpose of the Americanism Committee is to institute and promote patriotic activities of the Order. The Americanism Committee is charged with implementing the patriotic activities planned by the Grand Lodge Americanism Committee endorsed goals:

1. Obtain an Americanism brochure from at least one lodge in each Grand Lodge district.

2. Every state chairman to enter the State Association Report & Contest

3. Endorse “National Patriotism Week,” the second week in September.

4. Increase participation of fifth-eighth graders in the Americanism Essay Contest to 50 percent of the lodges in your state. The 2009-2010 theme is “The American Dream: What Is It?”

5. Every classroom in the area schools has an American flag flying proudly.

6. Encourage lodges to sponsor the “Pledge of Allegiance” video into every primary school. (Code 575005 from the Grand Secretary).

7. Encourage lodges to include an “Americanism” article every month, as well as the flag-flying calendar in their lodge bulletin.

8. Every lodge should have a “Heritage Corner” displaying the significant American documents: U.S. Constitution, Declaration of Independence, etc. (Code 571400 from the Grand Secretary).

9. Every Elk should wear a U.S. flag lapel pin on their jacket or collar to demonstrate pride and respect for our country.

10. Continue to communicate with our U.S. senators the need for an amendment prohibiting desecration of the American Flag.

11. Encourage lodges to fly the POW-MIA flag along with the U.S. flag, whenever the U.S. flag is flown.

12. District Committee members will distribute materials on these and other programs during the year. You are encouraged to use them and help us promote our devotion to the American flag and other programs.

13. Communication is the key to open up a dialog from within the Lodges thru the Districts and to the State Chairman. There are 2 ways to improve and enhance our committee’s success this year:

   a. Use the ON Line Reporting System for Lodge and District reporting.

   b. Briefly communicate to the committee what is working in your Lodge and District and share our successes.

   Should you have any questions on these programs or any other Americanism concepts contact the State Chairman.
Many of the key programs that the Order of Elks put forward into communities are those on behalf of our Veterans. Years ago, the Elks made a promise that “So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them.” This promise holds as true today as on the first day it was spoken. It is being carried forward by those men and women of Elkdom, who work on a daily basis through their Lodge to help make the lives of Veterans better.

In the military, soldiers have a support staff to help them carry forward their mission. Elkdom has developed one of the best support staffs there could possibly be to assist our Veterans in the many differing ways that are needed once they return from Active Duty. November is Veterans Remembrance Month and it is a special time to draw recognition, not only to our Active Duty Military, but to all of our Veterans who have served in our military throughout the years.

At the same time, the Order of Elks does not just serve Veterans only one month of the year. We stand ready to assist them 365 days a year, in any way we can. November is a special time to give praise and thanks to those caring members who step forward to assist our Veterans in their homes, communities, on the street and in hospitals. As a member of this Order, take the time to seek out and thank those Members in your Lodge that go that extra mile to assist those true American heroes.

Always remember that freedom is not free. It is paid for on a daily basis by our Active Duty Military Personnel, and by those Veterans who continue to carry the scars of freedom for the rest of their lives.

**Proclamation**

*WHEREAS:* The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks made a solemn pledge!

“So long as there are veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them.”

*WHEREAS:* The fulfillment of this pledge is the obligation of every Elk, as set forth in Section 4.290 of the Laws of the Order, and

*WHEREAS:* Serving our nation’s veterans is an expression of patriotism in its purest sense;

*NOW, THEREFORE:* By virtue of the authority of the office of Grand Exalted Ruler, I hereby proclaim the month of November as “National Veterans Remembrance Month” and request all Lodges to observe this month of recollection of the debt we owe to all veterans in the manner which has been recommended by the Elks National Veterans Service Commission in its communication to all Lodges.

James L. Nicholson, Grand Exalted Ruler
SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Reported by Jim Larsen, ER
Elksprguy@aol.com

Bradenton Lodge 1511

Bradenton Lodge donated an electric wheelchair to a disabled WWII veteran, 86 year old Richard Pence. The chair was donated to Bradenton from Sarah Russ. Sarah was recently widowed and said that her husband’s chair could be put to good use.

Sarasota South Lodge 2495

Sarasota South Lodge has started having a monthly breakfast with all profits going to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. At the September breakfast they had their district therapist, Margo Baker, with Mr. and Mrs. Schweitzer, the parents of one of her patients, Oliver Schweitzer. Margo spoke on how she is treating Oliver and the progress he has made so far. She also spoke on how the money that we donate to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund makes this all possible to help young children such as Oliver.

Lakewood Ranch 2855

Lakewood Ranch opened their new Lodge the second week in August. A lot of effort went into making this happen since the Lodge was instituted in January 2009. Four months prior to the opening of the Lodge, the facility had been used for the storage of hay and feed for horses. After overcoming some government concerns and permitting issues, the Lodge was outfitted through the generosity of its members. The building now boasts a full bar, pool table and other games, TVs, meeting room, office, and other amenities.

The Lodge held open houses for the Lodges of the Southwest District the third and fourth weeks of August with attendance of over 115 Elks each night. They already have an extensive Veterans’ Services program in place and intend to begin reaching out to the local schools soon. Lakewood Ranch is the first fraternal/service organization to have its own facility in this fast growing area of Southwest Florida.

Manasota Lodge 2734

Manasota Lodge was recognized at the 19th Annual Manatee Chamber of Commerce Business in Education Partnership Awards Breakfast. The Business in Education Partnership Awards recognize and award the many businesses, organizations, schools, and individuals who have made the commitment to work together to enhance the education of students in Manatee County. Manasota Elks were nominated as Civic Partner of the Year and Good Things Come in Big Packages. Attending this year’s Awards Breakfast were Jim Larsen, ER; Ken Davis, PER; Patrick Gallagher, PER & Trustee; Ray Smith, Trustee; and District Director, Thom Dillman, and his wife, Judy.

South Hillsborough 2672

The Lodge hosts twelve to fifteen veterans for a fish dinner and karaoke on the second Friday of each month. The veterans are brought in by bus from James Haley Veterans Hospital in Tampa and enjoy both the dinner and participating in singing.

On Wednesday, July 29, 2009, the South Hillsborough Lodge presented a gift check in the amount of $750 to the Ruskin Christian School to be used to purchase a portable basketball unit.

A National Elks Foundation grant to the Elks Lodge is responsible for two thirds of the gift to the school and the local Lodge contributed the balance from their charity funds. The Ruskin Christian School has been instrumental in helping the Elks with their annual Hoop Shoot Contest by allowing the competition to be held at their facility. The Lodge deemed them a worthy recipient of their gift.

Venice/Nokomis 1854

Chief Howard Beares and members of the Nokomis Volunteer Fire Department held a ceremony at Venice-Nokomis Lodge on 9/11 in remembrance of those who sacrificed their lives saving others.

Chief Howard Beares gave a talk relating to 9-11, entitled “We Will Never Forget.”

Sarasota Lodge 1519

Sarasota Lodge conducted a very impressive 9/11 Remembrance ceremony with an Honor Guard from the American Legion Post 30, representatives from the County Sheriff’s Office and County Fire Department, and members of the Sarasota Military Academy and the Riverview High School Junior ROTC. A complimentary lunch was served following the event.

On September 23 at the DDGER visit to the Lodge, eight new members were initiated.

Earlier in the month, five new officers were installed: Leading Knight, John Piper; Loyal Knight, Alberto Suarez; Lecturing Knight, Tom Pocorobba; Treasurer, Leonard Schimberg; and Trustee, Patti Piper.
During the South Southwest District visit a brief stop was made at the Deep Creek Lodge. David “Rock” Rockow, Vice President of the Elk Riders USA, gave a ten minute ride on his Harley Davidson to Julia Hurst, wife of Jim Hurst, VPAL.

Carole Weston, President of the FLOE 365 Club, gave the Director of the Florida Elks Youth Camp, Lynn Warburton, a check for $11,580.03. This brings the total donated to the Youth Camp to $343,244.51 since 1977.

Past District Deputies, Joe Rogers left and JJ Johnson, right, get a chance to buddy up and tell some stories at the Southeast Central Visitation in early October.

Jim and Julia Hurst and Vince and Lisa Como enjoyed a two hour Peace River Boat Cruise from the Punta Gorda Elks boat dock on a 40 foot pontoon boat captained by Louis Desguin who gave the 26 passengers the history of the Peace river and its benefits to the Punta Gorda area.

The SSW visit at the Englewood Lodge. From left, VPAL James Hurst, Exalted Ruler Larry Van Tilburg, President Como, SSW VP Carl Gerace and DDGER Richard Futral.

Port Charlotte Lodge hosted the SSW Saturday night dinner after which President Como received an Honorary Life Membership and a leather Elks Riders USA vest.

The East Central visitation included touring the Root Family Museum in Daytona Beach which features one of the largest Coca-Cola memorabilia collections in the world.
Daytona Beach Lodge 1141
A $500 Gratitude Grant from the National Foundation for meeting the per-capita goal last year was put to good use. School supplies and sports equipment were donated to the Tuscawilla T. Small Elementary School.

The Lodge was honored to host the official visit of State President Vincent Como and VPAL James Hurst and other dignitaries from the Florida State Elks Association.

The Emblem Club and Lodge volunteers were busy stuffing approximately 2,000 pieces of drug awareness material into bags. The Drug Awareness trailer was at the Daytona Beach Bandshell on Saturday, September 26. The event was sponsored by the Stewart-Marchman Center.

From September 6-12, the Lodge commemorated National Patriotism Week by selling $1.00 flags to guests and members. A dinner and a brief service were held on September 2, 2009 when District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Christopher Gariepy, ER Larry Skates, PSP Vic McClellan, and ECD VP Roger Johnson attended the installation of the newly formed Deland Delites of Deland Lodge 1463.

The Lodge participated in a Drug Awareness event held at the Babe James Center in New Smyrna Beach that included civic and government agencies. They handed out 1,000 pamphlets to kids and adults and another 4,000 pamphlets to Stewart-Marchman Act Mobile Van.

During these difficult financial times, Gifts of Love volunteers have served over 400 families with canned goods, meats, cereal, pasta, and rice in the community. Most recently, the volunteers have started a Back to School Shoe Project in approximately 230 children.

Merritt Island Lodge 2650
Congratulations go to Boyd Ellisland as the August 2009 Citizen of the Month for his countless efforts at the County Seat in trying to get a permit for a new shed for the Lodge and to Dean Londo, September 2009 Citizen of the month, for his tireless efforts doing roof repairs.

Thanks go to the Ladies Auxiliary for putting on a fabulous dance on July 11. The event raised $200 for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. The Ladies collected donations for school supplies for the area schools. They have stated a canned food drive for families in the community.

Deland Lodge 1463

On Saturday, July 11, Exalted Ruler Cynthia Painter presided over the installation of the newly formed “Deland Delites,” Sherrie Watercutter, wife of PDD Phil Watercutter, and her lady officers were installed by FLOE President Joan Fritz. Attending the installation were East Central District Vice President Roger Johnson and his wife, Mary, and other dignitaries, guests, and members from the East Central District.

The Lodge is currently conducting a school supply drive for local schools in the community.

Each month the Lodge Veterans’ Services Committee visits the Emory Bennett Nursing Home in Daytona Beach for bingo.

Every third Saturday of the month, Exalted Ruler Cynthia volunteers to bartend; she is donating her tips towards the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. Thank you, Cynthia.

The Lodge scheduled a bus trip on September 27 to our Youth Camp; members and guests were treated to a tour of the grounds followed by lunch.

Edgewater/New Smyrna Beach Lodge 1557
At the Grand Lodge National Convention in Portland, Oregon they announced the Lodge name change. It became official on Tuesday, September 2, 2009 when District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Christopher Gariepy presented Exalted Ruler Larry Skates with the new charter.
NEWS

Aripeka Elks Lodge 2520

Chairman of Aripeka Elks Lodge 2520 Youth Program John Nejedlo PER, presented eight male students at Hudson High School with $25.00 scholarships for the total of $400 this school year. This occurs every month during the school months.

Some of the Hudson Stomper’s left to right: Joan Paige; Liz Sutton; Shirley Taylor; Al Shultz; Henry Nesleberg; Vickie Nesleberg; Karen Singleton and Betty Amberson.

Recently Frieda Deane, Veterans Chairman of Aripeka Elks Lodge 2520, and volunteers served Root Beer Floats to the Veterans at the Baldomero Lopez Veterans Nursing Home in Land O’Lakes. Everyone had an enjoyable afternoon and enjoyed being entertained by the Hudson Stompers, a group from Aripeka Elks Lodge that line dance, do skits and sing, changing costumes several times. Approximately 80 attended.

June Firestone, Dan Hammer and several other members of the Aripeka Lodge presented a check for $5,000 to John Longley, representative of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. Mr. Longley’s eight year old daughter Delaney is a diabetic. Frieda Deane, Veterans Chairperson along with volunteers had a Root Beer Float Party at Baldomero Lopez Veterans Nursing Home, they were entertained by the Hudson Stompers all had a great time, there were approximately 80 people there.

John Nejedlo, Per, Youth Program Chairperson gave eight students from Hudson High School, $25.00 scholarship checks. This practice is followed each month during the school year.

Brooksville Lodge 2582

Our Lodge held its first Beach Bash Party In July. It was hosted by Rose Ludnick and Angie Balderness and their spouses Vic Ludnick and Bill Balderson and assisted by Jane Hennessy. All who attended had a great time.

On September 12th we were honored by the presence of Mary Ford, DDGER-Central District and her entourage to do our annual audit. This was followed by a delicious dinner of Chicken Cordon Bleu and all the trimmings.

West Citrus Lodge 2693

In July we had our Independence Day BBQ which is always well attended. We also hosted a Purple Heart Breakfast for all veterans who had received Purple Heart Medals. This was hosted by our Esteemed Leading Knight, Evelyn Dixon and her spouse, Sam. There were various speakers in attendance and awards were given out.

Our Veterans Committee is still going strong – visiting vets at the various nursing homes in our area. They treat them to Pizza Parties and visit them on their birthdays. At present we are visiting over 125 veterans in the area.

In September we had our Annual Daytona Beach Bash which is always a lot of fun. Attendants had lunch at the Ormond Beach Lodge on the Friday followed by a weekend of dining and dancing. This event is put on to benefit ENF and this year was no exception – a total of $1001.00 was collected for ENF, thanks to our ENF Chairperson, Gordon Caswell and our members.

West Citrus hosted the POW/MIA Survivor Scholarship Fund Benefit Dinner on September 19th. All divisions of the Armed Services were in attendance along with members from various Sheriff’s Offices.

Zephyrhills Lodge 2731

Zephyrhills Lodge has adopted West Zephyrhills Elementary School this year. A “Back to School Night” was held on September 19th with music and dancing. Everyone was asked to bring a school item. It was a great success and plenty of school items were collected. The items were delivered to the school on the 22nd and Emily Keene, Principal, was very appreciative of the generosity of the members.

CENTRAL DISTRICT

Reporter, Adrienne Martin
ajmartin66@hotmail.com

Some of the Hudson Stomper’s left to right: Joan Paige; Liz Sutton; Shirley Taylor; Al Shultz; Henry Nesleberg; Vickie Nesleberg; Karen Singleton and Betty Amberson.

North Central District

Reporter, Bill Connolly, PDD
patty@lcia.com

Winter Garden Lodge 2165

At the annual Ladies Luau a check was presented to Ben Brown, PSP, Administrator for the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services, in the amount of $1,000 for the North Central District Children’s Therapy Program. This grant is in recognition of Walt Disney World Volunteer Service accomplished in 2008. Pictured from left to right: Sherry Deweese, President of the Ladies Auxiliary; Ben Brown, PSP, Administrator for the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services; Gloria Wallick, Vice President of the Ladies Auxiliary; and Ray Deweese, Exalted Ruler of Winter Garden Lodge.

Apopka Lodge 2422

A Luau was held in mid July; the highlight of the night was when members were entertained by the strangest looking hula dancers. Past Exalted Rulers Neil Graydon, Eric Kretschman, and Steve Mahoney (now the North Central DDGER) and Exalted Ruler Monty Wilbern all dressed up in traditional hula girl costumes complete with makeup and danced. It was something to be seen and was enjoyed by all. The men were such good sports about it.

Remodeling of the Lodge has recently been completed. The interior was completed in February and in August the construction of the covered outdoor patio was completed. Smoking members now have a place to sit and relax outside.

The Lodge held an old fashioned Sock Hop on September 19. Veterans were invited from the Orlando V. A. Hospital. They all had a great time. The ladies dressed in poodle skirts and even some of the men dressed for the occasion. Fifties music was presented by Bubba; it was like being back in an old malt shop.

NOVEMBER IS VETERAN’S MONTH

The Elks always remember our veterans

Amos A. McCallum, PGER Past Chairman

Our Grand Exalted Ruler proclaims every year that November is Elks Veterans Remembrance Month and this is a most deserving and well-earned honor. I believe, however, as Elks we think about, remember, and work with our Veterans every month of every year, every week of every month, every day of every week, and every hour of every day. As Elks, we know we owe our Veterans a debt that can never be repaid for the sacrifices they made to protect our freedom and to give us the opportunity to maintain our way of life.

We made a pledge 63 years ago and I quote, “So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them.” We continue to fulfill that pledge on a daily basis and will continue to do so in the months and years ahead.

This is a special month. Wednesday, November 11 is Veterans Day and Thursday, November 26 is Thanksgiving Day. This is an opportune time to invite Veterans into our Lodges for a delicious meal, provide entertainment and show that truly ELKS CARE-ELKS SHARE.

Many communities celebrate Veterans Day with parades and other activities honoring our heroes. I ask and pray that members in each of our Lodges across this great country put forth extra effort and plan special programs over and above our ongoing activities such as Adopt-A-Vet, Student Veteran Volunteer, Comfort Care Kits and our Army of Hope.

Our Veterans are everywhere - in VA Hospitals, Veterans homes, in hospices, in our communities - and too many are homeless. Find them, help them and show how important they are to us and to all the people living in the United States of America. Let our Veterans know they are not forgotten and that we truly appreciate the sacrifices they made for us.

Let us not forget our current Veterans fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan and deployed in other parts of the world protecting our freedom and helping those who are in need. Our Army of Hope is still an on-going, successful program; therefore, please let’s do whatever we can to help the families of these Veterans. Let them know we care and want to help any way possible. In addition, show our service men and women our concern by sending CARE packages of requested items such as prepaid calling cards and nonperishable food items. Let’s show our Veterans and military personnel in this month of Thanksgiving how truly thankful we are for all they have done and continue to do because as Elks, we do CARE and SHARE!
South District

By Patricia Twist

Southwest Broward Lodge 2273

The Lodge was proud to help out with the Army of Hope picnic in Pompano by donating 75 bottles of ketchup, mustard, relish and mayonnaise, plus a check.

Approximately 50 members and their families celebrated the 4th of July at the lodge. Everyone enjoyed the great food, live music, dancing and fireworks. Patricia Twist, Veterans Affairs Chairperson contributed small Americana gifts and collected $100 in donations for the Veterans Fund.

The Lodge donated 147 books and 134 magazines to the Broward County VA outpatient Clinic in Sunrise. Also, 57 magazines and 60 pounds of pop tabs were delivered to the Ronald McDonald House of Fort Lauderdale.

South Florida

By Glenn Tekerman

North Broward Lodge 2272

On August 1, the Lodge ballroom was transformed into an old-fashioned USO dance hall for a USO dinner and dance. A color guard opened the event and great music from the 40s was provided by Frank Hubbell and the Moonlighters. Period attire was highly encouraged, especially military style clothing. Members and guests were asked to bring a new deck of poker playing cards to the event and were entered into a special drawing for six WWII era posters.

Vincent Como, State President sits on a 15 foot alligator at the “Welcome to the Jungle” dinner at Miami Lodge.

The VA hospital residents love to play cards and supplying them with sets of new cards keep them alert and mentally active and helps them with their motor skills. Proceeds benefited the Lodge Veterans’ Charity fund.

On September 7, the Lodge held its annual Labor Day picnic. In addition to the successful Labor Day Picnic, Bob Gill, PER, South District Co-Chair for the Florida Grand Exalted Ruler Fund (FLGER), set up a table and poster display to recruit members to become a team member of the Miami Lodge 948 “Mike’s Team.” The large poster had pictures of Mike Smith and his lovely wife, Sandra, along with an enlargement of the “I Like Mike” pin. The heading on the poster read, “We need you!!” The goal was to encourage the membership to support the effort for Lodge #948’s “Mike’s Team.” This fund is critical in helping the Grand Exalted Ruler with the many expenses that are incurred during their term in office. All the districts in the state of Florida are working toward generating money for this FLGER Fund.

South Miami/Coral Gables Lodge 1676

On July 3 a tribute was held for the 4th where volunteer members served food to members and their families. The event featured a local country western band called Full House. Open Mic Night on Thursdays still seem to be the most popular night for the Lodge. Local musicians (several of which are Elks members) attend and perform three songs. The Lodge has gained seven new members this quarter as a result of this event. On July 23 the Lodge provided dinner to GATE Program Graduates and their families. The GATE Program is a program for first time juvenile offenders where they are trained in life skills in lieu of jail time. The Lodge has been a host for nine years and many of the counselors were former students. Together officers and peer counselors work to make a difference in the lives of young men. On July 31 the Lodge had a very successful Sock Hop. DJ and Inner Guard, Tony Rincones, played tunes that made the members rock around the clock. August Friday Night Dinner on August 7 was a Port of Call with an Asian flair. Asian specialties were on hand and all who attended were not hungry an hour later.
Dunedin-Clearwater Lodge 1525

Members and guests gathered for a fundraiser in Ozona on August 29, 2009.

Twelve year old Jacob Larson, a paraplegic as a result of an accidental shooting, was the reason for the event. Jacob spent more than three months in All Children’s Hospital recovering and is now home. With mounting medical bills, Ozona Pig and the community came together to assist the family in purchasing a wheelchair accessible van.

Several Elks and Auxiliary members were on hand to donate checks totaling $350 to Jacob and his family.

Scottish families originally settled the city of Dunedin, Florida in 1899. Two Scotsmen, J. O. Douglas and James Sumerville, named the settlement Dunedin, the original name of Edinburgh, their hometown in Scotland. Sister city to Sumerville, named the settlement Dunedin, the original name of Edinburgh, their hometown in Scotland.

The Lodge also donated $500 to the Kids Wish Network to fulfill the wishes of three seriously ill children from Florida. All three children wanted a trip despite their life threatening illnesses. The Lodge received a thank you note from the representative saying the donation will help make these kids’ wishes come true!

The Lodge recently donated $500 worth of toiletries and personal items needed for the homeless veterans. The Lodge filled fourteen backpacks with soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, towels, razors, and other items Tampa had requested. The leftover cash was also given so that gift cards at fast food restaurants could be purchased. Tampa Lodge distributed these items to the veterans and homeless on the weekend of August 15.

At the recent District Vice President visit to the Lodge, two young men from the Scottish Highlander Band made a surprise visit. Dressed in full attire, they gave a wonderful performance for all in attendance.

New Port Richey Lodge 2284

The Lodge recently donated $500 to the Kids Wish Network to fulfill the wishes of three seriously ill children from Florida. All three children wanted a trip despite their life threatening illnesses. The Lodge received a thank you note from the representative saying the donation will help make these kids’ wishes come true!

The Lodge also donated $500 worth of toiletries and personal items needed for the homeless veterans. The Lodge filled fourteen backpacks with soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, towels, razors, and other items Tampa had requested. The leftover cash was also given so that gift cards at fast food restaurants could be purchased. Tampa Lodge distributed these items to the veterans and homeless on the weekend of August 15.

The Volunteer Way was presented a check for $500 by Exalted Ruler Ed Coleman. This organization feeds the needy in the community and delivers food to homebound seniors.

Alexandra’s Story continued from page 1

They said that when I started walking, my left heel cord was not stretched enough for my foot to hit the floor as I walked. To resolve this, they needed to push my heel cord up into place and cast my foot. This was done and they sent me home with a pretty bow on my cast and said, “See you in six weeks, any problems call us right away.” Believe it or not, we got more accomplished with the Elks in one day than we did with our own doctors. We were in by 7am and out by 5pm heading home.

At the end of six weeks, we returned and the cast was removed and X-rays were done. Things were progressing as they should. To make sure I would be steady on my feet they casted both of my feet so that one foot would not be stronger than the other, and I would walk like a normal two year old. After another six weeks, they cut both casts off and needless to say I have not skipped a beat since!

My parents were so grateful with what the Elks had done for me that my Dad became a member, went through the chairs and became Exalted Ruler in 2000. My parents both had volunteered and chaired many functions within Elkdom.

Now that years have passed, I want you to know that what I have accomplished with the Elks since my trip to the hospital. I volunteered at Seminole Lodge as a young teen waiting on tables, doing set-up, food prep, clean up and helped with functions with the children. I also helped the Ladies with their functions.

Thanks to the Elks I have accomplished track, soccer, softball, swimming, karate and being able to keep up with the crowd. I have also had the pleasure of being a camper at the Florida Elks Youth Camp for many years. I then went on to be a CIT and most recently a Counselor on the summer of my graduation from High School, 2009, before I head off to college at the University of West Georgia.

There is nothing that I cannot do or try to succeed in doing, without all the love and help from the Elks when I was younger.

I personally would like to thank the Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks.

Harry-Anna Trust Fund Recognition Certificates & Pins
Awarded July 14, 2009 through September 30, 2009

Paid-in-Full $5,000 Certificate Donors
Betty Tewksbury  Stuart-Jensen 1870

Gold Pins for Paid-in-Full $1,000 Certificate
Charles Hatz  Jupiter Lodge 2469
Arthur H. Miller  Fort Pierce Lodge 1520
Jerry Mills  Boca Raton Lodge 2166
Jack G. Rouse  Titusville Lodge 2113
Richard L. Schneider  Tampa Lodge 708

Silver Pins for Paid-in-Full $500 Certificate
Linda Bailey  Lake Wales Lodge 1974
Mary J. Crosier  Zephyrhills Lodge 2731
Jimmy Jenkins  Winter Garden Lodge 2165
William J. Ortlieb  Viera Lodge 2817
William A. Jennings  Fort Walton #1795
Joe C. Poppell  Plant City Lodge 1727
Walt Reynolds  Clewiston Lodge 1853
Vera Sickels  South Hillsborough Lodge 1672

Tampa Lodge 708

Tampa Lodge celebrates America’s heritage with the display of five United States flag: April 1767 – First Navy Jack; May 1776 – Betsy Ross Flag; August 1777 – Bennington Flag; June 1, 1792 – Star Spangled Banner; and July 4, 1960 – The United States of America, our nation’s current flag.

The Lodge’s Americanism Committee plans to fly these flags on all important holidays throughout the calendar year in recognition of the importance of being aware of our heritage as American citizens and as proud members of an Elks Lodge that remembers the past struggles and sacrifices that made America great and those among us who daily fight and die for their country. During the month of September, Tampa Lodge flew the five flag display for Labor Day to honor all working Americans, past and present. The display was flown on 9/11, Patriot’s Day; it was a look back at our nation’s beginnings and throughout our long history to this present day. A special prayer was said for all American’s who died on September 11, 2001, by an officer of the Lodge during the 11th hour of memory that closes Elkdom’s Lodges. The display was displayed again on September 17, Constitution Day, to honor those documents that forged our current democracy into existence. September 17 is also Citizenship Day to honor and revere our past immigrants and their past successes but it also should celebrate and honor our new immigrants arriving today with their potential successes.

As American citizens serving our nation and our communities and as Elks everywhere across America should never forget to uphold our 141 year history’s principles of Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love, and Fidelity because we know that Elks care and Elks share.

Tarpon Springs Lodge 1719

On Saturday, August 22, the Lodge held a Scholarship/Education Fund Dinner to raise funds to help adopt classrooms for local teachers. The Lodge was able to raise $654, making it possible to adopt six classrooms. The teachers being sponsored are all Elks members or spouses of Elks.
Ft. Pierce 1520

Over 200 Elks and guests enjoyed a great crab dinner with all the fixings to raise money for the Lodge for bills incurred as a result of an auto accident on the way to the Elks State Convention in Orlando in May. Musical entertainment was donated by both Joe Montepare and the Lady Grayson Band. Four Elks and Elkettes dressed up as “Crab of the Day” and competed to see who could raise the most money. The winner, Pollyanna Weter, won two dinners at the Elks. PER John Henry agreed to have his beard shaved off if $1,000 was raised. He did not think it would happen, but he forgot that the members do not give up. By 5:30, he was clean shaven. A Chinese Auction and Bake Sale were managed by the Elkettes and raised a good sum, as did a Silent Auction.

Port St. Lucie Lodge 2658

The Lodge was one of ten Lodges in the state to receive an outstanding Indoctrination Program. Congratulations go to Kathleen Nixon for winning the top prize for the second year in a row for the Scrapbook. An appreciation dinner was held for PER Walter Baird who has been an Elk for fifty years and helped with the institution of the Lodge and for Carl Elsner who celebrated his 100th birthday. He recently received a special award from the City of Port St. Lucie at a council meeting.

The Lodge sponsored Cub Scouts won a $500 award for the most outstanding and best float exemplifying Americanism at the July 4 Parade. The Boy Scout Troop 420 promoted Robert Preston and Joseph Soucie to the rank of Eagle Scout. Troop 420 can claim twenty Eagle Scouts since its inception.

The Lodge recently was able to purchase a new therapy van for therapists to continue with their excellent work.

Stuart-Jensen Lodge 1870

Summer has been busy for the Lodge starting with a 4th of July celebration and then the annual Christmas in July party. The District Vice President visitation for Robert Carroll and his wife, Brenda, with 150 in attendance was held in August and welcomed Southeast Central District Deputy, Betty Tewksbury. The Lodge also held a Labor Day picnic with over 100 in attendance.

The two Cub Scout packs sponsored by the Lodge are growing too. An open house for their special needs Cub Scout Park 877 was held in September. This is a one of a kind Cub Scout pack in the area open to all youth with learning disabilities within the Martin County area.

Viera Lodge 2817

On September 19, the Lodge had the privilege of hosting a Sock Hop dinner for their honored guests, Vice President Robert F. Carroll and his wife, Brenda. The event was complete with a rock and roll band, pizza and salad bar, hobo socks, rolled-up jeans, and cigarette pack rolled T-shirts.
Panama City Lodge Lodge 1598
The Panama City Elks Lodge delivered a truckload of boxed food, 42 to date, to the Family Services Agency of Panama City. The box fans are being distributed to needy families throughout Bay County that lack air conditioning in their homes. Their goal was to supply as many needy families as they could with at least one box fan by the end of August 2009. Anyone wishing to make a donation to this cause should please contact the Panama City Elks Lodge at 850-769-1598.

Fort Walton Lodge 1795
If you missed the Kids Day which was held on August 1, you missed a wonderful time. The weather didn’t look promising, but it rained everywhere except over the Elks Lodge.

The turnout and the support from all the parents and volunteers were great. Children of all ages enjoyed each and every event that took place that day. It was also wonderful to see the older children look after the smaller ones. Some new members jumped in to enjoy the event and volunteered to help out. Thanks go to Sherry Cronley and Mike & Liz Skrovanek for all their help.

Also, thanks go to Michelle Burns, Jerry Burrows, Kevin Clemons, Tammy Kuhn, Kym Johnson, and David Cagle for all their help with setup, cleanup, cooking, and all other help in between. A special thank you goes out to Mandy Grogan who did an awesome job with the face painting and to Sherri Biggot and Gail Parker for donating all the Beanie Babies. The Lodge is going to plan more events like this in the future. If you have any ideas or want to help with the kids activities, please send the Lodge an email.

The Children’s Halloween party was held on October 31 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. There were games, prizes, a costume contest, and a lot of fun activities. This party is for children from infant to 11 years of age.

Holly-Navarre Lodge 2787
On Saturday, August 8, the DDGER, Tom Rogers, and the Vice President, Betty Clark, made their first joint visitation to the great Northwest District. The Holly-Navarre Lodge was privileged to be the first for such a visitation. It was a very successful visit as all of the Lodge Exalted Rulers were present.

There were more than 100 people present for the wonderful lasagna dinner. Many great comments were received about the meal.

A special thank you goes out to all those who helped with the setup, cooking, and service. Special thanks also go out to Liz & Jarrell Banks, Joanne Connor, and Sue Hargraves for the food preparation and Patty Quinn, Kelley Pattin, and the many others who helped with setting up and serving. An additional thank you goes out to the people who provided the desserts and the service in the lounge.

Destin Lodge 2688
The Northwest District PER Association is doing a fundraiser to assist our upcoming Endorsed National President (GER), Mike Smith, who will be nominated next July at the National Convention in Orlando. This fundraiser is to assist in all of the out of pocket expenses that will be incurred during his yearlong travels and help defray their expenses. All proceeds will go toward the GER Fund. The Lodge is also selling lapel pins. I LIKE MIKE pins are $10.00 and Grand Exalted Ruler pins are $100 which will get you a ticket to the Grand Exalted Ruler reception in Orlando.

Warrington Lodge 2108
A big celebration for Warrington Lodge was held on October 9th and 10th. The party started Friday at 4:00 p.m. with happy hour in the lounge with music provided by Joe Rossi. A sit down dinner began at 5:30 p.m. Then to round out the evening the Midnight Riders entertained with music from the 50s. A great time was had by all.

Saturday the fun continued with an outdoor family picnic from 11:00 – 2:00 p.m. There was plenty of food and drinks. There was also a 22 foot dry slide and a jump house for the kids. Joe Rossi was playing the best of the 50s on the outside stage. At 7:30, Touch of Blue played in the ballroom for more dancing and entertainment. Most of the revelers were pretty well exhausted by the end of the evening but we only have it every fifty years.

Approximately sixty community leaders are leading a campaign to raise $50,000 for Junior Achievement of Northwest Florida, the local economic education organization through the annual Investment in Kids Campaign. Sue Straughn, WEAR News Anchor/Senior Editor, kicked off the annual campaign at Gulf Power Headquarters.

Warrington Elks Lodge made the first contribution for $2,000 secured by Gary Barnes on the Walmart team.

The Northwest District is offering a beautiful 2009 Nissan Altima to help raise money for the incoming Grand Exalted Ruler, Mike Smith, from the great state of Florida.

This is a huge honor for one of Florida’s own for this position. Tickets are in the club area. The drawing will be Saturday, December 12 at Pensacola Beach Lodge for all ticket holders. See you there.

The restaurant is doing great and they now have several groups meeting on a weekly basis at the Lodge. Mondays and Fridays they have a Bridge group. A Bunco and Bridge group share Wednesdays.

On the entertainment side, the governing body has agreed to try having more entertainment. So, every Friday this month there will be entertainment. Also, they will be having karaoke on one Saturday a month. This will continue as long as the membership supports it.

September began college football. They offered some football drink specials on Saturday’s game day. They also had some foods available. If you football fans have a great tailgating recipe, bring it to the Lodge for the ultimate taste test. There will be a sign-up sheet at the Lodge for those wishing to bring something. They don’t want ten people showing up with their favorite. Also, those who bring in their tailgating special will get to decorate the Lodge in their favorite team colors for that day.

Milton Lodge 2377
PER Bill Allen, right, Milton Lodge ENF coordinator, presents Mr. Tim Wyrodick, Superintendent of Santa Rosa County Schools, with ninety soccer balls and basketballs for the Santa Rosa County School Students’ Summer School Program, “Say No to Drugs.”

The soccer balls and basketballs were purchased using a Gratitude Grant from Elks National Foundation. Mr. Wyrodick stated, “the Elks are providing physical education instructors at our school with these new rubberized outdoor basketballs and ‘Say No to Drugs’ soccer balls. We are very fortunate to have local Elks support our schools and students.”

Twin Cities Lodge 2747
Cleaning house after the holidays? Don’t know what to do with all your stuff? What one considers junk is someone else’s treasure. When you are cleaning, you need to keep the Elks in mind. They have many programs that are in need of stuff.

If you have old magazines, the veterans would enjoy reading them. The veterans prefer short stories compared to novels. If you have old books, the Lodge has a small lending library. Let someone else enjoy a good story. If you have old clothes, The Bargain Box, St. Simons Homeless Program, and the Cope House could use these. Sharing and Caring will need new jackets for the children too! If you have travel size toiletries, The Cope House and the St. Simons Homeless Program could use these. As you can tell there are many programs that are in need. Since we have been so richly blessed, why not pass those blessings on?

WE WANT YOUR CANS!!!

Please bring in your aluminum cans to the Lodge to help their Cans for Kids program. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

We’re located at 224 Seminole Avenue, Valparaiso, FL.
District Information

Like other districts, the District Vice President, Carol Cruce from Perry, has completed her visits and now DDGER Tom Sanson is making his rounds. The Lodges make a big effort to comply with the directives of the Florida State Elks Association and the Grand Lodge statutes and to be prepared when these official visits are made to each of the Lodges.

Lake City Lodge 893

Lake City Lodge was pleased to initiate five new members in June. The Lodge held a July 4th celebration including a cookout and fireworks. A highlight of this event was a visit to the Lodge by veterans from the domiciliary at the VA Hospital. Patriotic food like burgers and hot dogs was served. The Lodge is proud to have Agnes as a member.

New patio furniture has arrived for the porch as well as some water misters that will be installed. A little mist helps to beat the heat in the north Florida summers. A Lodge cleanup day took place on July 27 to spruce up the place.

The Lodge has an annual Elks Family Day Picnic at the home of member, Jim Martin, and his wife, Carol. The Martins have a riverfront home and always invite the Elks and their families to come and participate in the picnic. The food is great and plenty of refreshments are provided, and this year the turnout was awesome. A big tip of the hat goes to Jim and Carol for being so generous to the Lodge and its families!

Lake City Lodge is in the process of forming and sponsoring a Boy Scout Troop. ER Siegmeister is working with Lodge members to recruit enough youngsters to organize a troop.

A state ritual clinic was held in Lake City on October 24th and 25th. The Lodge enjoyed hosting the clinic, along with the members that such an event brings.

Live Oak Lodge 1165

The Live Oak Lodge celebrated its centennial on June 20. It was attended by all the Lodges in the North District and was a great time to reflect on 100 years of Elkdom in Live Oak. Mayor Sonny Nobles attended the celebration. PSP Tom Elmore from Lake City Lodge presented ER John Cowan with a plaque from the Grand Lodge commemorating this event.

Fundraising was conducted to help pay for the centennial. A raffle for a gas grill and a nice stack of steaks was won by longtime member, James Cannon, who has been a member for 39 years.

Marianna Lodge 1516

The Marianna Lodge was pleased to have the help of the local Boy Scout Troop in celebrating Flag Day. Several PERs were on hand to help make Flag Day a resounding success. A low country boil held in June with help provided by several other PERs was well attended and enjoyed by those who participated. There were so many compliments that the Lodge planned another boil on September 17.

Family Outing Day at the Lodge was held on July 4; this is when burgers and hot dogs are provided to Elks for only $5 and the rest of the family eats for free. It always draws a crowd and this year was no exception. July 15 is an annual birthday celebration for the Lodge, this being its 83rd year. The Lodge served cake and ice cream in honor of that annual anniversary.

A little brightness has been added to the interior of the Lodge including repainting of the dining room and the pool room. Ceiling tile is being replaced in some areas of the Lodge too.

The Lodge is proud to announce a total scholarship award of $1,000 from the Marianna Elks Endowed Scholarship Fund to two students at Chipola College. Funds are available throughout the students’ career at the college as long as a 2.5 GPA is maintained.

Perry Lodge 1851

Visit Perry’s website at www.perryelks.com and see the changes that their new web master, Charles Praytor, has made. The Lodge appreciates the fine work and effort made by Charles in updating the Lodge’s web site.

The Perry Lodge has expanded its dining room menu and hours with the dining room open Wednesday through Saturday nights. Family night specials on Thursdays are only $7.95 featuring fried chicken every Thursday with another entrée such as chicken and dumplings, country fried steak, or spaghetti. Most folks call this kind of food comfort food because we all love it and remember it from growing up.

Flag Day proved to be a great celebration. The Lodge thanks member, Al Davis, and his wife, Dorothy, for their work in planning the service and providing music for the event. Members of Boy Scout Troop #600 assisted with the flag presentations.

A new screen television has been acquired and is used for karaoke most Friday nights after dinner. The good news is the big screen provides bigger words for the singers, making for easier reading if the lyrics are not committed to memory.

Perry Lodge needs to brag just a bit on one of its members, Agnes Blanton, who continues to set a good example for the Lodge. Agnes has been a member for nine years and celebrated her 90th birthday in August. She was the Tiler for the Lodge, but due to issues with her sight and hearing, she stepped aside. She still helps with the newsletter, rarely misses a meeting, and wears her Lodge officer blazer to a meeting and will fill in a chair if needed. That’s the kind of attitude that all Lodges wish their members displayed. The Lodge is proud to have Agnes as a member.

Tallahassee Lodge 937

The Tallahassee Lodge celebrated Flag Day with help from two Boy Scout Troops, #10 and #123. Girl Scouts from Troops #119 and #122 were on hand to assist too. Three National Guardsmen from Charlie Troop 1-153rd Cavalry presented the colors and at the conclusion of the ceremony retired the flag flying out in front of the Lodge.

July 4 brought an old-fashioned Fish Fry which was sponsored by the Lodge as a fundraising event for the Gretchen Everhart School. Member, Rick Peckham, catches the fish and then cooks them up for the enjoyment of those who get a plate of food. Gretchen Everhart is a local school for challenged young adults and the Lodge has adopted this school as a charitable endeavor.

Another local organization to which the Lodge contributes is Refuge House. This establishment is a safe haven for battered women, and each month the House seeks donations for needed items. The requests change from month to month, and the Lodge and its members are proud to donate to Refuge House.

Tallahassee Lodge was pleased to host a District DD/VP clinic on August 8. There was good attendance by officers and committee chairmen as well as many fine reports by committees.

Members of the Lodge have made a tremendous effort here at the end of the summer to rehabilitate Troy Fain Park, an outdoor picnic area on the Lodge’s site. The area is wooded with plentiful shade and there are many cement picnic tables and benches (from the early 1960s), a cement block building that houses a kitchen and bathrooms, and patio for serving food and drinks. Additionally, a wooden gazebo was built about twenty years ago where music and dancing can occur. The park had not been used much, and the guys decided it was too much of a jewel to be neglected. Events are now being planned in the park for the fall months.

The DDGER, Tom Sanson, conducted his official visit to the Lodge on September 15. The Lodge served a fine meal featuring herb roasted pork loin and herb roasted boneless chicken breast. No one went home hungry. A visit on August 4 by District Vice President, Carol Cruce, had another wonderful meal where homemade chicken and dumplings was the entrée.

The weekly pool tournament continues to draw a crowd to the Lodge for the Thursday competitions. Another draw is Burger Night, held every Monday except the first Monday of the month. Volunteers rotate and take a Monday to prepare burgers to order, french fries, and a draft beer for only $5. If Tom Walden is around, he will prepare one of his signature salads in lieu of fries to accompany your burger. Sunday breakfast from 9 a.m. till noon is another featured event.

The Lodge makes a big effort to offer a number of venues to its membership. Additionally, like other Lodges, we are always searching for new ideas to draw in the crowd.

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Florida Elks Charities, Inc. --Wills and Bequest Committee

Frank D. Hayes, Chairman, 2026 Blue Sky Drive, Pensacola, FL 32506

1-850-453-5438 E-Mail: f_hayes1@cox.net

Name__________________________________________

Address________________________________________

City, State, Zip______________________________
District News

The Southeast District entertained the State President, Vinnie Como, and his wife, Lisa, along with the VPAL, James Hurst, and his wife, Julia, on September 5th and 6th. The Presidential party was housed at the Historical Clewiston Inn. I understand President Como had an interesting encounter with the ghost who is said to haunt the Inn! The visit was a roaring success with a Friday night dinner at the Clewiston Lodge and Saturday night at the Belle Glade – Pahokee Lodge. Several of the dignitaries were treated to an airboat ride on Lake Okeechobee. After the ride, everyone enjoyed a picnic. This reporter heard that the President even wrestled an alligator. Guess who won?

PDD Carl Williams reports that on October 3, the district hosted a Golf Tournament at the Lake Worth Golf Course. A buffet followed at the West Palm Beach Lodge with special prizes awarded.

WEST PALM BEACH LODGE 1352

The Lodge has been very busy this summer introducing many new activities. Tuesday nights find the guys doing Texas Hold’em in one room while ballroom dancing is going on in another.

Thursday nights continue to be busy with karaoke. The Lodge has installed DIRECTV along with the NFL package. This will allow Sunday football specials.

The WII Bowling League continues. PER Bill Couch and Eddie Waldron have each bowled a 300 game.

At the President’s visit to Belle Glade – Pahokee, the Inner Guard, Dot Cook, Chairman of the Lodge’s Harry-Anna Trust Fund Committee, presented a check to President Como for $3,100 to be placed in the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. Veterans from the West Palm Beach VA Center were invited to the Lodge’s Pig Roast Picnic. They really enjoyed the luncheon and left with a Lodge t-shirt. In fact, they returned to the Lodge on October 17 when the Bushwackers (our outside maintenance team) hosted its Fall Picnic. Thanks go to George Shleton and Patti Phillips for doing such a fine job.

The Lodge was open to the public on September 18 for the Palm Beach Health Department to give flu and pneumonia shots. Over twenty people appeared to take advantage of this opportunity.

On October 17 the Lodge conducted a blood drive in connection with the Bushwacker’s Picnic. The Blood Bank’s mobile unit was there to do the collection from 11 to 3 p.m. The rumor that Secretary Lowell Tyler was going to collect the blood himself can be laid to rest. The doctors said he had enough even if it may have a foamy head on it.

Leading Knight, Patti Phillips, and several other Lodge members will be participating in the Down’s Syndrome Walk A Thon. They have been busy getting sponsors and preparing to walk the distance. The team will be walking as ELKS and getting publicity in doing so.

CLEWISTON LODGE 1853

On Saturday, September 19, the Lodge hosted a Country Boy Cook Off. The entries will be sold to the public and all proceeds will go to the Lodge.

The Lodge hosted a Back to School Party on August 20. The House Committee provided hot dogs and drinks to an enthusiastic crowd of kids and parents.

The Fifth Annual Golfing with Fred Golf Scramble donated $3,545 to the scholarship fund. Chairman Fred Thomas did an outstanding job in organizing the event.

BELLE GLADE-PAHOKEE LODGE 1716

The Exalted Ruler of the Lodge takes this opportunity to express his thanks to District VP, Sonny Willis, of this Lodge on his successful planning for the President’s visit.

NORTHEAST DISTRICT

Reporters, Christine Wolfred
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GAINESVILLE LODGE 990

Always looking for a unique fundraiser, the drawing for a $1,000 gift card was won by Max Danford, PER. In his line of work, and for all he’s done for the Gainesville Lodge, no one is more deserving. The Kids Fishing Tournament was assisted by the Gainesville Bassmasters and was a wonderful experience for the kids. As usual, the fundraising barbecue was a huge success with proceeds to benefit Elks Charities. Thanks to the help of many Lodge members, the Lodge room is finally finished and the anteroom is almost complete.

The 50s Sock Hop in July was filled with poodle skirts, slicked back hair, makeshift tattoos, rolled up shirt sleeves, and topped off with a hula hoop competition.

August news included the nuptials at the Lodge of Tyler Danford, son of PER Max Danford, and his new wife, Candice, the niece of House Committee Chairman, Lynn Dowling. Additional, Lodge members and guests had a wonderfully successful food drive donating 600 pounds of food to the Bread of the Mighty Food Bank.

GREEN COVE SPRINGS LODGE 1892

It was a pleasure for the Lodge to donate $10,000 to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund during the August Quarterly in Umatilla. Those of you who attended know what a thrill it was for the Lodge to present $10,000 for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. The newlywed couple, Joe and Laura Russell, presented the Elks State President, Vincent Como, a check for $1,500 which was money donated in lieu of wedding gifts. Exalted Ruler Paul Orvosh presented the remaining $8,500 from the Lodge.

In August, the Veterans’ Services Committee took another group of vets from the Lake City Domiciliary to a Jacksonville Suns game. The men and women who attended had a great afternoon and got to visit with fellow veterans from Jacksonville.

The Green Cove Electronic Bowling League raised enough money to have a great pool party and banquet and donate $100 to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. Joyce Bicknell won Most Improved with the Russell Team as big winners.

Lastly, they collected and donated over 300 pounds of school supplies, such as pencils, paper, backpacks, etc., filing the donation box five times. The supplies were delivered to Charles E. Bennett Elementary in Green Cove Springs, Florida. The Assistant Principal was overwhelmed with the amount of school supplies donated.

Green Cove Springs Elks member, Carla Aten; Assistant Principal Mark Phelps; and the mound of supplies.

JACKSONVILLE LODGE 221

On Saturday, August 22 a group of faithful members sold barbecue ribs and chicken dinners under a tent on Beach Boulevard. Seventy dinners were sold with the net proceeds going to this year’s Children’s Christmas Party which Betsy Bryant so ably manages.

The PER Association held a reverse draw on July 25 to benefit VPAL Jim Hurst. Close to 100 attended and suffered when their names were drawn eliminating them as a possible winner. It was a gala affair with net proceeds of over $1,700 for VPAL Hurst.

ORANGE PARK LODGE 2605

A donation of $100 was presented to the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Chapter 38, of Orange Park, Florida. The donation will be utilized to offset the costs of training DAV Service Officers who offer disabled veterans counseling on VA compensation, health care, pension, employment rights, education, and more.

The VPAL Fish Fry in August was a success thanks to their fine chefs, Richard & Linda Martin and Keith & Linda Eppes. Many thanks also go to the musical entertainment of Bruce Wolfred, PER and the gang from Palatka. The Palatka Lodge is so lucky to have such a great group of folks. They were able to sell $667 in proceeds to support VPAL James Hurst, and with additional funds from the PER Association, they are presenting a check for over $900 to cover expenses as State President. Thanks go to all who came and made this successful.

PALATKA LODGE 1232

Palatka Lodge has their focus on their community like never before. In July they donated $250 to the local Palatka High School soccer team to support them in the upcoming year, providing them with game and practice uniforms.

Also in support of their community, the Palatka Elks joined with the Northeast Florida Humane Society, a no-kill shelter, and held WOOFstock ’09, a fundraising endeavor to support small animals in Putnam County. All dress and decorations were straight out of the 60s. Featured were five musical acts and bands playing much of the music from that era; over fifty items raffled through a Chinese Auction raising $1,200; and Cooking Crew 1232’s famous low country boil serving 180. Totals raised topped $5,500 for the Humane Society.

September saw the 95th birthday of their Tiler, Jack Massey. Jack has been a member of the Palatka Elks Lodge for 54 years and is a Life Member. Additionally, Jack is a Life Member of VFW Post 3346, the American Legion, Woodmen of the World, and the Putnam County Historical Society. He is the oldest member of all of these organizations and is still active in each.

ST. AUGUSTINE LODGE 829

Elks on Wheels had a grand time this quarter visiting the Youth Camp in Umatilla presenting Lynn Warburton with a donation of $275 in memory of Jack Plimpton. In August, they ventured to the little town of Welaka and visited the Welaka Maritime Museum to check out the wooden boats, half-finished steam engines, and antique outboards, wrapping it up with a lunch at Anderson’s on the St. John’s River.
HONORING THE MILITARY!

Elks Veterans Committee, Army of Hope & Florida Elks Youth Camp joined forces to create a special week of camp for dependents of our deployed Military Personnel.

To assist as many family members as possible, the age group for this special week was 8 to 16 years of age. It was a very special week and appreciated by all who attended. It created a special network and bonding of three campers who had lost family within the past few months.

The knowledge that Elks value and appreciate all the sacrifices made by our military to insure our freedom was very comforting to the dependents of our military personnel.