Florida Welcomes  
Grand Exalted Ruler James Nichelson

The Florida Elks, known far and wide for their southern hospitality, welcome our Grand Exalted Ruler, Jim Nichelson and his lovely wife, Mary Carolyn – a very enthusiastic, energetic Past District Deputy herself, from Martin's Ferry, Ohio on Thursday, February 4, 2010.  Jim and Mary Carolyn are wonderful representatives of our Order, and have dedicated twelve months of their lives criss-crossing our great country hearing about every state’s Elks’ accomplishments. They will be visiting the Youth Camp and the Mobile Therapy Services where they’ll see the best and brightest successes of our Order.  I’m proud that PGER Bob Grafton and I will be hosting them and showing off the crown jewels in all of Elkedom.  

Please make plans to meet them and share your Lodge’s success stories with them.  Jim has dedicated this year to raising as much as he can for the benefit of the National Foundation; it is my hope that all who can, will bring their donations to the Saturday meeting to really impress him with the long lines of generous Elks for which Florida is famous.

On Friday, February 5, 2010, we are honored to have a musical performance of the renowned patriotic singing group, Recreation.  Please make plans to help us show GER Jim Nichelson is expected to give a brief hello to those attending.  

Friday will be spent touring the massive 400 plus acres of the Florida Elks Youth Camp, the Museum of Florida Elks History and a Lake Cruise followed that evening with cocktails and dinner at the Youth Camp.

There will be numerous board meetings Saturday morning, many of which he will attend.  The General Membership Meeting is at 11:00 AM where he will address several hundred Florida Elks in the Grafton Center.

During his year in office Grand Exalted Ruler Nichelson will be traveling to almost every state in the country visiting with the thousands of leaders of the State Associations and hundreds of the 2,000 plus Elk Lodges.  He continues spreading his theme motto of his year, “Elks Make a Difference,” by getting the members to get more involved in their Lodges and practicing the principles of Elksdom’s Order, Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love, and Fidelity.

FLORIDA ELKS NEWS  
P. O. BOX 49  
UMATILL, FL. 32874  

National Elks Leader Visits Florida

James L. Nichelson, the National President of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks is visiting Florida to meet with the Florida State Elks Association officers and members.

He and his wife, Mary Carolyn, will be met at the Orlando airport by Florida State Elks Association President Vincent Como and his wife Lisa; Past Grand Exalted Ruler Robert Grafton and his wife Pat; Past Grand Exalted Ruler C. Valentine Bates and his wife Claudia; James Hurst, State Vice President at Large and his wife Julia; Various other Past State Presidents and wives; PSP-PGELECTK-BOGT and GER Elect Michael Smith and his wife Sandra; and Florida Elks News Editor Raleigh Whiteman and wife Joya.

The entourage will lunch while enroute to the Florida Elks Youth Camp which is six miles west of Umatilla. They will stay at the Youth Camp in one of the cabins for visiting dignitaries.

On the evening of February 5 there will be a casual dinner and cocktails and musical entertainment by Recreation. Grand Exalted Ruler Nichelson is expected to give a brief hello to those attending.

Friday will be spent touring the massive 400 plus acres of the Florida Elks Youth Camp, the Museum of Florida Elks History and a Lake Cruise followed that evening with cocktails and dinner at the Youth Camp.

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Soccer Shoot Winners Page 11  
Why Elks are Elks and not Buffaloes by Lowell Tyler-Page 19
**OFFICERS OF THE FLORIDA STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**PRESIDENT**
- Vincent P. Como -Lisa
- James E. Hurst, Jr - Julia

**VICE PRESIDENT AT LARGE**
- 2042 NW 104 Avenue - 4355 Edgewater Crossing Dr.
- Coral Springs, FL 33071 - Jacksonville, FL 32257-6106
- Margate Lodge 2463

**DISTRICT VICE PRESIDENTS**

- **Northwest**
  - Betty M. Clark - Crestview Lodge 2624
  - Carol Croke - Perry Lodge 1851

- **Northeast**
  - John E. Markiewicz - Jacksonville Lodge 221
  - Larry E. Taber - Ocala Lodge 286
  - Roger L. Johnson - Daytona Beach Lodge 1141

- **Central**
  - R. Michael Ritchie - Zephyrhills Lodge 2731
  - Frank Enlow - Wesley Chapel Lodge 2964

- **Southeast**
  - Robert F. Carroll - Vero Beach Lodge 1774
  - Carol Sirianni - Mansasota Lodge 2734

- **South Southwest**
  - Carol Gerace - Port Charlotte Lodge 2153

- **Southwest**
  - Stever C. Jester - Port Charlotte Lodge 2153

- **Southwest Central**
  - Henry L. Poage - Plant City Lodge 1217

- **Northwest (29-30) Districts, respectively**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- David P. Lake - 5 year Chairman - Fort Myers Lodge 1280
- Michael F. Smith - 4 year - Plant City Lodge 1727
- Don Sansoussi - 3 Year - Vice Chairman - Lake Placid Lodge 2661
- Thomas E. Elmore - 2 Year - Lake City Lodge 893
- Michael P. Phillips - 1 Year - Titusville Lodge 2113
- Joseph A. Ortiz - Immediate Past State President - North Miami Lodge 1835

**DISTRICT DIRECTORS**

- Northwest
  - David E. Lumber - Fort Myers Lodge 1280
  - Ron Brown - Tallahassee Lodge 937

- Northeast
  - Robert Cato - St. Augustine Lodge 829

- North Central
  - Jodie crews - Eustis Lodge 1578
  - Sanford Tabb - Holiday Isle Lodge 1912

- Central
  - William Puzar - West Citrus Lodge 2693

- Southeast Central
  - Herman J. Heydinger - Sebastian Lodge 2714
  - Michael Priester - Seminole Lodge 2519

- Southeast
  - Frank Malatesta - Sarasota Lodge 1519
  - Carl M. Sturm - Englewood Lodge 2378
  - Ernest L. Basili - Jupiter Lodge 2469

- South Southeast
  - John H. Rooney - Lake Placid Lodge 2661
  - Joe Roberts - Holiday Isle Lodge 1912

-אי
  - Albert A. Reker - Miami Lodge 948

**APPOINTE OFFICERS**

- Chaplain - James F. Lind
- Sgt-at-Arms - Willy A. Sanders
- Organist - Patricia A. Maher

**HARRY-ANNA INVESTMENT FUND, INC.**

- Michael F. Smith - President - Plant City Lodge 1727
- Michael Phillips - Vice President - Titusville Lodge 2113

**FLORIDA ELKS CHARITIES, INC.**

- Winston M. Needham - President - Ocala Lodge 286
- Victor McClellan - Vice President - Daytona Beach Lodge 1141

**FLORIDA ELKS PROPERTIES, INC.**

- Ken McGrady - Fort Myers Lodge 1288
- James E. Hurst, Jr - Jacksonville Lodge 221

**FLORIDA ELKS MAJOR PROJECTS COMMITTEE**

- Winston M. Needham - President - Ocala Lodge 286

**FLORIDA ELKS YOUTH CAMP, INC.**

- Dennis B. Squires - Gainesville Lodge 990
- Donna J. Berkowitz - West Palm Beach Lodge 1352
- Lynn Warburton - Palm Coast Lodge 2709

**FLORIDA ELKS CHILDREN’S THERAPY SERVICES, INC.**

- Sean L. Maples - President - West Palm Beach Lodge 1352
- Augustus Simonelli - Vice President - Port St. Lucie Lodge 2658
- C. Valentine Bates, PGER - Florida Co-Sponsor

**PAST GRAND EXALTED RULERS**

- Robert Grafon, PGER - Florida Co-Sponsor
- 1511 NW 6th Street - Gainesville - 32601

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**FLORIDA ELKS NEWS**

**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

Vincent P. Como

“Helping Others – Promotes Elkdom”

By my dear friends:

By the time you receive this edition of the Florida Elks News, the Christmas and New Year holidays have come and gone. Lisa and I sincerely hope that you enjoyed them with family and friends, and we wish you health, prosperity, and happiness for 2010 as we continue our promotion of our great Association and its good works for the betterment of those less fortunate.

We have just returned from the State President’s annual visit to the “Crown Jewel of Elkdom,” our National Retirement Home, at the foothills of the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains in Bedford, VA. We were accompanied by Retirement Home Coordinator, PSP Tom Elmore, and his wife, Pep; PGER Val and Claudia Bates; PSP Michael and Sandra Smith; and PSP Vic and Peggie McClellan. We had a meeting with the Florida residents at the home on Friday morning and they were most appreciative of the gifts and good tidings sent on behalf of the FSEA and FLOE. There is one thing I must make perfectly clear, which was made perfectly clear to me at the home, and that is, it is not a nursing home! The residents reside in beautifully maintained 1 and 2 bedroom apartments with all amenities included. The Christmas lighting that has become an area event and officially starts the Christmas season had many local government dignitaries present. We all waited patiently until PGER James Damon hit the switch and lit over 60,000 lights and fixtures on the home grounds. What a spectacular event it was! Cars lined the streets and waited for miles to come onto the grounds to view all the beautiful decorations.

Since my last message, Lisa, I, and the H.O.O.P.E. team have completed two more district visits. First, we were the guests of the South Southwest District and VP Carl Gerace. We visited members from Englewood, Rotonda, Punta Gorda, and Deep Creek Lodges and at the Saturday dinner in Port Charlotte I was honored to become the first Honorary, Charter, Life member of the Elks Riders Motorcycle Club. Two weeks later, I attended the fall Harry-Anna Trust Fund Seminar at our Youth Camp and heard all the reports of our investors. Things appear to be on the upswing but we must continue to support the fund and keep a cautious approach with our investments.

The following week was spent on the high seas as we participated in the annual Harry-Anna Trust Fund cruise in the Caribbean. Although the participation was less than desired, partly due to other districts running their own Harry-Anna cruises from different ports throughout the state, we were still able to make a generous contribution to the fund.

The ensuing week was filled with preparations for our Mid-year Convention at the Lake Mary Marriott. With the assistance of some great friends and members of the hospitality team, they set up and maintained the hospitality room with goodies and refreshments for the entire weekend. I hope that all of you who were in attendance shared in the camaraderie and had a good time. A big thank you goes to my hospitality team, PDD Roy Kronenberg and Marilyn; PDD Norman Mandel; PDD and State Chaplain, Jim Lind, and Karolyn; PER and State Sergeant-at-Arms, Willy Sanders and Joan; State Harry-Anna Chairman, Jerry Cooper, and Denise; and ER Jim Larsen and Loyal Knight, Sean Peel, from Manasota Lodge; for their last minute assistance in reloading the trailer. Thank you all so much. To our dear friend, Barbara Hollingsworth, we miss you.

The membership and breakout meetings were all well attended. The state committee chairpersons reported on their respective committees and provided the general membership with a perspective on the state of the Association. Special thanks are always in order for our State Secretary, Carl Seibert, Youth Camp Director, Lynn Warburton, and their staffs for their untiring efforts to make certain that everything goes off without any problems. Thank you both.

The week before Thanksgiving we visited the Southwest Central District and Plant City Lodge, home of Vice President Henry Poage, and our endorsed candidate for Grand Exalted Ruler, Michael Smith. We were treated to some fun and gabling at the Tampa Hard Rock Café and an afternoon of wine tasting. We are looking forward to the remaining districts to visit. During all of our visits, we have come to see and appreciate ALL of the hard work and dedication of great Elks from all walks of life and from all areas of our state. It should make all of you, as it does me, so very proud to be a Florida Elk.

One of my key points in my addresses to the district members has been and will continue to be the critical need for all of us to work harder to increase our membership by sponsoring just ONE qualified member into our Order. For one moment, just imagine how much greater we could be in promoting our Therapy Services program, our Youth Camp, and the care we provide for our veterans, if EACH member brought in just ONE new member. Can you imagine a State Association with over 100,000 members? As a small token of my appreciation for membership recruitment, I have the membership trailer which completes my three piece pin set. Please do it for all of us because we will all reap the benefits of increased membership.

In January, our travels will take us northward for visits with the North Central (15-16), Northeast (22-23), and the North (29-30) Districts, respectively. We look forward to the renewal of old friendships and the making of new ones.

In February, my homecoming to the South Southeast District was reversed with the February quarterly to accommodate certain scheduling conflicts. The new date for the February Quarterly is February 4-6. We will have the honor of welcoming and hosting our National President and GER, James L. Nichelson, and his lovely wife, Mary Carolyn. Please make every effort which shows them our pride in Florida Elkdom. As has become customary, we will be accepting your donations to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund at the General Membership session on Saturday in the Grafton Center.

My homecoming to the South Southeast District and Margate Lodge No. 2463 will be on February 12-13. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at any of these events.

Let’s continue to show both Elks and non-Elks that “Helping Others – Promotes Elkdom.”

Until our next issue, may your troubles be less, may your blessings be more, and may nothing but happiness pass through your door.

May God bless each and every one of you for your continuous support of our children, our veterans, and all our programs. May He bless our service men and women wherever they are proudly serving, our Florida State Elks Association, and our United States of America.
A MESSAGE FROM THE STATE SECRETARY

Carl T. Seibert, PDD

The November mid-year meetings were held at the Orlando Marriott in Lake Mary November 12th-14th. There were 435 Elks and guests in attendance. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped to make our mid-year meetings a success. Also a big thank you goes to Lisa Hurt and her entire Credentials Committee for all of their hard work during the convention.

The February Quarterly meetings will be held at the Youth Camp February 4th -6th, 2010. Meeting agendas and information is available on our web site at www.flels.org.

The 2010 State Convention will be held May 19th -22nd at Disney’s Coronado Springs Resort and Convention Center. Reservation information will soon be available on our web site.

Please make your reservations as early as you possibly can and please understand your room assignment has nothing to do with when you make your reservation. Your room is not selected for you until you arrive at the resort and then it is chosen from those rooms ready and available. Last year 192 of our 754 rooms checked in on Wednesday and 534 were occupied by Thursday. Since there are approximately 200 rooms in each of the five buildings we are normally housed in, the closest buildings (1, 2, & 3) are full by Thursday. If you arrive on Friday, chances are you will be housed in one of the farther buildings. It is no guarantee, but if you arrive by Thursday, you probably have a better chance of being assigned a room in one of the closer buildings. Our reserved block will sell out so please be sure to have made your reservation in order to make your reservations for the 2010 State Convention!

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

March 12-14, 2010 – Lake Mary, FL – Lake Mary Marriott
March 19-21, 2010 – Lake City, FL – Holiday Inn

Again this year, the Harry-Anna Trust Fund will be sponsoring a breakfast on Sunday morning. Several presentations will be made during the breakfast so all attendees will be expected to attend. We will also again offer dual tracks for a portion of the Secretaries seminar. This will allow us to offer more targeted training for the new versus experienced secretaries. And, we will again offer the popular “Chicago Lodge Management System” (CLMS) training on Friday night.

The seminars will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday and conclude by noon on Sunday. If the distance prevents you from traveling accordingly on Saturday night, please be sure to arrive for the seminar on Friday evening. If you are honored to be elected the Exalted Ruler Elect or Secretary Elect this month, I hope you will make every effort to attend one of these training seminars. Information has already been sent to your Lodge, and it is also available at our web site at www.flels.org. Our goal for this training is 100% participation, and each year we come very close to attaining this goal. Let’s make 2010 the year we reach it!

Incidentally, due to limited space we are not at this time offering a separate seminar for Lodge Treasurers, Trustees, and House Committee Chairmen. These officers are permitted to attend the ER Elect and Secretary Elect training however the part that is most relevant to them is held only on Sunday morning. Your best bet for training for these officers is to have them attend the quarterly meetings of the FSEA. At each of these there is a question and answer session with our Past Grand Exalted Ruler Sponsors, and the Business Practices Committee holds a question and answer seminar. At these you will learn about many of the pressing issues that Lodges are facing at the time. Also, PSP Frank Palladini has created a Business Practices Training Course. It is on DVD and comes with a companion manual. This program may be purchased from the State office for $55. An order form may be found on our web site at www.flels.org.

The 2010 Grand Lodge Convention will be held in Orlando, Florida July 4th through the 8th. The Florida delegation will be housed at the Rosen Centre Hotel which is located adjacent to the Convention Center. Hotel reservation information and online ordering for event tickets, volunteering, and sponsorship is available at our web site. All hotel reservations for the Florida delegation hotel must be made online and through the FSEA web site links. There is no pre-registration for the Grand Lodge Convention as it takes place on-site at the convention center. If you will be attending the Grand Lodge Convention but not requiring hotel accommodations please notify the State Office so we may add you to our attending list.

As in the Lodges, the next few months will be especially hectic at the State Association offices as we prepare for conventions, seminars, and the new slate of officers, directors, and committees. Please be sure to have made your reservations for the Florida delegation hotel must be made in January in order to have enough time to put the packets together. The September Conference Committees are all excited and are working on their plans. Another big thank you is given! The workshop is open as is the FSEA PINS. If you have any great ideas or would like to take one of these workshops please contact me at (800) 523-1673 extension 230 or by e-mail at carl@mipinet.net.

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

FLORIDA LADIES OF ELKS

Enid Simpson
President

Dear Florida Ladies of Elks and Elks Members,

On November 14, 2009 at the Mid-year Meeting, we had the pleasure of meeting at the beautiful Orlando Marriott in Lake Mary. After the preliminary opening, Joan Fritz, PSP-FLOE gave the wrap-up portion of the 2008-2009 conference reports. Some helpful recommendations were given for the 2010 conference to be passed on to the next chairsadies. Joan’s motto, “Old Glory Will Light Your Way,” came true for her and all of us. Great job, Joan!

Historian, Connie Puage, presented Joan with her yearbook. Wow! Connie put together a beautiful book and it is so big. Joan will have many wonderful memories for years to come.

Tom Elmore, PSP-PGELDGK was unable to attend our meeting, so Judy Reyes, Parliamentarian from the Northeast District, assured us that she had presented the Christmas stockings to him the day before. Tom takes the stockings to the Elks National Home for our Florida residents. Tom was very pleased. He is always so grateful for what our ladies do. Thank you, Judy, for that presentation.

When the dignitaries arrived, I introduced PER and Chairman Jerry introduced dignitaries Larry Skates, Vice Chairman; James Hurst, VPAL; Frank Hayes, Endorsed VPAL; and Vince Como, State President. VPAL James Hurst said that he and Julia had a wonderful time at the conference and looked forward to working with the ladies. State President Vince Como complimented the ladies on the fine work they do for Elkdom and for their continuing dedication.

It is always a pleasure to have our dignitaries’ wives present at the FLOE meetings. Lisa Como, wife of Vince Como, President of the Florida State Elks Association; Julia Hurst, wife of James Hurst, Vice President at Large; Kathy Lake, wife of David Lake, Past State President; Sandra Smith, wife of Mike Smith, PSP, Chairman of the Board of Grand Trustees and endorsed as the Grand Exalted Ruler for 2010-2011; Sonja Coggins, wife of Jim Coggins, PSP, serving on the Board of Grand Lodge Americanism Committee; Mary Ann Trinowski, wife of Charlie Trinowski, PSP; Linda Hayes, wife of Frank Hayes, PDD and Endorsed VPAL; and Faye Bryant, PSP-FLOE, wife of Joseph Bryant, State Treasurer. Also in attendance were Past State Presidents of FLOE, Mildred Lamb, Dolores Casella, and our newest PSP, Joan Fritz.

The committees for the May 22 Luncheon are all in place. A very big thank you goes to you all; you are the greatest. However, I have changed the deadline for the flyers. It has been changed from February 1 to January 15 in order to have enough time to put the packets together. The September Conference Committees are all excited and are working on their plans. Another big thank you is given! The workshop is open as is FLOE PINS. If you have any great ideas or would like to take one of these workshops please call me.

I had the pleasure of attending the State President’s visit of Vince Como at Plant City on November 21. When we walked in, we felt like we were at home. The hospitality was overwhelming! State President Vince gave a very moving and inspiring message. I was so grateful for the opportunity to be able to attend such a wonderful evening with so many Elks and ladies who have their hearts into Elkdom. I could not believe my eyes when I saw three Past State Lady Presidents. I do not recall ever being at one of these functions with three or more lady PSP’s in attendance. I am so fortunate to have so many friends throughout this beautiful state of Florida. You all are awesome!
We hope each of you plan to attend our February Quarterly Meeting at the Florida Elks Youth Camp. You will have the opportunity to see your various Boards for each corporation in action. There will be a dinner Friday Evening in the Pavilion of filet mignon, baked potato, veggies and dessert. Dinner will be followed with entertainment. A show will be performed by Re-Creations, a group of young people who donate a year of their lives to entertain Veterans throughout the nation. It is a fabulous show you will not want to miss. There will be some special events to support the Endorsed Candidate for Grand Exalted Ruler for 2010-2011 who is our very own Michael F. Smith. Our very own PGER Robert Grafton will be sitting in a dunk tank as one of the fund-raisers. The feature of the meetings is a presentation by our Grand Exalted Ruler on Saturday morning at 11 AM.

Now is the time to begin finding needy children in your communities to benefit from our safe camping experience during the Summer Camp 2010 program. Staff applications along with camper applications are available on our web site at http://www.fielks.org/FEYC/feyc.htm. You may call the office 352-669-9443 x249 for applications or just download them.

We are very excited to again offer a seventh week of camp specifically for the dependents of our military with a focus on those folks who are currently deployed. Summer Camp 2009 was our first year with this special week and we are so proud to have been able to help 150 youths with a safe camping experience. The families sincerely appreciated dedicated Americans as the Elks for not forgetting them.

Please take note of some important changes in our programs this year.

First and most important, the check in time on Sundays has changed. You may bring your campers between 2 PM and 4 PM. If you arrive before 4 PM you will have the opportunity to visit you campers cabin. At 4 PM there will be a brief orientation and the parents will be ask to leave. The later check in time will help all our remote campers (The Keys to the Panhandle) time to arrive. In addition, it was put in place to ensure our staff has the required time off each week. With the later check in time, there will be no food served so enjoy a lunch on the way to camp.

Second, the age for our Counselor in Training program has changed to 16 and 17 year old youth. This change was implemented by the Board of Directors to insure our compliance with current labor laws.

During this difficult economic time, more children than ever need our help. Even families out of work will try to give their children as much as they can. The growth and self confidence gained through a safe camping experience benefit the children along with their families and our future.

In the next few years we would expect to reap that extra hidden benefit from helping children. When they grow up and want to join an organization, it may be the Elks because of their memories and benefits from the camping experience we provided. They will be good Elks, joining for the right reason, to help others as they were helped.

Your contributions are what make it all possible. Times are tough and these days we need to make choices on who we can afford to help. What better way could there be than putting your donation to work in the Harry-Anna Trust Fund strictly for the benefit of children. Our Florida Elks Youth Camp and Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services are second to none. Be proud to be an Elk and proud to be a supporter. If you can not afford to help today, consider a codicil in your will specifying an amount to be given to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund, Florida Elks Youth Camp, or Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services. It will give you a great feeling and warm your heart knowing you are helping children forever.

Lynn Warburton
Sebring Elks Lodge 1529
Sebring Lodge initiated 43 new members on December 17, 2009. The Lodge recently sponsored a “Say No to Drugs” coloring contest at the Sebring Kindergarten Learning Center. Jim Mason, Drug Awareness Chairman, presented the five winners a $15 gift certificate. The 107 children ages five to six years old did an excellent job. The Kindergarten Learning Center represents three elementary schools, Wiles, Woodlawn, and Cracker Trail. Jim Mason presents Principal Andrew Lethbridge with a $100 donation check to the Learning Center.

Lake Placid Lodge 2661
Lake Placid Elks Lodge has a Needy Basket Project for Thanksgiving and Christmas! The Elks were able to give six families with several children complete dinners including a turkey and sundries plus much more for both holidays. The generosity and donations from the Lake Placid Elks Lodge members have helped families through the holidays. Vicci and John Grant store, shop, and distribute these baskets to the needy families.

Arcadia Elks Lodge 1524
The Florida Elks News Report editor reported in the last issue that with the closing of the Wauchula Lodge, the Lodge would be merging with Arcadia Lodge. That was an error; Wauchula membership voted not to merge. Therefore the Wauchula Lodge charter was revoked and is closed. Wauchula members are eligible to transfer their membership to other Lodges in the Southwest Central District. The TDs will be managed through the Grand Lodge. As of December there have been seven TDs.

Lake Wales Lodge 1974
The Lake Wales Elks Halloween Party had scores of outlandish and amusing costumes which the Elkettes sponsored.

Lake Wales Lodge hosted the Southwest Central District Golf Tournament on November 7 at the Lekarica Golf Course in Lake Wales. Funds raised will go toward the Mike Smith National President Expense Fund.

Lake Wales hosted the Veterans’ Barbecue at the Bay Pines VA Nursing Home on October 18 with thirteen people assisting in the gathering with the veterans. Cost of the 125 barbecue meals served to the veterans was $463 with another $65 worth of other donated items to the hospital.

Plant City Lodge 1727
SWC District Vice President, Henry Poage, and his wife, Connie, celebrated their homecoming visitation at the Lodge on October 10 with all district Lodges in attendance. Comments were heard from many regarding his very successful and enjoyable visits to all the Lodges.

Winter Haven Lodge 1672
Winter Haven Lodge has started a program to have Elks and others in their area and perhaps throughout the state display a star decal showing support of our troops defending our country. Stars are offered at $2.00 each with choices of a blue star showing they have someone in service, a green star showing support of our troops, and a white star showing someone in the family deceased in action. Contact Exalted Ruler Sharon Bremer at sbr7611026@aol.com or call 863-289-5930 if you are interested.

Along with Veterans’ Remembrance, Winter Haven Lodge was privileged to be a part of the sendoff ceremony of deployment of the Winter Haven National Guard in early January.

The Lodge was also invited to be a part of the November 11 Veterans’ Day ceremony sponsored by the Denison Middle School and the American Legion.

Winter Haven Elks welcomed two of Wauchula’s members and are hoping more decide to transfer demit there.

Brandon Lodge 2383
Brandon has one of Florida’s largest Elks RV parks. Park your RVs (2 week maximum); there are ten sites with electricity (50/30 amp) and water hookups. There is a dump station located on site. Sites are 60’ x 24’. Call for information at 813-685-6469 or 813-654-2968. You must be a member of the Elks to use the RV facility.

November was a very busy month with a lot of very good events. The changes in the first Friday night fish dinner hosted by Dick Rhodes and crew were well received. Everyone can all look forward to that grouper every month.

Not to be outdone, the Ladies followed up with a very successful denim and diamonds event. The ladies fashion show, the barbecue, and the Friday steak night by Larry Oliver and crew all helped make November a very good month.

If your grandchild or child has missed out on the Legacy scholarships, there are still opportunities available at the Lodge. The ENF Legacy Scholarship is still available. This is for any child or grandchild of a living Elk who joined the Order on or before April 1, 2007 and is a paid up member through March 31, 2010. Great grandchildren are not eligible.

The applicant must be a high school senior.
The Elks Retirement Community

Don’t stop reading! Every Elks 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 member of the “family” that lives here. If you don’t have a computer, just call 1-800-552-4140 during regular business hours (Eastern Time) and we will be glad to send you a packet of information by mail.

The dream of the early Elks members who founded the Home has certainly come true. But in order to continue to offer the services and opportunities available here for retired Elks, we need the help of the entire Order.

Since we no longer receive a grant from the Grand Lodge or the Elks National Foundation, we depend upon the $1.00 annual membership assessment to supplement our operating budget. But that isn’t enough. We also depend upon donations from individual members, lodges, state associations, and friends.

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 the Elks Riders USA. Bequests 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 in its future with your support - or by becoming a resident!

If you have questions or want more information, contact us at elksridersusa@verizon.net or call 941-234-7001. Or visit our website: www.elksridersusa.com.

Elks Riders USA

The Elks Riders USA recently held a fund raiser at Viscani’s Comedy Club in Port Charlotte to raise funds for the Port Charlotte Lodge #2153 Children’s Charity Christmas Party.

The Elks Riders USA now plan an even bigger task. The Cranford New Jersey Elks Lodge #2006 has invited Elks Lodges across the country to join in an event to be held April 10, 2010. The Cranford lodge has been doing this for the past 6 years on the second Saturday of April and has raised thousands of dollars to benefit handicapped children in the New Jersey area.

The event is called “Rally Across America” and will benefit 2 children’s charities of choice in each state. The funds raised by each state remains in that state. At this time the list of Elks Lodges participating include Florida, Tennessee, Georgia, Maryland, Texas, Minnesota, and California. Just imagine the impact of Elks members across the country participating in an event on the same day at the same time for the same cause.

The Elks Riders USA immediately jumped on board and plans to raise funds for the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services (FECTS) and the Harry-Anna Trust Fund to be divided 50/50 each charity. The event started out as a motorcycle poker run which was so successful for the New Jersey lodges and has continued to grow each year. The New Jersey lodges continue with the poker run that goes to different lodges in the surrounding areas.

The Florida event will not be strictly a motorcycle event. Any type of transportation is welcome. The donation for the poker run is $15.00 per hand. The donation for attending just the event is $10.00. The event will be held at the Venice Golf Club #1854 which will include entertainment, raffles and vendors. Food and beverages will be available for purchase.

All Elks members and guests are invited to attend.

Sebring Elks Lodge Presents

The 30th Annual Florida State Elks Golf Tournament

Saturday, April 10 and Sunday, April 11, 2010
Spring Lake Golf Resort.

The tournament is open to all Elks and their guests.

Ladies are also encouraged to participate. The tournament will be a four person scramble.

Teams will be flighted after Saturday round.

Awards will be presented as follows:
Low Gross and 1st & 2nd place in flights. A thru F
The first 260 entries received prior to March 26 will be accepted and processed in the order received. Late entries will be accepted, placed on file and processed if opening occurs.

NOTE: Sebring/Lake Placid Lodges will be open at 2:00 PM on Friday, dinner from 5-7 P.M.
Entries will be received and accepted only as follows:
a. As a single accompanied with check totaling $120.00
b. As a twosome accompanied with check(s) totaling $240.00
c. As a threesome accompanied with check(s) totaling $360.00
d. As a foursome accompanied with check(s) totaling $480.00

If you indicated a non-player dinner and luncheon, send $25 per person with your check. Saturday only dinner tickets $15 or Sunday only lunch tickets $10 can be purchased. Lunch only tickets will be available at the resort.

Check makes payable to: Florida Elks State Golf
• Drawing for prizes Saturday night at the Sebring Elks Lodge
• Complimentary cold drinks both days on the course
• Mail entries to Dave Switzer; 641 S. Lakeview Rd.; Lake Placid, FL 33852 Ph: 863-465-0632---Email; dswitzer6@msn.com
Saturday dinner will be at 7:00 p.m. at the Lodge, and Sunday lunch after golf at the resort.

Tickets must be presented for both dinner and lunch.
Registration: 7:00 - 8:30 a.m. each day with an 8:45 a.m. start.
Official score cards which will be issued at check-in.

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

Practice rounds: Tee Times as available the week of the tournament at a cost of $26, which includes 18 holes with cart. For reservations call Spring Lake Golf Resort one week in advance at 1-800-635-7277, local call 655-0101.

Elks Riders and Event Chairperson Ricki Markle presenting a check for $800 to Port Charlotte Lodge Exalted Ruler Eric Roslon. Looking on are Elks Riders USA Vice President David Rockow, Treasurer Ken Greenhorn, Secretary Linda Sewell and President Carl Gerace.

FLORIDA
Bradenton Lodge 1511

Bradenton Lodge bar bingo players have raised $2,500 to be divided equally and donated to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund, Manatee Operation Troop Support (MOTS), Southeastern Guide Dogs, Sarasota Manatee Area Riding Therapy (SMART), and the Manatee County Food Bank this Lodge year. Each month, the bingo players recommend a specific charity that they would like to support.

Lakewood Ranch 2855

Lakewood Ranch Elks recently gave a flag history presentation to the veterans at Heartland Rehabilitation Center in Sarasota, FL. After the presentation a bag of goodies including personal care products was given to each of the veterans. Just three days before, a contingent of Lakewood Ranch Elks attended and helped out at a barbecue cookout for the veterans at Bay Pines VA Nursing Center in St. Petersburg, Florida. Lakewood Ranch Elks also recently donated $170 for food baskets for the needy in our community.

Palmetto Lodge 2449

Exalted Ruler Wes Townsend of Palmetto 2449 recently presented a cash donation to Manatee High Schools JROTC Program. This is an ongoing program of the Elks Care and Share program. The money was raised by members’ donations at the twice monthly Sunday brunch program at the Lodge. Mr. Townsend received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Dept. of the Army JROTC Hurricane Battalion in recognition of the Elks support for the ROTC program.

Manasota Lodge 2734

Students of Daughtrey Elementary help Manasota Elks with a special veterans’ project. Ms. Washington had nearly two dozen students spend the past few weeks in an arts and crafts club at Daughtrey Elementary making thirty blankets for the local veterans’ program. “We made blankets for the community to help them,” said Victor, a soft spoken second grader who says this season is a time for giving. Frank Wagner, PDD and Ed Neally, Manasota Elks members, met with the kids and explained what this means to our veterans and how much their work is appreciated. Wagner and Neally talked with the students about their experience in the services and how it impacted their lives. This helped the students better understand why we need to help our veterans. Jill Gallagher, school liaison, works with Manasota Elks to help deliver them to Bay Pines VA Healthcare System in St. Petersburg. Both Manasota Elks and Daughtrey Elementary are working together because Elks Care – Elks Share.

From back left to right: Randy Fredrickson, Assistant Principal; Bernitha Washington Teacher; Jim Larsen, Exalted Ruler; second row: Rosie Velazquez, Frank Wagner, PDD; Ed Neally, Veterans’ Chairman; Dionne Bradley; front row: Briana Saucedo, Miamya Scurry, and Tania Aplicano.

Manasota Elks 2734 held their annual Hoop Shoot Saturday, December 5. This year’s event was hosted at the YMCA on State Road 70. Ken Palmer, Chairman, is pleased to send these students on to district competition. Manasota Elks enjoyed this annual event which offers kids the opportunity to express their talents.

Sarasota Lodge 1519

Sarasota 1519 hosted the Easter Seals Adult Training Program attendees to a wonderful Christmas party at the Lodge. Over one hundred handicapped participants arrived by special buses to the Lodge and were greeted by Santa’s helpers. All were presented with Christmas presents and they enjoyed a great lunch from the Lodge volunteer kitchen staff. Carol Edwards, PER kept all the guests in a festive mood with Christmas songs and games.

Sarasota South Lodge 2495

Sarasota South 2495 donated a wheelchair and built a wheelchair ramp for a veteran who had broken his back and was coming home after spending more than six months in the hospital. They also donated over $4,000 worth of clothing to a homeless veterans organization.

Wheelchair ramp with Sarasota South members Red Malone, Charlie Preston, George Adams, and Vic Kobialka.

South Hillsborough 2672

South Hillsborough Lodge 2672 had over 600 youngsters participate in their annual Hoop Shoot program this past season. The Lodge finals were held November 21 at Ruskin Christian School with fifty young men and women participating. Those in attendance were treated to a continental breakfast and after the program were treated to lunch. The South Hillsborough Elks Lodge 2672 distributed seventeen baskets of food to seventeen needy families in the area on November 22, 2009. The Lodge provided the turkeys and members supplied the other food items. On November 7, 2009, South Hillsborough Lodge 2672 sponsored a Pasty Cline Show for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. There were 164 enthusiastic Elks and guests in attendance and $625 was raised for the fund.

Venice/Nokomis 1854

Venice-Nokomis 1854 held their first Annual Lobster Boil on November 7. Dan O’Connor, Event Chairman, put on a very successful event with guests from many different Lodges and the proceeds of the evening going to the Elks National Foundation.

BUSEINESS PRACTICES

Exalted Rulers, you and the other officers of your Lodge have the obligation to assure your members that their Lodge is managed financially; that management is directed by the use of financial statements and procedures; that these statements and procedures are reviewed regularly so that you as officers may report the financial condition of the lodge and your recommendations for future action to the membership.

Your Business Practices Committee is a group of Elks with time and talent to assist the Lodges of Florida in achieving their financial goals. Here’s how!

CALL US! Our names and phone numbers are listed in the “Roster of Lodges” book. Just say you want to invite our committee to visit your Lodge. We’ll take it from there.

REMEMBER! When we are invited, we conduct ourselves as to be completely confidential. What we learn, do or say in your lodge stays in your Lodge. Our job is to review, advise and recommend,. Your job is to execute and administer. All reports will be made to your lodge only, NO ONE ELSE.

The most important thing is that you not wait until it’s too late. It starts with a call. The scope of our visit will be determined by the nature of your concerns, and more than one visit may be recommended.
Englewood Lodge 2378
HOOPSTERS LIGHT UP THE SCOREBOARD!
Swish! The quiet sound of basketballs easing their way through the nets at Englewood’s Warren Loranger YMCA gym delighted parents and well wishers on November 28. It was the finals of the Englewood Elks annual Hoop Shoot competition open to area students who had qualified earlier during the month. Foul shooters toed the line and poured ’em through with an eye on trophies and advancement to the district round held January 9 at the Bonita Springs “Y.”

Contestants from Englewood Elementary, L. A. Ainger and Myakka River, represented their schools well with each of the institutions having at least one winner.

In the Girls Division the 8 – 9 year old leading shooter was Koko Summer Rainbow Kester (EE). Sharpshooter Hayley Smith (LAA) brought home the gold among the 12 – 13 girls. Sharphooter Hayley garnered overall individual honors with an eye on trophies and advancement to the district round held January 9 at the Bonita Springs “Y.”

In the Boys Division the 8 – 9 year old leading shooter was Koko Summer Rainbow Kester (EE). Top honors in the 10 – 11 age group went to Shannon Smith (LAA) while Hayley Smith (LAA) brought home the gold among the 12 – 13 girls. Sharphooter Hayley garnered overall individual honors by hitting eighteen buckets out of her 25 chances.

The Boys Division saw Dan Friedline (MR) triumph among the 8 – 9 year old hopefuls with marksmen Sean Hinkle (EE) leading the way in the 10 – 11 year olds group.

Chairman Wes Arrington congratulated all participants and their schools for their involvement in the tourney and was quick to point out that the Englewood Elks’ commitment to community youth is the force that drives programs like Hoop Shoot and its accompanying theme: “Say Yes to Hoop Shoot and No to Drugs!”

Naples Lodge 2010
At the November 16 Board of Trustees meeting, Boy Scout Troop #214 was introduced to the Lodge. The BSA Troop will be sponsored by the Naples Elks Lodge as part of their youth program. The scouts were presented with a check for $500 from the Lodge and matching donations of $500 each from Naples Elks members, Mavis Waler and Annie Cole. Hopefully they will be seeing more of these youth functions at Naples Lodge in the near future.

North Fort Myers Lodge 2742
As just another way North Fort Myers Elks Lodge Veterans’ Committee is helping in their community, on Tuesday, November 10, the J. Colon English Elementary School held a program honoring the veterans of past wars and conflicts as part of the Lee County schools’ Pride and Patriotism. Refreshments of punch and cookies were donated by the committee and were served by Dick Wood, Co-Chairman; Peter DeBryun; and Larry Burnett to over 350 students and guests. Dorothy Holmes was one of the guest speakers.

Punta Gorda Lodge 2606
The Punta Gorda Elks Lodge hosted the annual veterans’ parade in Punta Gorda to kick off Veterans Appreciation Week. Ninety-eight parade entries, including military and veterans’ groups, made a sight for spectators of all ages.

On October 31, 2009 Punta Gorda Elks Lodge 2606 members (left to right) Ty MacKenzie, PER; Joe Tuhill, PER; Henry Reposa; Bob Bastas; Bob Hahn, PER; and Jack Barghausen participated in the Charlotte County Homeless Veterans Stand-down.

The Lodge provided toiletry articles, clothing, and shoes. Thirty homeless veterans also received medical check-ups, haircuts, showers, flu shots, and lunch. This was the fifth year for the stand-down and the Punta Gorda Elks involvement.

ORIGIN OF THE ELKS 11:00 O’CLOCK TOAST
By Lowell Tyler, State Historian
One newsletter said the custom of the toast is over a thousand years old and is credited to the Danes, who originally used it to commemorate their departed loved ones. The actual word, toast, however, is taken from the 11th century practice of dipping a piece of warm bread in wine to improve its flavor. Mike Kelly, Historian assigned to the Grand Secretary, takes exception to this supposed 1,000 year old Dane accreditation. He says that one only needs to consult an English translation of either the Iliad or Odyssey of Homer, both works written over 2,000 years ago in ancient Greece, to note that it was a long standing tradition in all cultures B.C. to start any feast with one cupful of wine being poured on the ground to sink down to the underworld where the shades or spirits of the dead had gone before the living partook of the feast.

One of the main contributions of Charles Richardson, the stage name of Charles Algernon Sidney Vivian and founder of the American branch of the Jolly Corks, was to deliver into the hands of newborn Elks the rituals and traditions of a fraternal organization started in England around 1010 A.D., the Royal and Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes, to which he belonged prior to coming to New York.

The RAOB or Buffaloes, as they were more commonly called, also practiced an 11 o’clock toast in remembrance of the Battle of Hastings in October of 1906. Following his victory, William of Normandy imported a set of rules, both martial and civil in nature, to keep control of a seething Norman-Saxon population always on the edge of a revolution.

Among those rules was a curfew law requiring all watch fires (basically all lights controlled by private citizens that could serve as signals) to be extinguished at 11:00 each night. From strategically placed watch towers that also served as early fire alarm posts, the call would go out to douse or shutter all lights and bank all fires. This also served to discourage secret and treasonous meetings, as chimney sparks stood out against the black sky. A person away from his home and out on the darkened streets when all doors were barred for the night risked great peril from either evildoers or patrolling militia.

The hour of 11 quickly acquired a somber meaning, and in centuries that followed, it became the synonym throughout Europe for someone on his deathbed or about to go into battle, i.e. “his family gathered about his bed at the 11th hour”, or “the troops in the trenches hastily wrote notes to their families as the 11th hour approached when they must charge to the top.”
South Southeast District Celebration

The South Southeast District held its Army of Hope Picnic at the Pompano Beach Elks Lodge 1898 on June 13, 2009. The district was very well represented by numerous dignitaries, officers, and members from each Lodge. The fellowship and camaraderie made helping others even more enjoyable. State President, Vincent Como, and his lovely wife, Lisa, were among the very many visitors and guests in attendance. The monies raised from the proceeds of this event will be sent to the Army of Hope so that we can continue assisting those military men and women in need. A special thank you is given to Pompano Beach Lodge for hosting this wonderful event and to Sal Grilli, PER of Hollywood West Lodge for chairing the Army of Hope Picnic Committee.

Hollywood West Lodge 2365

Hollywood West Elks has always been very busy with charity work, and this period was no different. Thanks to donations from lodge members, three bags of men’s clothing, fourteen sport coats, three cases of candy, a box of magazines, and fifteen new baseball caps were donated to Sandy Nininger State Veteran’s Nursing Home. We also donated a bag of new stuffed animals for their bingo prizes.

Besides being busy with our veterans, Lodge members donated forty pairs of eyeglasses and cases to the Broward County Lighthouse for the Blind. The Miami Shores Lodge donated $600 to the West Broward Counties. The members benefited from donations also. Five cases of candy and plastic Easter Eggs were donated for the children’s egg hunt. Two bags of new clothing, two boxes of paperback books, and fifty cell phones were delivered for Women/Children in Distress to use.

We also donated forty pounds of pop tops to the Broward County Ronald McDonald house. The Lodge held a Barbecue Party, chaired by PER Brad Lewis, for BARC – Broward Association Riddled Citizens. The residents enjoyed plenty of good food and had fun dancing to the different kinds of music.

Hollywood West Lodge presented a check for $250 to the South Florida Council of the Boy Scouts of America “Friends of Scouting Campaign”. This campaign is the single largest source of income provided by the Scouting’s character development programs to over 58,000 youth in South Florida. Our lodge continues to support scouting and shares many of the same values and beliefs as the Boy Scouts of America program. Accepting were our own “Order of the Arrow Scouts” that meets each month at the lodge.

The Lodge hosted many fundraisers and has given time and money to charitable organizations.

An old fashioned New England Clambake for 36 members and friends was held on Sunday, November 7, 2009. Over $100 was raised for local charities.

The Elks Hoop Shoot was held at the Boys and Girls Club of Hollywood, with 96 participants. Members and young athletes both enjoyed the experience.

The Scholarship Committee was very busy this month also with 26 applications for Elks Scholarships reviewed. The students applied were all outstanding candidates and have the possibility of one of our scholarship applicants moving up to a higher competition.

The Annual Dinty Moore Dinner was held on December 5, with dinners served to over 40 members and friends. Proceeds from the dinner will be used to provide the Annual Children’s Christmas Party at the Lodge on December 19, 2009. The children always enjoy this party, especially when Santa arrives on the fire truck!

The Lodge also welcomed and installed 6 new members this past month.

December reflected the spirit of giving this holiday season with 35 pounds of pop tops donated and delivered to the Ronald McDonald House in Fort Lauderdale. In addition to that, two large bags of Christmas decorations were donated to Good Will of South Florida, along with a dozen toys, 20 pounds of assorted clothing, and 15 rolls of plastic tablecloths to be used for meals for the needy.

Also, thirty cell phones were donated to Women in Distress, and 50 pounds of food was donated to the Miami Veteran’s Hospital in conjunction with a student’s community service project. Many gracious letters of thanks were received from the hospital and the student involved in the project.

The Susan B Anthony Home benefitted from three large boxes of women’s clothing – approximately 20 outfits – 250 stuffed animals for the children, 5 baby strollers, 15 assorted types of toys, 15 games, 20 pounds of candy, and 25 movies. Also included was a bucket of chewing gum for the staff – tension relievers!

The Lodge also donated 35 pairs of eyeglasses with their cases and 50 audio magazines to the Lighthouse for the Blind.

One hundred fifty movies, 30 magazines, 3 large boxes of mixed men’s and women’s clothes – approximately 40 outfits – and 5 handmade afghans were donated and delivered to the Sandy Nininger State Veteran’s Home in Pembroke Pines.

Finally, 14 donors came to the Lodge on November 15, 2009 to give blood to the Blood Bank of Broward, a successful drive.

The Lodge will continue with charitable work and donations throughout the rest of this holiday season and the year.

Pompano Beach Lodge 1898

Pompano Beach held a “MASH BASH” in honor of those who served our great country. There was a large display of shadow boxes, pictures, medals, and other memorabilia from those members and/or guests who are veterans of wars past. It was truly delightful to see those members wearing their uniforms and the pride they took in showing them off.

Boca Raton Lodge 2166

The members of Boca Raton collected toys and gift items for over several weeks. The toys were given to the Marines’ Toys for Tots Program for distribution.

Margate Lodge 2463

Margate Lodge 2463 hosted two special needs families. These families consisting of several children were provided lunch of hamburgers, hot dogs, holiday cookies, etc. The children played games and sang Christmas songs. Santa Claus and his elves arrived with a bag full of toys and gifts for all the good little boys and girls.

Oakland Park Lodge 2407

Oakland Park Lodge 2407 in conjunction with the Marines’ Toys for Tots held a dinner / dance on December 17 for members and non-members. Tickets were sold for this event and the money raised through the ticket sales went to the purchase of toys, clothing, etc. PER Tom Watson was extremely instrumental in organizing and spearheading this event for the past several months. The Lodge with the assistance of the Exalted Ruler, PER Watson, and all who participated should be applauded for their great work. This event put big smiles on the faces of many children.

Delray Beach Lodge 1770

Terye Sununu hosted almost eighty people at the 2nd Annual Cancer Awareness Luncheon for the Delray Beach Elks. Guest speaker, Dr. Thomas Niederman, spoke regarding the early detections of colon cancer. Over $1,2000 in proceeds from this event went to the Colorectal Cancer Research Alliance, co-founded by Katie Couric.

The PERs of Delray Beach Lodge donated $600 to help their three charities, Our Lady Queen of Peace, The Soup Kitchen, and AVDA.

The Delray Beach Fire Department Delivered Santa and his bag full of presents to the Delray Beach Lodge on Sunday, December 20. Members and their families served fifteen families lunch while Santa Claus gave presents to thirty children. Some of the parents were so overwhelmed by the act of love and kindness demonstrated by each and every member that they wiped away tears from their eyes as their child was presented with toys.

Southwest Broward Lodge 2273

Southwest Broward Lodge in Sunrise made a delivery of 216 books and 171 magazines to the Broward County VA Outpatient Clinic in Sunrise.

On the evening of November 11, Veterans’ Day, the Lodge treated fifty veterans to dinner, desserts, and a gift bag. Another 52 members and guests celebrated in this great event. Boy Scout Troop 245 participated by presenting both the POW and American flags. A candletab was set for the POWs and another for the missing and killed in action.

Two shipments totaling thirteen large boxes (200 lbs.) of new assorted hygiene products, thirty DVDs, twenty CDs, assorted snacks, and writing pens were sent to two Elks family members serving in the military stationed in Afghanistan along with enough for a unit of fifteen for both Thanksgiving and the December holidays.

The Alexander Nininger State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Pembroke Pines was happy to receive donated and boxed foods for the holidays to help fill their pantry. Personalized signed holiday cards and trays of cookies were also delivered to the 110 residents along with new playing cards, games, puzzles, and books.

The Elkettes had their annual fall fashion show on October 10 with 150 attending and raising over $2,000 going to various charitable organizations. They also donated $100 to help with the cost of sending packages to the military service men and women serving in Afghanistan.

The Elkettes are conducting interviews for college scholarships for two lucky recipients. Each month they collect canned goods for the Elks Lodge food bank and also the Hope Outreach.

On October 21 over sixty were in attendance for the Oktoberfest and a wonderful meal consisting of knockwurst, bratwurst, sauerkraut, hot German potato salad, and German chocolate cake. Everyone left with their bellies full of good food and a beer or two.

An adult Halloween costume party took place on the evening of October 30 and was enjoyed by over eighty members, friends, and family. Everyone looked great in their costumes. It was a sight to be seen watching the witches, pink flamingos, hippies, cowboys, bikers, doctors, devils, and fairies all dancing together on the dance floor. The Village People had nothing on them.

On Halloween day the Lodge sponsored the children’s Halloween costume party with over fifty children attending. They looked cute in their costumes and enjoyed the day with hot dogs, chips, beverages, games, prizes, and surprises.

The Lodge members were proud to make and donate 22 Thanksgiving food baskets for some less fortunate in Broward County.

The Holiday Ball was held on Saturday, December 5 with approximately seventy guests enjoying catered food, music, dancing, and getting into the holiday spirit.

Santa Claus made a special visit to the Lodge on Saturday, December 19 bringing gifts to over forty children including approximately 150 new packaged toys and hundreds of new stuffed animals. Approximately $450 cash was spent on children ages two to twelve which was donated by Lodge members and given to the less fortunate along with a nice homemade hot breakfast and other holiday treats.

A delivery of 23 books and 68 magazines along with sixty pounds of aluminum pull tabs was made to the Ronald McDonald House in Fort Lauderdale.
Green Cove Lodge 1892
Gene and Barbara Blair took a group of seven lady Veterans from the Veterans home in Lady City to dinner. Gene felt like it would be nice to do something special just for these ladies and they were very pleased to have this done for them.
Lodge members served 200 sausage dogs to Veterans at the Palatka Riverfront and honored them with a ceremony. Thirty-five Lodge members participated in their annual walk across Memorial Bridge, being met on the other side of the bridge by John Graves and Bill Dixon with cold water for the walkers. The Palatka High School ROTC joined the Elks this year in full uniform, and honored the Veterans with a proud salute lining the sidewalks for their annual Veteran’s Day parade. They wrapped up with a potluck dinner at the Palatka VFW.

The Lodge raised money with a fish fry, received donations, from members, and Wheeler Enterprises, a local company, matched the donations up to $500 to provide 100 Thanksgiving dinners for needy families in the community. Clyde Mixon led the effort in preparing and providing the dinners to those families throughout the Green Cove Springs area.

In conjunction with the Lions Club, Green Cove Lodge sponsored Christmas on Walnut Street. Over 200 trees were decorated by sponsors, and vendors of all types were on hand for the fun event by the beautiful St. John’s River. The proceeds will be donated to local schools and for Veterans Programs in the area.

Orange Park Lodge 2605
Veterans Committee Chairman, Bob Morse, PER, had the honor of participating in the Greenwood Pines Elementary Reading Fair on November 5. The program was based on the book, THE WALL, by Eve Bunting about a father and his son visiting the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, DC, to look for his Grandfather’s name. Additionally, Bob took part in the Lake City Veteran’s Domiciliary “A Salute to Our Veteran’s” program on November 10. Also attending this event was the Suwannee High School Color Guard who presented colors. Sixty residents from WWII, Korean, Vietnam, Gulf and the Iraq/Afghanistan wars were in attendance.

The Lodge had a packed house November 13th when they hosted 24 Veteran Elk members and 10 Veteran residents from the Lake City Veteran’s Domiciliary at the annual Fish Fry. As a Special Thanks To our Veterans, complimentary meals were served. The success of this event is attributed to the Veterans Committee participants, our members, Lady of Elks and their guests! Ray and Rosanne Lackey in coordination with the Depression Glass Club of Jacksonville, made homemade donations of health and comfort items for the guests. A donation of hard and paperback books as well as clothing valued at $275 was also made to the Veterans.

Donations to the VA Hospital, Lake City Hospice Unit totaling $350 included canned and non-perishable goods for the family kitchen, disposable razors blades for veteran patients and paperback books.

Palatka Lodge 1232
Against all odds! That best summarizes the efforts for our annual golf charity tournament. In some very difficult economic times the brothers and sisters of Palatka Lodge hit another homerun for their various charitable concerns with their annual - and only - event that targets charity and charity alone as its focus. Jeff Stalvey, for the third consecutive year, led all fundraisers for the tournament. He successfully raised more than $1,000 and it was not easy. Right behind him was Jim Caldwell, AKA, the Black Knight. Other major fund raisers were PER Bruce Wolfred and ER Elton Conant.

John Taylor, Gerry Register and Frank Crosby, Tournament Chairmen, their efforts have gained another $6,000 to charities this year. Since the inception of this annual fundraising event, Palatka has raised more than $90,000 for local, state, and national Elks charities in the past nine years.

Veterans Committee Chairman Frank Crosby delivered over 700 toiletry items to the Malcolm Randall VA Medical Center in Gainesville. These items are made available to patients, guests of patients, and gift bags are created with the items to be provided to homeless veterans. Julie Baker, Chief of Volunteer Services at the VA, expressed her thanks to the Palatka Elks’ contribution to the VA Medical Center and explained that “these items will benefit veterans throughout North Florida and South Georgia”.

St. Augustine Lodge 829
The Lodge held a classic car show and “Doo Wop” music and dance the evening of Sept. 5. It brought back many memories of nostalgia from the 50’s good times. Saribel & Robert Olivero won in the Classic Car contest.

There were five state past presidents in attendance, James Solana, Ben Brown, Bud Powers, Winston Needham and Bill Wellbaum.

The Lodge members are helping troops get on the horn. Members donated $1,200 to buy phone cards for military personnel serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, enough to buy 48 500-minute cards. The cards were presented to the Greater Jacksonville USO during the lodge’s annual Pal Day free luncheon for veterans. The Lodge also served up lunch for about 700 veterans and their families during what has become a 57-year tradition at the lodge. “We keep it coming,” said Rich Loux, an Elks member and lunch volunteer. The crew had cooked 500 ‘dogs by noon, he said.

The diners noticed the smooth operations. “It’s well-organized,” said Navy Veteran Craig Black, 33, one of several veterans eating around 1 p.m. The Black family, Craig, wife Trenye, daughter Samirah, 13, and twins Gabrielle and Arielle, 3, said they came so they could enjoy some family time.


Pam Croy of Gainesville Lodge is Pet Sharing “Denny” with James Cox at the Gainesville VA Hospital for the Elks Vet Services Program. Denny is 4 years old and is the only dog authorized to visit the VA Hospital.

Jacksonville Lodge 221
Jacksonville Lodge held a Veteran’s Day dedication ceremony of a POW-MIA table at their Lodge jointly with the American Legion conducted by our District Vice President Markiewicz. On the first Sunday in December, members made their monthly visit to the VA Hospital in Lake City where they entertained 48 veterans with food and a Bingo Game.

Kudos to Lodge Esquire, Betsy Bryant, and all of her helpers for this year’s Children’s Christmas Party held December 13th at our Lodge. Forty-three children received special gifts they indicated they wanted from Santa - and Santa (aka member Jack Ward) made the event very festive. John Hamel provided Christmas music and a great turnout of members made this one of top charitable functions of this Lodge year.
2010 Florida State Soccer Shoot

Florida Elks Center
Florida Elks Youth Camp
January 9, 2010

The year has been exceptional with our endeavors achieving a 16% increase in participation at the Lodge level with current participation numbers logging 1,286 hours of service; more than 2,400 miles of travel; and involved more than 1,500 spectators, 200 Elks and over 234 kids participating.

On Saturday, January 10th the best of the best came with their family and friends to the grand finale of the Florida State Elks Soccer Shoot at the Youth Camp in Umatilla.

Dignitaries attending were State President Vincent Como and wife Lisa; VPAL Jim Hurst and his wife Julia; and recently Endorsed Vice President at Large Frank Hayes and his wife Linda, who traveled in from the North West District. Other dignitaries included were PSP Charles Trinowski and his wife Mary Ann, and State Secretary Carl Seibert, plus more than 150 family, friends and Elks in attendance for the very well run Shoot-Out.

Boys Division U-8 Ages 7 & Under
1st Place        Corey Rhoads----------Orange Park Lodge
2nd Place       Dylan Lago-------------Perry Lodge
3rd Place        Roy Paniagua---------Clewiston Lodge

Girls Division U-8, Ages 7 & Under
1st Place        Taylor Bain----------Clewiston Lodge
2nd Place       Claire Noble---------Orange Park Lodge
3rd Place        Lolaris Kiara--------Deland Lodge

Boys Division U-10, Ages 8 & 9
1st Place        Diego Gonzalez-------Kissimmee Lodge
2nd Place       Christopher Pappas-----Punta Gorda Lodge
3rd Place        Matthew Dobson------Orange Park Lodge

Girls Division U-10, Ages 8 & 9
1st Place        Jacqueline Smith------Jupiter Lodge
2nd Place        Amelia Beaver--------Orange Park Lodge
3rd Place        Rachelle Goff--------Perry Lodge

Boys Division U-12, Ages 10 & 11
1st Place        Spencer Ross---------Kissimmee Lodge
2nd Place       Ryan Nesbitt---------Clewiston Lodge
3rd Place        Mike Sullivan-------Perry Lodge

Girls Division U-12, Ages 10 & 11
1st Place        Rochelle Goff--------Perry Lodge
2nd Place       Mahra Moss----------Punta Gorda Lodge
3rd Place        Madison Lee--------Orange Park Lodge

Boys Division U-14, Ages 12 & 13
1st Place        Alberto Rodriguez----Ocala Lodge
2nd Place       Travis Largo--------Perry Lodge
3rd Place        Hernandez Valsquez--Clewiston Lodge

Girls Division U-14, Ages 12 & 13
1st Place        Katelyn Henderson----Sebastian Lodge
2nd Place       Carley Hall---------Orange Park Lodge
3rd Place        Daniela Cobb--------Orange Park Lodge

The Tournament will be held in DeLand, FL. April 23--25, 2010
This is the greatest weekend in Florida Elkdom.
No shoes, No shirt, No problem.
Come to DeLand and enjoy the camaraderie with your fellow Elks and their families.
If you have never attended please make an attempt to attend this year, once you attend you will return for the next year’s tournament.

In the past sixteen years the tournament has raised over $115,700 which has been donated to the Florida Elks Youth Camp in the names of the winning lodges.
For more information please check the Florida State Elks web page (www.flelks.org) and click on the State Softball Tournament logo at the bottom of the page. If you have questions call Joe B. Rogers @ 407-330-9339 or Email jrogers84@cfl.rr.com.
Daytona Beach Lodge 1141

During Drug Awareness Red Ribbon Week over 100 packages of drug awareness material and bookmarks were distributed to the Volusia County schools. Thanks go to volunteers and Elroy the Elk, John Faile, for making the Drug Awareness Program a success at the Daytona Beach Council.

A Western theme at the Lodge welcomed home District Vice President Roger Johnson on October 24; there was $133 raised for Elks charities.

Cub Scout Pack #141 participated in the Lodge Soccer Shoot on October 21.

The Lodge sponsored a haunted house party for kids and the costume party for adults were held on October 31.

Lodge volunteers came out and picked up nine full bags of trash for the annual highway pickup.

Thanks go to Mike Linders, member of the Am Vets Post 911, and Bobby Lambe for chairing the Veterans’ Appreciation Night on November 12. Veterans from the Emory Bennett and Indigo Manor Nursing Homes were given socks and t-shirts and they enjoyed a baked ziti dinner. Kay Costa, Marine Corp Veteran and member of Emblem Club #204, attended as the guests of honor.

The District “Idol” show to benefit GER Mike Smith’s campaign was held on December 10. Two winners were selected, Kenny Bresche and Sherrie Wise, and one alternate, Lisa Moom. They will go on to the next round sometime in January 2010.

The Hoop Shoot competition was held at the Port Orange City Center Gymnastics on December 13.

A children’s Christmas party for the School for the Blind was held at the Lodge on Sunday, December 20.

The Lodge had the annual Hoop Shoot competition at the Port Orange City Center Gymnastics on December 13.

Deland Lodge 1463

On October 11 the Lodge held a Soccer Shoot contest; winners of the Shoot were Isabella and Beanna Napolitano, Mathew Moore, Solaris-Kiara, and Ariel-Raul Dwitt.

The Deland Chili Cook-off was held to establish a presence in the local community.

A “Pink” dance was held on October 17 to help raise money for breast cancer research for the community. Elks from the Lodge helped with the Deland High School Football game to help bond with the local schools in the community.

The Ladies Auxiliary, Deland Delights, presented Exalted Ruler Cynthia Painter with a check for $50 for school supplies and another $50 check was presented to Veterans’ Chairman, Barb Felker, to help pay for the Veterans’ Breakfast held on October 18.

Edgewater/New Smyrna Beach Lodge 1557

The Red Ribbon Rally, “Making the Right Choice,” was held in partnership with People for Drug Free Youth on October 24 at the Lodge. The event attracted over 25 civic and government agencies and over 250 children and parents.

Dave Hess, Chairman, and Lodge Secretary, Marcie Skates, helped set up the venues for this event. Approximately 3,000 drug awareness packets, in Gifts of Love grocery bags, were handed out to everyone who came. Entertainment, booths from area organizations, and the New Smyrna Beach Police Department Canine Corp. participated.

Elks National Foundation Chairman, Marcie Skates, reports great success in collecting a grand total of $1,110.25.

The 9-11 Memorial Wall has been completed thanks to Ken and Barbara Fuller, Earl Ehrenspeck, Earl Anderson, and Tim Shazes for their contributions toward this endeavor.

At the FLOE Convention, the Ladies Auxiliary donated $1,384 for the Florida Elks Youth Camp. The Ladies also donated $100 to the New Smyrna Beach Middle School and $75 to the Lodge for tinted windows.

On November 11 a luncheon in honor of all the Lodge veterans was held and a “Member Veterans’ Rooster” was presented to the Lodge by Veterans’ Chairman, Ken Fuller.

Approximately 86 names were added to the rooster. The Veterans’ Committee invited fifteen residents from the Fairgreen Assisted Living Facility to be part of the luncheon. Girl Scout Troop #474 presented the military flags during the ceremony.

Members Jim and Marge Cyr have been collecting aluminum pull tabs to be sold as scrap with proceeds going to the Seeing Eye Dog Training Institute. So far they have collected 800 pounds of tabs, their goal is to collect 1,000 pounds before the drive ends in February 2010.

Toys for Tots proved to be a success with over fifty toys donated to local children. On December 12 the Hoop Shoot contest was held.

In the spirit of Christmas, donated gifts were given to the Lodge adopted family of Chet, Lisa; husband, Jason; and their three children ages five, ten, and thirteen.

Merritt Island Lodge 2650

During Red Ribbon/Drug Awareness Week, materials were distributed to the Brevard County School System.

The Ladies Auxiliary has been busy organizing a canned food drive and sending out school supplies. A “Hop with the Boy and Friends” for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund to benefit the Florida Elks Youth Camp.

Veterans from the Melbourne Transitions Station were invited to Thanksgiving dinner. Cub Scout Pack #369 held a car wash to help raise money for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund.

PERs recently organized and implemented a program called “Operation Santa’s Book Swap” that provides food baskets to families in need during the holiday season.

The Lodge has a special person, PER Robin Mitchel, who shops, packs, and mails out boxes containing various items to seven local families serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Every week Robin also helps take care of people in the community who have special needs.

Brevard County hosted their annual Kountry Christmas for the mentally challenged; the Lodge donates food and drink for the event.

Ormond Beach Lodge 2193

Recently home from serving in Iraq, newly indoctrinated member, Julia Carver, presented the Lodge with a flag that flew in a combat mission by Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron #369 during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

A golf tournament held at the Riverbend Golf Club raised $4,000 to benefit the Elks programs and charities. A diamond bracelet was auctioned off to benefit local families in distress.

Approximately forty kids showed up for the Hoop Shoot contest held at the Nova Community Center.

The Lodge held a Christmas party for kids ages five to twelve on Saturday, December 19.

Palm Coast Lodge 2709

The PERs held a Christmas Raffle to support the Harry-Anna Trust Fund and the Elks National Foundation.

The Emory Bennett Nursing Home received board games, small craft kits such as planes or cars, and soft dinner music on CDs or tapes; all were donated by the members.

Sincere thanks go to Lodge Ambassador, Jeanie Fontana, for putting together a great effort at the annual Creekside Festival, a two day event where she along with Marka Fontana, Suzie Cook, Crystal Haddon, Jerry Dickens, Jerry Guy, and Fred Szwed provided more than 500 families with drug awareness packets, American flag pins, and tote bags.

The Veterans’ Day celebration was a great night at the Lodge with a very moving ceremony by the VFW Honor Guard.

The Elks Precision Marching Team was part of this year’s Christmas parade at the Town Center Central Park. As part of the event, a drug awareness booth had volunteers handing out packets of information to parents and young adults.

As part of their Floating Doctors project, Dr. Ben LaBrot and Claudia Quintero spoke about their efforts to get

the Southern Wind cruiser ready for its relief mission. Members were asked to donate marine equipment and medical supplies.

Eagle Scout Daniel Spicer from Boy Scout Troop 270 is currently enrolled at the University of Central Florida (UCF). When NASA called UCF for an intern to work on their computer systems, UCF recommended Daniel. These mentor guided internships provide hands on, real life, career related experiences that challenge, inspire, and provide practical application that complements and expands upon students’ academic education. Daniel was selected from candidates across the country to receive this internship from August to December 2009. Daniel has been in Houston for four weeks now and has been asked to return in the summer of 2010.

The Ladies Auxiliary sponsored a Christmas party at which time they donated $8,000 to the Lodge.

Port Orange Lodge 2723

The Student of the Month program furnished scholarships to six very deserving students from Spruce Creek High School and Atlantic High School. Elizabeth Sridhar has a 4.52 GPA and will be attending the University of Florida working toward a degree in Nursing. Michael Tingley has a 4.6 GPA and will be attending MIT working toward a degree in Computer Science. Mollie Elkin has a 4.61 GPA and is waiting acceptance from several colleges and universities to study Civil Engineering. Rami J. Bustami, Jr. has a 4.4 GPA and will be attending Florida University to study Medicine. Heather Rubino has a 3.7 GPA and will be attending the University of North Florida, majoring in Accounting. DeJuan Palmer has a 3.4 GPA and will be attending the University of Central Florida working toward a Law Degree.

The Police Athletic League and Spruce Creek High School Boosters helped this year with the Drug Awareness Program. With the assistance of the Elkhearts, Exalted Ruler, and volunteers, 1,428 pieces of drug awareness material were distributed to parents and young adults.

Veterans’ Day was celebrated with an indoor picnic of hamburgers and hot dogs to 127 veterans at the Emory Bennett Nursing Home. Lodge Veterans’ Committee Chairman, Dan Theodore, and eleven volunteers helped serve the food.

The Hoop Shoot contest was held at the Port Orange City Gymnasium. There were thirteen kids who participated. A collection box to benefit the United States Marine Corps Toys for Tots drive was set up.

Titusville Lodge 2113

As part of a community service, the Lodge held a fundraiser for Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Law Enforcement Officer, Vann Streety, and presented a check in the amount of $7,115.35.

Jim Harnish, Lodge Chairman of Veterans’ Services, reported that on November 11, Veterans’ Day, the Lodge hosted a dinner for families of deployed troops from Patrick Air Force Base. The complimentary dinner gave these families a period of relaxation and friendship and gave the members the opportunity to greet these wonderful families. Each family was given a blue star flag.

Santa and Mrs. Claus appeared at the Lodge for the annual Santa’s Breakfast hosted by the Does.

At their last meeting, the Does raised monies for a bar cooler. They presented Exalted Ruler Deanna with a check for $500 to fix or replace the cooler.

Lodge members and the Does worked on and entered a float for the annual Titusville Christmas Parade.

In December the Lodge helped wrap gifts at the mall for families in the community and donated worn bath and hand towels to area animal shelters.

Betty Wittekind, member of the Does, gave special recognition to Judy Schmidt, officer of the Does, who donated many items of clothing and shoes to the Titusville Nursing Home and Rehab Center.

On behalf of all the officers and members, thanks go to all the Does for their dedication and support of the Lodge.
Aripeka Lodge 2520

Aripeka Lodge is proud to have Mary Ford as its new District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler; she was installed at the National Convention in Oregon.

The Lodge recently celebrated its 35th Anniversary (Past State President Dave Luikart Day) with a dinner and dance. Approximately 150 attended. Among the dignitaries present were Judge William Severs, retired, and his wife, Agota; Mary E. Ford, DDGER Central District; and Michael Ritchie, Vice President Central District.

A special children and young adults Halloween party was held for the physically and mentally challenged, their siblings under ten years of age, and the parents for the 22nd year. This party was the inspiration of PDD Hal Steffes. A wheelchair accessible mini village of store fronts was set up and candy, stuffed animals, fruit, and other treats were distributed from the store windows. Over 400 attended this function this year. Face painters and balloon figures were done by Luv-A-Clown and Clown Towners.

Exalted Ruler Jack Rees presented Joe Neri from the Angelus Home a $1,000 check and presented Colonel Al Nienhuis from the Pasco County Sheriff’s Office a check for $1,000 for the Sheriff’s Youth Camp. The Pasco County Sheriff’s Office, through their Citizens Support Group, was represented by Gus Lawrence (aka McGruff the Crime Prevention Dog). All of this was made possible by the fantastic work the Lodge volunteers do and the donations received from local businesses.

On November 14 veterans from Baldomero Lopez Veterans’ Nursing Home were hosted and were served mini burgers, fries, dessert, and soda. They were entertained by the Hudson Stompers, a group from Aripeka Lodge that do line dancing, skits, and sing.

Recently Lorraine Lovett, Drug Awareness Chairman, distributed 1,000 drug awareness coloring books, red satin ribbons, literature, and bookmarks to students at Gulf Highlands Elementary School.

The Lodge held a mock wedding to enable them to be able to present $1,500 to the Keystone Kops of Egypt Shrine to assist with the Shriners’ Crippled Children’s Hospital in Tampa. There were games, prizes, food, and of course a jail. Approximately 450 attended.

In early December the Lodge held a home-coming for Mary E. Ford, DDGER of the Central District. The officers were inspected on the opening and closing ritual of the Lodge. After a great dinner gifts were presented to Mary Ford and dancing followed.

Among the dignitaries attending were Charles A. Trinowski, PSP and his wife, Mary Ann; R. Michael Ritchie, Vice President of the Central District, and his wife, Carolyn; John Nejedlo, PER, Grand Esquire to the DDGER, and his wife, Mary Ann; Jack Sproul, PDD, Grand Auditor to the DDGER, and his wife, Fran; and Jack Rees, Exalted Ruler of Aripeka Elks Lodge, and his wife, Evelyn.

On December 6, 2009 Aripeka Elks paid homage to their departed brothers and sisters. Jack Rees, Exalted Ruler, presided over the program. Mary E. Ford, DDGER of the Central District, gave the oration. This service is a must for all Elks Lodges throughout the United States to be held on the first Sunday in December.

Barbara Benson, President of the Ladies of Aripeka Elks, presided over the deceased lady members. Seventy-five attended. The following donations were made by Aripeka Elks Lodge Charities: $5,000 to the Elks National Foundation; $5,000 to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund which supports the Florida Elks Major Projects the Florida Elks Youth Camp and the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services; and $250 to Hernando County Volleyball Club for Volunteers who train girls from Hernando and Pasco Counties rules and regulations of volleyball.

Brooksville Lodge 2582

Brooksville Lodge held the Annual Memorial Service on December 6. Departed members were honored with 24 memorial candles being lit by Past Exalted Ruler Bill Miseska and Past Exalted Ruler Paul Stark as the names were called out by PDD Donna Zuk. Poinsettia plants were given to the widows, widowers, and next of kin. Following the service a luncheon was served.

On December 7 the Lodge annual Christmas party hosted 122 challenged adult clients from the Key Training Center along with approximately 45 center staff members. They had a turkey dinner with all the trimmings and cake. The guests, including some in wheelchairs, enjoyed dancing to Christmas music provided by the Take Two group. “Happy Birthday” was sung to all who had a birthday in December. At the end each guest received a Christmas present handed out by acting Santa Claus, Ron Thomas.

Kissimmee Lodge 1873

Kissimmee Lodge was quite busy during October with the Soccer Shoot at Partin Settlement School for students ages five to thirteen; 24 participated. The winners competed with Brooksville, FL at the Kissimmee Lodge for regional awards and those winners will be shooting in Fort Pierce and then on to Umatilla.

Nancy Wanke, Drug Awareness Chairperson, has revamped the Lodge’s procedures for this committee and contacted Donna Gasiorowski, Drug Awareness Chairperson for Osceola County. She runs a teen workshop each year to educate teenagers about the effects of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol. Donna volunteered to pass around the poster information to all elementary schools in the district with instructions for third through fifth grade teachers. Also, the Drug Awareness Poster Contest entrants have been collected and are being judged by the Lodge. Three which were the most original will receive trophies and a cash award. The first place winner’s poster will be sent on to the district level.

The Veterans’ Committee visited the VA Clinic nursing home in Orlando and called bingo and gave the vets sugar free cookies and sodas.

In November the Hoop Shoot contest went well.

West Citrus Lodge 2693

West Citrus held its annual children’s Halloween party which is always well attended by the local children. They were given lunch and prizes for the most original, scariest, and prettiest costumes. They had clowns and puppeteers for the children’s amusement.

Thanksgiving Dinner was open to the public and was well attended. Their chef (one of the best) served a fantastic dinner and everyone went away well satisfied.

The Veterans’ Committee is hard at work gathering items for the vets they care for at the local nursing homes.

The Holiday Kickoff Dinner/Dance was held as was the Memorial Service to honor those who have passed away. The service was followed by the West Citrus Ladies Auxiliary’s service with a buffet lunch afterward.

On December 19 the Lodge annual children’s Christmas party was held wherein the children and their parents had lunch and a visit with Santa Claus (the Lodge’s Richard Hynds) and received a gift. This year bicycles and Publix Food Cards were raffled. This party is possible due to the generosity of the Ladies Auxiliary and the members of the Lodge.

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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

Name_______________________________________________________________________________

Address_____________________________________________________________________________

City, State, Zip_______________________________________________________________________

Date(s) of Birth_________________________ Phone________________________ E-Mail: f_hayes1@cox.net
Miami Lodge 948

Miami Lodge held its annual Veterans’ Thanksgiving Luncheon. Anticipating sixty veterans, 132 showed up. Quick thinking volunteers and kitchen staff were able to feed all 132. Upon leaving, the veterans thanked the volunteers for the “great service and good food.”

Exalted Ruler, Bill Henderson, pours coffee for the visiting veterans during the Lodge’s annual Thanksgiving luncheon.

The Honorable C. Valentine Bates, Past Grand Exalted Ruler, and Past State President, Joe Ortiz, recently visited Miami Lodge 948 to engage members in a question and answer forum. They answered numerous questions pertaining to revenue, membership recruitment, and development along with publicity. The members were informed about the Grand Lodge’s publicity efforts here within the state of Florida of billboards, bus ads, and various periodicals all working to increase membership statewide. Mr. Bates concluded the evening by telling members that “a successful Lodge starts with good leadership.”

Past Elkette President, Mickey Rauch, works closely with the Miami VA Hospital and was asked recently by the hospital personnel if she could help obtain some t-shirts for the vets. Mickey approached Mary Rust, Secretary of the Lodge’s PER Association, to purchase the seventeen unsold Lodge t-shirts in the display case. Mary took the matter to the PERs’ next meeting and the PERs unanimously voted to donate all seventeen shirts to the hospital.

Miami Lodge hosted the Junior Orange Bowl Royal Court Search Finals. The Royal Court will act as ambassadors to the young children taking part in various events throughout the Junior Orange Bowl Festival, which is one of the largest youth festivals in the world.

Thanks to the efforts of Leading Knight, Jack Lopez, Chairman; Janis Taylor, Charity Ball Journal Editor; and Jane Walker, Charity Ball Event Decorator; and the rest of the committee volunteers, the 2009 Charity Ball of “A Winter’s Tale” was a rousing success. The Lodge fundraiser to replace its stolen Elk statue was a great success; the prime rib dinner raised $3,078 for its replacement. This event could not have been accomplished without the extraordinary help of Lodge volunteers, Bob and Chickie Schmidt, Sheila Dowd, Glen and Mary Rust, Ralph Chislett, and Ron Riley along with Lodge employees, Chef Jane, Serena Kent, and Gina Mazzoli, who volunteered their time for this event.

Toys for Therapy

Patty Connolly, of Lady Lake Elks Lodge #2793, 9 years ago started Toys for Therapy. This program is for the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy services. Children that are in the therapy services along with any siblings will receive a gift at Christmas. The Elks National Foundation awarded a Gratitude Grant to help with this project. Patty contacted all the Lodges, Ladies of Elks and the DDGERs of the North Central District.

On December 7, 2009 Patty and Bill Connolly with the help of David Steward of Lady Lake Lodge delivered 419 toys to the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services in Umatilla for the children. The Elks of the North Central District believe in “Elks Care – Elks Share.”

Stephen Mahoney and wife Teresa of Apopka Elks along with District Vice President Michael Mongeluzzo and wife, Joan of Ocala Elks, decided that the last Interlodge Visit would be a birthday party and everyone should bring a wrapped gift for either a girl or a boy newborn to 18 years of age, and it would be donated to the Toys for Therapy program.

Brigitta Brinkman, also with Lady Lake Elks, donated handmade Afghans, Ellen McCarthy, Lowell Dunkle, Bob Sadrack, Charlie Wachs, Lyle Richard, Dora Amoroso, Sandra Jean and Elaine Kix all came through with monetary donations when we were short of toys and games. Betty Connolly, Michelle Lennon, Patti Voelker, and Doris Bradley all donated stuffed animals.

Inverness Elks Lodge 2522

Two very deserving students at the Withlacoochee Technical Institute were each given a $500 scholarship to be used toward their second semester for the school year 2009-2010 from the Inverness PER Association.

Victoria Snyder of Hernando, a mother of a teenager and whose husband has been laid off for over a year, is studying Computer Systems Technology. She hopes to further herself in that field and specialize in tracking people who molest children through the use of computers.

Kenneth Adkins of Homosassa Springs lives with and cares for his diabetic father and is also studying Computer Systems Technology. He hopes to get into the security field using his IT skills.

Both students were chosen by a committee and were interviewed by Brenda Miley-Kelley who is a guidance counselor at Withlacoochee Technical Institute.

Each year the Inverness Elks Lodge 2522 holds a Christmas Charity raffle funded by their members. This year the Lodge presented Citrus United Basket with $1,000 from the money donated by members.

From left, are Inverness Elks Lodge Exalted Ruler Dick Krause, Field Cub Director Bill Ross and Inverness Lodge Secretary and Chairman of the Christmas Charity Walt Mabie.
**Dunedin-Clearwater Lodge 1525**

Under the direction of Lodge Veterans’ Affairs Chairman, Gary Richey, twelve volunteers traveled to Baldomero Lopez State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Land O’Lakes. The veterans and staff were served grilled hamburgers, hot dogs with baked beans, potato salad, chips, and homemade cookies.

**Holiday Isles Lodge 1912**

Holiday Isles hosted the homecoming of West Central District Vice President, Bob Pitney, and his wife, Joanie, on September 12. There were over 300 members and guests in attendance. A week later the Lodge hosted the State President’s visit to the West Central District. Over 260 members and guests enjoyed a fun evening with State President, Vincent Como; his wife, Lisa; VPAL, James Hurst, Jr.; his wife, Julia; State Chaplain, James Lind; his wife, Karolyn; State Harry-Anna Trust Fund Committee Chairman, PDD Gerald Carter; West Central District Advisor, PSP Frank Palladini; and his wife, Ebba Jean. Other dignitaries included PSP Tom Elmore; his wife, Pep; PSP Joe Ortiz; his wife, Rita; PSP David Lake; State Secretary, Carl Seibert, PDD; and many more. It was a wonderful visitation.

On Saturday, October 3, a dance was held to raise money for Elks National Foundation. This dance raised enough money to put the Lodge over the GER’s goal of $4.50 per person.

The Lodge held a dinner/dance on October 17 to honor the Lodge’s 55th anniversary. Monies were raised for both the Harry-Anna Trust Fund and Elks National Foundation.

On November 7, the Lodge in conjunction with American Legion Post 273 held the Annual Veterans’ Boat Parade. This year’s parade honored the U.S. Army. The army provided a Blackhawk Helicopter for a flyover to start the boat parade. The Grand Marshall of the parade was the Lodge’s Veterans’ Services Chairman, Stan Azevedo, a Pearl Harbor survivor. The awards banquet was held at the Lodge and was attended by over 200 parade participants.

Thanks to the donations of the members, the Lodge was able to distribute meals to ten needy families in the area. The meals consisted of 23 to 24 pound turkeys with all the fixings. A thank you goes to one member for donating the turkeys and to all of those for the various canned goods, dressing, etc. Each family was given two bushel baskets full of goodies.

At the Thanksgiving Day dinner, Doris Spitzer was honored; she had been the force behind this dinner for years. Doris passed away this past year and she is sorely missed.

**New Port Richey Lodge 2284**

The Lodge once again proved that “Elks Care – Elks Share” with recent donations of $500 to the Kids Wish Network, $200 to the Salvation Army, $200 to James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital, $100 to Hospice, and three needy families were given Thanksgiving dinner baskets. Children from local schools were invited to the Lodge for lunch with Santa. The children had provided their wish lists which were placed upon a tree at the Lodge. Members then gave gifts according to the list. A joyous time was had by everyone.

**St. Petersburg Lodge 1224**

Through radio media and an article in the St. Petersburg Times, over 500 tattered flags were received by the Lodge to be retired. Performing the ceremony at the Lodge was Chapter 14 of the Korean War Veterans led by Joe Slatton, PER. Assisting Joe was Emily Woodruff of Forest Hills ROTC, Alex Bann of Boy Scout Troop #334, and Pinellas County student, Ray Garcia. Iwana Choromoneski, DDG; Bob Pitney, West Central District Vice President; and his wife, Joanie, were present along with members of the community, Elks, and guests to observe the burning of the flags.

The L.O.E.A. of St. Petersburg Lodge recently sponsored a USO Show featuring Bob Hope, Marilyn Monroe, Jayne Mansfield, Shirley Temple, The Rat Pack, Gypsy Rose Lee, Elvis, Mae West, and Maxine. Over 300 were in attendance for the event including seventeen veterans from Bay Pines Veterans Hospital, all of whom enjoyed the delicious meal and lively rendition of “The Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy.” All proceeds of the event went to the veterans at Bay Pines. Also a check for $2,360, various toiletries, socks, and t-shirts were presented.

The Lodge held their annual Soccer Shoot at Walter Fuller Park with over eighty children competing for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place trophies. Every child received an Elks Soccer Shoot t-shirt. Winners from each age group advanced to the district shoot.

The members and guests of Lodge 1224 turned out recently to observe the ceremonial burning of the flags. Over $15,000 for the Harry-Anna Trust Fund. The tournament was held at the beautiful Isla Del Sol Golf Course located in Tierra Verde. Although the weather was a little chilly, the course was hot and many foursomes carded scores in the 70s. To kick off the tournament, a bagpiper, David Elias from Dunedin Middle School, played for the group. Tournament organizer and Lodge member, Dan Mansi, hosted the awards ceremony at the Lodge. The night was done, instead pointing to the many members and friends who worked tirelessly to make this year’s event a success. “It’s all about helping the kids,” Massi said. “When you marry a great cause with a great game and have a fantastic team effort behind you, there’s no way to lose.”

The Lodge, with cooperation and assistance from the staff of Dive Heart Scuba Experience, had one participant take part in their Discover Scuba Program. This program was open to all disabled American veterans currently living at home and their families. The program ran in conjunction with the Lodges’ Veterans’ Day celebration and all participants were invited as guests to the Lodge’s Veterans’ Dinner. The Dive Heart program is a scuba program introducing the underwater world to all physically or emotionally disabled American veterans. The Lodge was delighted to partake, allowing them to get out of their wheelchair and into the water.

**Tampa Lodge 708**

The Tampa Elks/Athena House Program for homeless female veterans will continue for a second year using a new $10,000 grant announced as one of just 56 impact grants nationwide. The Tampa Elks Lodge’s Athena House Program for homeless veterans and their children, which is funded through the Elks National Foundation, is helping the women residents with their children. The Elks use the ENF grant is being utilized to provide clothing, school supplies, Christmas presents, doctor visits, and more for these veterans and their children.

The Athena House Program is operated by Tampa Crossroads and is a rehabilitation program aimed at helping women veterans return to a productive life. The Elks use the Athena House Program for homeless veterans and their children.

The December plans of the committee included a Christmas tree and decorations for Athena House. The items were presented in an evening of fun and decorating and included door prizes, Christmas treats. The Lodge members and friends and guests traveled to Bay Pines VA Hospital. The veterans and staff were served fresh pulled pork sandwiches, potato salad, baked beans, chips, and desserts. Christmas comfort kits were distributed to the veterans at Bay Pines. Also a check for $2,360, various toiletries, socks, and t-shirts were presented. The event went to the veterans at Bay Pines. Also a check for $2,360, various toiletries, socks, and t-shirts were presented.

The Tampa Elks/Athena House Program for homeless veterans and their children.

**Seminole Lodge 2519**

At the recent FLOE Convention, Seminole LOE’s End “Sam” Strother was named the FLOE District 7, 8th Annual 4 Kids Bike/Toy Run. The West Central District was co-sponsor of the event which began in Tampa and ended at Quaker Steak & Lube in Pinellas County. Riders who registered paid a $10 fee and added a new toy to several large boxes provided at the Lodge. The toys will be distributed to needy children for Christmas 2009. More than 200 people showed up for the start which featured more than 65 motorcycles. Tampa Lodge provided a breakfast, Chinese auction, a share-the-wealth, and featured the drawing for an autographed Mike Alstott t-shirt. Registration was followed by the breakfast and drawings, and then aided by a crew of Tampa Police officers and two motorcycle officers, it was “kickstands up” at noon for the run across the bay. The 8th Annual 4 Kids Bike/Toy Run motorcycles all departing in an orderly fashion was an awesome sight. Reports from the run organizers indicate the cyclists were quite pleased with Tampa Lodge and the participation of West Central District Lodges in their run. They will likely return in 2010 for another toy run from Tampa Lodge.

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**Southeast Central District**

Carol Heinz, Reporter  
c_m_heintz@yahoo.com

**Ft. Pierce Lodge 1520**

On Oct. 11, the Avenue D Boys Choir performed, with 200 Elks and guests attending. This was made possible through the Elks National Foundation Promise Grant. Promise grants offer funding to Elks Lodges throughout the US to host an event that builds the character and competence of local youth. These events give the youth an opportunity to give back through community service, enhance their self-esteem, boost their confidence, and heighten a sense of responsibility to the community.

This year the Lodge was honored and very proud to offer and assist families, relatives and loved ones in obtaining a Presidential Memorial Certificate through a program offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs at no cost to the families. The Certificate is a beautifully engraved paper certificate signed by the current President of the United States, to honor the memory of honorably discharged, deceased veterans. All relatives of honorably discharged veterans are eligible. To apply you need: a copy of the discharge papers, a copy of the death certificate, a letter stating your relationship to the deceased veteran with your name, address and phone number included. Fax your request to 202-565-8054 or mail to: Presidential memorial Certificates (412A1C), Department of Veterans Affairs, 5109 Russell Road, Quantico, VA 22134-3903. When you send off your request, please contact Dee Konow @772-465-4151 or Lemmy Smallacombe @772-871-2255 so that they can follow up on your request, any questions you may have, or missing documents.

The Lodge has adopted a unit in Afghanistan and they will be the recipients of the packages being wrapped and shipped. This is the third shipment sent by our Lodge and it follows with the Elks tradition that ‘So Long As There Are Veterans, The BPOE Will Never Forget them.’ On December 21, a terrific show was held. Davey Whitmill and Friends were an entertaining show consisting of several of our Lodge’s talented singers and performers. Old familiar songs were presented, as well as some new ones, and the audience was kept entertained all evening. Peggy Montepare and her volunteers served a delicious meal and the proceeds of over $1,000 were raised for the Harry Anna Trust Fund.

A Christmas Hoedown was held at the Lodge on Dec. 13. Ribs and Chicken, cooked by Scott Rohn, Eddie Gaban and the gang were served to over 100 guests who were there to support the Lodge’s three Softall Teams who travel to Umatilla each year for the annual Elks Softball Tournament to benefit Elks Youth Charities. Larry Chapman, a member of the over 50 team, and his band, Out On Bail, donated their time and music to make the afternoon very enjoyable.

**Melbourne Lodge 1744**

On October 22, Melbourne Lodge distributed 125 dictionaries to the Dr. Creel Elementary School in Melbourne.

The following is a story of a special needs 3rd grader who has autism. When he came up to get this dictionary, he thanked all of the Elks for his first dictionary. He knows his alphabet so he can learn a few words. We handed out over 100 dictionaries that morning and, again, I was proud to be an Elk. For those Elks who feel dictionaries are passe’, the Dr. Creel School uses them in their English class every year as a learning tool. This school is very active with the Elks free from Drug Awareness to participating in our americas Essay Program. Please remember that dictionaries will help the students learn to use the English language effectively and assist them with their education, opening up to them all of the opportunities a good education offers. Our Lodge has four other schools scheduled to receive dictionaries over the next 30 days. The Lodge has distributed over 550 dictionaries.

**Port St. Lucie Lodge 2658**

ER Joe Pepe was presented with awards for participating in the Community Activity Contest and Net Gain in Membership by Grand Lodge. Joe accepted these awards from DD Betty Tewksberry on behalf of the Lodge.

The Lodge was able to present the FSEA Children’s Therapy Services with a new van donated by the members.

September allowed us to continue to show patriotism by honoring the Heroes of 9/11 and all first responders with a luncheon, both at the Lodge and ‘to go’ boxes. Over 200 were served.

The Lodge was able to host Vice Bob Carroll and his wife Brenda on Sept. 12, and in a moving jousting DVP Bob dedicated the 11 O’clock Toast to our recently departed and beloved brother Jim Manning.

In October, we showed State President Vincent Como our true spirit with a large showing at the different events he attended. Our Lodge was also able to present him with a check for $10,000 to the Harry Anna Trust Fund.

The Golf Tournament, headed by Sal Lente, had a great showing and all are looking forward to next year’s event. ‘One of best’ was a phrase heard frequently that day.

The Halloween Dinner Dance was well attended. It appears more people are really getting into the holiday with their costumes. Everything from a ‘Dragon’ to a Dr/Nurse and patient to the always favorites of Witches, Goblins, etc.

In November, The First Veterans Dinner/Dance was organized by Bill Nilsson and crew who did an outstanding job. The hall was filled with Veterans from all wars and their spouses. What a great time.

Thanks to Lecturing Knight Tony Tavaloni, his wife Theresa and their helpers, the Lodge was able to supply a beautiful Thanksgiving dinner to 20 families.

**Sebastian Lodge2714**

The Lodge will be hosting the Harry-Anna Ball on Saturday, January 30. All funds raised will be donated to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund.

On February 6, the Lodge is having their annual three day open house weekend to benefit the Children’s Therapy Services. Members will be on hand to welcome visitors and to explain what being an Elk is all about. There will be free food, entertainment, and a cash bar.

On February 7, the Lodge is hosting what has become the largest and best car show in Sebastian. This show is run by the Renegade Cruisers on behalf of the Florida Elks District for judging. Three students were chosen to receive the Elks National Foundation Scholarship Fund. He always felt Gunther’s favorite Elk’s project was the Elks National Foundation Promise Grant. A number of special presentations included the theme of “It is a Veteran” by Victor Diaz, a Marine veteran and member of the Veterans’ Council of Indian River County. This was followed by a reading of the History of Veterans’ Day by Jay Hurd, former Lecturing Knight. The veteran members of the various branches of service were recognized during the playing of their organization’s theme songs. These renditions were truly inspirational with many veterans wearing apparel supporting their branch of service. A buffet barbecue dinner was served and donations from the 50/50 raffle and other receipt amounts totaling $465 were donated to the Veterans’ Council. It was a truly memorable day for all concerned.

**Viera Lodge 2817**

Yes, there was a Santa Clause! The members of the Lodge chose to sponsor the Melbourne Chapter of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren for the 2009 Christmas season. Dawn and Mark Mailoux organized the fundraiser. The Lodge raised money through raffles, and members offered prepared food, for example, sloppy joe night, chili night, etc., for a donation. In addition, there was an angel tree so members could select a child’s name to buy a gift for. They also accepted food and toy donations. The Lodge gave at least fifteen bicycles. They had a wrapping party at the Lodge on December 18 and distributed the food and gifts to the families on December 21.

The Lodge helped at least sixty families, and they received food, toys, and clothing to brighten their holiday.

**Stuart-Jensen Elks 1870**

In October, the Lodge hosted a luncheon for the wheelchair veterans from the VA Hospital. They were treated with a meatloaf lunch, played bingo, and were given gifts by District Deputy, Betty Tewksbury.

The Drug Awareness program was in full swing too. Elroy the Elk (aka Suzi Simonelli, PER, ER) along with the Lodge Chairman, Betty Tewksbury, DDGER, visited four elementary schools in Martin County for their Red Ribbon Week during their PE classes and fall festivals! Palm City Elementary did a “Don’t Let Drugs Bowl Me Over!” With all the programs, the Lodge passed out over 3,000 pieces of drug awareness material! The Lodge also received 22 Most Valuable Student Scholarship applications and sent three on to the district for judging. Three students were chosen to receive the Lodges $500 scholarship award.

Dear Elks and Spouses,

Words can’t convey my heartfelt thanks for all the cards received in remembrance of the recent passing of my husband, Gunther.

As I read the numerous cards, so many of you seemed to say the same things. He was kind, always had a smile, was a true gentleman, a good supporter and a great Elk. Of course, we will always remember that he needed to be doing something - anything and sat down when absolutely necessary.

We were fortunate to have shared 51 wonderful years married, for which I am most thankful. Gunther’s favorite Elk’s project was the Elks National Foundation Scholarship Fund. He always felt schooling was a must, even more so in these trying times.

As a true tribute, I of Vince Gill’s song, “Go Rest High On That Mountain” Son your work on Earth is done! Auf Wiedersehen! Lee Weigel
Holly/Navarre Lodge 2787
The Lodge had an angel tree during the holiday season. Members were asked to pick up an angel at the Lodge and purchase any or all items on their wish list ($35.00 minimum please). They were then to place their name on the gift with the tag provided and return it to the Lodge unwrapped in a bag and the Lodge took care of it from there. Anyone wishing to adopt an older angel could do so by making a donation of $35.00 to Caring and Sharing.

Members of the Holly/Navarre Elks Lodge donated 1,000 junior firefighter hats to the Holly/Navarre Fire District to be used for children’s fire prevention education. Funds for the hats, approximately $1,000, were raised by the Elks during their annual Children’s Charity Golf Tournament. Presenting the hats to Fire Chief Ron Norton and Lt. Howie Rounsaville were Jim Fix and Gary Forester.

Destin Lodge 2688
The Lodge is holding a cooler raffle for the Veterans Fund. One ticket is $1.00 or six tickets are $5.00. Remember, this is for the vets who served our country to give us the freedom we have. See the bartenders for more information.

There is a wish list posted on the bulletin board and a container under it for items donated. If you wish to have a copy of the list, the Secretary will be glad to supply you with one. Every time you go to the store or think about giving, pick up an extra item to donate.

Because of the generous donation from the Destin Elks, the freshmen boys’ football team from Fort Walton Beach High School got to enjoy a great meal before their last game of the season. The moms were able to feed over 55 players and coaches. They all enjoyed a meatball sub, chips, cookies, fruit, and Gatorade.

Destin Elks donated $1,500 to a needy couple in Destin for hospital bills and nursing home costs and also donated a wheelchair to a needy amputee in Destin as well as $200 to the Special Olympics.

Fort Walton Beach Lodge 1795
The Lodge is being recognized by many members of the local community as a place where things are happening. It has been said many times in the past few months from people in the local area that they have heard about the Elks on Okaloosa Island and what they have been doing. When asked, they are told about our Order and what we do. They are surprised as the cliché is that it is a bar for older people to hang out. This image is fading and it is you who have made this happen.

Many members have talked to others and presented a good image. Then is the time to ask them to join and get active. The pins are still on sale for the nominated GER from Florida, Mike Smith. I LIKE MIKE pins are $10 each and the Grand Pin is $100. With the Grand Pin you get admittance to the reception at Grand Lodge in July 2010 in Orlando.

The Lodge has experienced a significant loss of members due to passing on to the land of the BIG ELK recently. Thus far this year they have lost eleven members due to sickness or due to natural causes. Each time they lose a member this way they have protocol to follow such as a Lodge of Sorrow at the next meeting and sometimes they perform their final services for them. With this, sincere condolences are passed on to all who have lost a loved one this year, and sincere thanks are given for those who have assisted in the services.

On November 14, the Fort Walton Elks Lodge was converted to an auction house for the purpose of raising funds for the following organizations. There were approximately 75 people who attended the auction which netted $9,053.24 with the funds being distributed as follows: Ronald McDonald House - $3262.26; Susan B. Komen Foundation - $3,262.26; and Fort Walton Elks Lodge 1795 Needy Family Christmas Fund - $1,800.

The primary function of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks is charity in which the Florida Elks have two major projects: the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services and the Florida Elks Youths Camp. The other services are dedicated to the local community. Many times they assist local families in need along with the veterans, Water Front Mission, Salvation Army, and Sharing and Caring. These are only a few of the services they offer.

Warrington Lodge 2108

On November 6, the VA Clinic held a one time round-up of all needy veterans including the homeless. This is held once a year. A small tent city was erected on the clinic grounds and various agencies provided transportation for the veterans. They received health screenings, shots, haircuts, massage treatments, a full sea bag of clothing, breakfast, and lunch. The committee had the privilege of serving breakfast. It was quite an event and they were proud to have been a part of it. On the 10th they held their annual Veterans Wall of Honor picture update; they had a nice turnout. Their Exalted Ruler, Dennis Pochel, was the guest speaker. Light refreshments were served after the ceremony. The committee did an excellent job from start to finish.

On the 12th of December they attended the Wreaths of America ceremony at Barrancas National Cemetery. The wreath laying on the graves started at 9:00 a.m. and the ceremony was at 11:00 a.m. They also helped the Marine Corp/ Navy Relief Society in December. The Veterans’ Committee would like to wish everyone a prosperous and Happy New Year.

On Monday, November 2 the annual Warrington Elks widows luncheon was held at the Lodge. The gathering was a great success with the attendance of 36 gallant ladies, all so glad to see each other again. The culinary repast was catered by Lodge Chef, Jon Matlick. Others in attendance were Phil Finder, PER; Paul Palmer, PER; and Toni Palmer. Exalted Ruler, Dennis Pochel, gave a short speech remembering their departed members. The Lodge is so blessed to have troopers such as Joe Walsh, PDD and his lovely wife, Norma, who plan and orchestrate this event each year. This marks the 27th year for their efforts which truly is a labor of love.

The Warrington Lodge had a very successful Soccer Shoot. Forty-seven players signed up. Unfortunately, the winners cannot move on to the district competition because they have a soccer tournament on that date. The Lodge volunteers included PER Frank Cabigting; Toni Cabigting; Frank Cabigting, Jr.; Deanne Cabigting; Edie Hardee; and some of the parents and older kids. Everyone involved did a great job. They served hot dogs, chips, and drinks to all who helped and participated.

A Lodge check was presented to their organization for $300 to purchase a sign promoting the Elks Soccer Shoot. All the kids said they enjoyed the shoot and were looking forward to next year. They signed up one new member and gave an application to another.

Crestview Lodge 2624
It is sad to report the death of Harlace Hoomes. Harlace was a three time Exalted Ruler of Crestview Lodge and was involved in starting the Florida Elks Youth Camp.

There are a lot of Mardi Gras Balls and events being scheduled for January and February. Some of these events require the closing of the Lodge for ticket holders only; make sure you check out the bulletin and web site for the particulars.

The Lodge cook, David, moved on for bigger and better things. A replacement is in place and evaluation is in progress. Please bear with them during this training process.

Consideration is being given to picking one day a month and having a birthday bash for all those having birthdays that month. It would be similar to what they used to do at the old Sun Deck. Anyone interested should contact the Lodge.

Thanks go to everyone who helped with the Veterans’ Day activities, especially the LOEs, who came out to decorate and wrap the hot dogs to give away on November 11. Also, a very special thank you goes to Ronnie Ivey for stepping in the last two years.

Publicity and Membership
Russell D. Sens, PER
Florida State Vice Chairman

The continual decline of membership is of great concern to us. The question of how to attract new members and how to retain existing members is complex, and this article only deals with one aspect of this issue. As direct advertising for membership is in violation of our statues, publicity and public relations is a term that can be defined within our Order as marketing, so let’s consider what product the BPOE markets. The product we sell is membership, for it is only through our members that our charitable goals are obtained. As Elk Lodges are all community based, membership gain must be considered a local endeavor taking into consideration the demographics of age, full or part time residents, local competition, etc.

First let us consider publicity. Elks can view publicity as internal through their Lodge Bulletins, the State News Letter and the Elk’s National Magazine. When the Lodge Publicity and Public Chairmen submit articles and are represented in the State and National publications a sense of pride is instilled in the membership. Additionally, meetings in many Lodges are not well attended; this makes your Lodge newsletter your voice to your membership. Those thank you letters, awards and commendations read on the floor, if published in the newsletter, help to reinforce the fact that we are a charitable Order and not simply a social club. Practicing good internal publicity will go a long way in helping to stem the tide of lapsation.

The Elks have a tradition of humility, working to improve the lives of others, while avoiding the lime light. The citizens of your community need to know of the good work we are doing. Many of your smaller local newspapers are willing to print human interest stories, and they are your opportunity to inform the local citizens of our endeavors. Examples of this could be your help to veterans, local children who received scholarships, and community projects such as Christmas food baskets. One point to remember is that it is best if your Lodge submits their own articles and pictures; this will give you better control of what is printed. Last, impress upon your membership to speak positively about our Order when in public. The person sitting next to you is always a potential new member, and a first impression is important and lasting.

Public relations generates it own publicity. Events such as Policeman, Fireman or Person of the Year hosted by your Lodge and open to the public will raise awareness to our Order. High profile community projects such as playground improvements or restoration projects can be public relations bonanzas and there are Grand Lodge Grants available for such projects. Sponsoring Scouts and Little League teams also help to raise community awareness.

In conclusion, as each Lodge is as individual as the community they’re in, it is in the Lodge’s best interest to keep the citizens informed of what we do. The benefit to the Order will result in an overall membership gain.
The North District is excited to be hosting State President Vince Como’s visit to the district the last weekend in January. The best news is that no one will be facing the heat of summer during the weekend activities!

**Lake City Lodge 893**

Lake City Lodge was fortunate to host a state ritual clinic in October. A number of Elks were certified and re-certified to continue to serve the Lodge.

The Lodge continues to work on establishing a Lodge sponsored Boy Scout Troop. A troop leader has been procured and several young men are interested in scouting, yet more are needed.

Christmas baskets are a big deal at the Lake City Lodge, with the baskets being funded by a raffle. Each year the Lodge delivers baskets of food to the needy for the holidays and the Lodge members purchase raffle tickets to generate the funds to fill the baskets. Twenty tickets are provided to each member with the two prizes being drawn for a $600 gas card and a $400 gift card from a local grocery store. Baskets are delivered about a week before Christmas, and this year the delivery date was December 19. Another December community event is Toy Night where toys are distributed to kids in the area. The Lodge offers a complimentary dinner to members who donate a toy whose value is at least $15. Toys and goodie bags are distributed on Christmas Eve.

The Elks Memorial Service was held at 1 p.m. on Sunday, December 6. A meal was provided prior to the service.

The Lodge had a New Year’s Eve party; a DJ playing favorite tunes was there and plenty of food was provided.

**Live Oak Lodge 1163**

Live Oak Lodge had a raffle this fall for a Browning shotgun and a Browning rifle. Lodge members, Hobbi and Ralph Douglas, were the winners of the goods, and congratulations are extended to both on their good fortune.

The Lodge also raffled a 50” Sanyo flat screen television in November, with Jimmy Cannon the winner. The television proceeds are to go toward funding the five four year scholarships that Live Oak awards annually. Each scholarship is $2,000.

A new fundraiser for the Florida Elks Children’s Therapy Services and the Florida Elks Youth Camp is being explored at the Lodge. The Ladies organization, the Anna Miller Circle, is baking homemade desserts and bringing them to the Lodge the day after dinner one day each week. The Lodge offers a different dinner special every week and now a homemade dessert for only $1.50 is a fine way to end a great meal. All revenue from dessert goes to Florida’s major projects.

The Lodge held a New Year’s Eve Party with the band, Silverado, providing live music. As with other Lodges, the event is a great source of income for the Lodge. The bill of fare was finger food during the evening and breakfast at midnight.

**Mariana Lodge 1516**

For a food event, Mariana Lodge has had really good success and member participation with serving a low country boil dinner. Shrimp, potatoes, carrots, sausage, and corn on the cob all make for a hearty meal, and it is easy to cook and serve. The Lodge plans this menu several times a year.

A little sprucing up has occurred at the Lodge with new paint in the poolroom and new baseboards. There is still a bit of touching up to do, but the new look is attractive. In the lounge some new high top tables and bar stools have been added.

On December 5, the Lodge held its Christmas party, a dress up affair, featuring heavy hors d’oeuvres and substance and music by The Snowband from Atlanta, GA. The Lodge is most appreciative for the members who plan the parties for all to enjoy.

**Perry Lodge 1851**

Perry Lodge began the fall with a complimentary meal being given to the Forest Festival Junior Miss contestants during the week of practice for that event. This is such a great example of giving back to the community! The Lodge also provided each contestant with an application for the Most Valuable Student scholarship. More fall news included the Soccer Shoot held in the Lodge’s front yard on November 28.

Also in the fall, Lodge Chaplain, Ed Sheffield, was a special guest at the Andersonville (GA) National Historic Site and POW/MIA Museum on POW/MIA Recognition Day. There was a dedication ceremony at the museum for a plaque monument representing 7,140 POWs in Korea, the 2,701 who died, and in memory of the 8,177 still waiting to come home. The plaque was designed by Ed and his wife, Jamie, and they had the honor of placing a wreath at the site during the dedication ceremony. The lodge was 175 POWs from past wars, a flyerover salute by the helicopter squadron from Fort Benning, and music provided by the Albany (GA) Marine Band. Thank you, Ed, and all veterans, for your sacrifices.

In keeping with the veterans theme, the Lodge held a dinner honoring veterans on November 11. Dinner was complimentary for veterans and a short program filled out the evening. About 85 folks attended including 38 veterans. Three high school students were awarded $75 each as winners of the “Dedication to Heroes” contest.

The Lodge is proud to sponsor a flag football team, The Eagles. The team had a winning season this fall with a 7 and 1 record. A celebration of the season and trophy presentations were made at the city park on November 7.

For its Memorial Service, Perry Lodge has a remembrance table where photos of departed spouses can be displayed. In addition to the service, a buffet luncheon was served.

A major December event at Perry Lodge is Breakfast with Santa, this year on December 12. For only $5 each child visits with Santa, receives a toy, and gets breakfast. The Lodge also feeds those who attend the breakfast with the child. Community sponsorship from local businesses help to make this annual occasion a success. Later that evening, the Lodge sponsored a Law Enforcement Appreciation Dinner for all law enforcement in the community. Santa was on hand to provide gift bags to those attending.

Winding up the year was the New Year’s Eve dance. The band, Alibi, performed with party favors and hors d’oeuvres provided by the Lodge.

**Tallahassee Lodge 937**

Tallahassee Lodge is pleased to have two members of its Lodge as State Chairman and Vice Chairman of Ritual. PER Carl高清 chairs this committee, and PDD Ron Brown is Vice Chairman.

Tallahassee Lodge’s annual trip in the fall to the FEYC with the kids and families from the Gretchen Everhart School was once again a resounding success. More than a dozen Lodge members work to accompany these kids who are challenged to have a wonderful weekend at camp. This is the fifth year that the Lodge sponsored this trip.

October 24 brought the fifth annual Chili Cook-off Contest to the Lodge. Attendance waned a bit this year due to two other chili contests in town that weekend (how could that happen!!). Nonetheless there were a number of repeat teams as well as new teams. One first time contestant, Just Chillin’, won first place from the judges, and The Regulators team from the National Guard won People’s Choice. Proceeds from the Chili Cook-off go to benefit the Family Readiness Group, a helping hand and part of the Florida National Guard. The following weekend the Halloween party was the talk of the lounge.

Veterans’ Day is always a celebratory event at the Lodge. A program recognizing and commemorating veterans was conducted. A cookout featuring hamburgers and hot dogs fed veterans for free and could be purchased by other attendees.

December brings the Lodge’s annual poinsettia delivery to Elks widows. This year the Lodge delivered about 130 plants using Lodge volunteers to make house calls. A bright, pretty poinsett livens the household for an entire month.

The Elks Memorial Service held Sunday, December 6 was fortunate to have member, Joe Ashcraft, play several selections on the bagpipes. Joe was gracious to perform again this year to the pleasure of those attending. Refreshments were served afterwards in the dining room.

Other social events in December included a visit to the Lodge by Santa Claus where he greeted kids of all ages. Santa’s appointment this year was on December 20 and there were plenty of kids on hand for fun and games. Later that evening, the Lodge’s traditional Egg nog Social was held where members come by for a bit of holiday cheer and share wishes for the holiday season. For many of the Lodge’s members, this is a do not miss gathering.

Tallahassee Lodge’s New Year’s Eve Party featured The Free Wheelin’ Band. Hors d’oeuvres were provided during the evening and breakfast was served at midnight after the champagne toast.

The Lodge’s PER Association is sponsoring a Memorabilia Night in February 2010. Solicitations have already begun requesting old photos, brochures, programs, plaques, signs, and the like to be brought to the Lodge for display. The Lodge has been in its present quarters since 1958 and they know there are some members who have treasures from the former building as well as the early days of the current lodge and anyone who has been invited to participate. All items will be labeled and returned to the owners.

**Florida dignitaries at the National Home during the Christmas lighting. Shown with Florida residents are PGER Val Bates, State President Vincent Como, PGELDGK Tom Elmore and PSP Vic McClellan.**
Early Days in the Formation of Elkdom

By Lowell Tyler, State Historian

One of the main issues in forming the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks was selecting a distinctive name.

One of the more serious considerations was that of the Order of Buffalo. The Buffaloes were an organization prevalent in Europe during the 1800s.

Charles Vivian had been a member of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes, (R. A. O. Buffaloes) and was himself familiar with their ritual.

Influenced by his membership in the English Order of Buffalo, Vivian had set in his mind establishing an English organization. The English Order was named after the African Buffalo, a name that Americans popularly called their North American bison. The committee however resisted this idea expressing their desire that it bestow a more distinctive American title.

In search of a name and emblem for the new Order, a visit was made to the Barnum Museum located at Broadway and Anne Street and the Cooper Institute Library. An elk’s head was conspicuously placed on the museum. It was so impressive that they decided to research it at the Institute. They read that the elk was an animal “flee of foot, timorous of doing wrong, but ever ready to combat in defense of self or the female of his species.” T. R. Fehrenbach states in his Elkdom USA that besides “being fast and avoiding evil, the elk also avoided aggressive combat. The elk attacked no other species and destroyed nothing but it would fight valiantly in defense of its own life, and those of its females and young.” The idea of an animal that lived in peace but would fight valiantly in defense of its own life and those of its females and young. The elk seemed to define the qualities they were looking for, admiral qualities that the members could emulate as members of a benevolent fraternity.

Other names considered were the bear, but it was thought to be a rather savage and surly animal. Beavers were an industrious animal but were also known as a destructive pest. The fox seemed an even greater pest and the moose was considered a magnificent animal but lacked the sheer grace and beauty of the North American elk.

On February 16, 1868, the committee recommended that the Jolly Corks be merged into a Benevolent and Protective Order. Vivian supported by most of his men still favored the buffaloes. The first ballot as to whether to merge as Buffalo or Elks was a tie vote, but on the second ballot the Elks passed by one vote, 8-7, when William Bowron changed his mind although some say it was Vivian who changed his vote to break the tie.

The seven who voted for Buffalo were Charles Vivian, Richard R. Steirly, M. G. Ash, Henry Vandermark, Frank Longborne, Harry Bosworth, and E. W. Pratt.

The eight who voted for Elk were George F. McDonald, George W. Thompson, William Carleton, Hugh Dougherty, Thomas G. Riggs, George Guy, William Sheppard, and William L. Bowron.

Considerable ill feeling developed by the adoption of the change of name and the organization divided into two camps. At the close of the meeting on February 16, the minute book of the proceedings, kept by William Carleton, Secretary, was carried away from the hall by Edgar N. Platt and taken to his boarding house at the Dodworth Band Headquarters and placed in his trunk.

Shortly thereafter Platt left there, taking a position elsewhere, leaving his trunk and contents behind, intending to send back for it when definitely settled in his new place. In the meantime, Dan Underhill, a drummer with the Dodworth Band, stated Platt’s trunk and contents had disappeared and never were heard of again. Thus was lost the first minute book of the pivotal time when the Corks changed to Elks and no one ever after was able to recover the missing records.

Go to Page 8 for History of the 11 O’Clock Toast
Partnerships Help More Children!

The Florida Elks Youth Camp partners with many groups throughout our state.

Seven years ago we began a partnership with the Children’s Burn Foundation of Florida. Working together we have helped hundreds of children through the years.

In appreciation of the Elks, the Florida Burn Foundation donates over $25,000.00 each year to help us meet our goals to help the children of Florida.

Burn Camp (now called Camp TeQuesta) is the number one priority and annual project for CBF.

During the second weekend in November, 70-90 burned children from across Florida attend camp for four wonderful, fun-filled, jam-packed days.

Burn survivor children between the ages of 6-17 are accepted. The only restrictions are that the children are one year post-burn, and comfortable with being away from their parents/guardians, siblings and/or other family members.

Florida Elks Charities Donor Wall Update

Partners ($5,000 to $9,999):
- J. Russell Rudning Trust
- William Wenman Trust
- Estate of Sesco Victor Tipton
- Earl Franklin Johns Trust

Patrons ($10,000 to $24,999):
- Estate of John Uttmann
- Estate of Evelyn Walters
- Paxton Trust
- Estate & Trust of Frances C. Kaile

Benefactors ($25,000 to $49,999):
- Dorothea Pummer Trust
- Louis Tucker Trust
- Children’s Burn Foundation of Central Florida

Deadline for the Spring Edition – March 25, 2010

ADDRESS CHANGES

Neither the Florida State Elks Association Office nor the Editor of the newspaper maintains the mailing list for the Florida Elks News. The mailing list is obtained from the Elks Magazine Circulation Department at Grand Lodge Headquarters in Chicago.

All address changes must be delivered to your home lodge secretary and should include your current and new address along with your lodge membership number.