

Keep public aware of US

By DONALD L. JONES
Committee Member

Our Order of Elks has been recognized as one of the nation's greatest service organizations. This distinction has been achieved by the individuals who become Elks and dedicate themselves to the charitable and benevolent needs of their communities.

To continue being honored, we must be alert to the simple fact that when the public is informed of what we do and how we contribute as Elks, they will cooperate, particularly on the community level, and will allow us to continue to do our many good works. As the public and government officials become aware of our many good deeds, future legislation and regulations that impact us will be favorable.

It is not only in the best interest of our Order, but of every youth, veteran, disadvantaged person and community member who will benefit when each of us constantly recognizes and publicly promotes our activities. This awareness is achieved not only by publicity, but by the enterprising efforts to keep citizens and legislators at all levels informed of our activities.

We must make those legislators and the public aware of our activities and charitable goals long before any legislation is considered. Participation of the public and legislators at our many charitable, patriotic, youth and community events, will help educate and develop their understanding and appreciation of our Order.

We can also create a favorable impression on our legislators and the public, when they learn of the activities and expenditures of time and money by Elks. This is why each Lodge must maintain its Charity Records throughout the year, so they can be reported in the Survey of Volunteer, Youth, Charitable and Community Service Programs. The totals should be used to highlight what we do and how so many people benefit from our Order.

An informed public and government will result in winning allies who will recognize and support us as they appreciate and understand how much "Care - Share."

Hides provide craft for veterans Keep public aware of us

by ROBERT M. HENNINGS
Commission Director

In 1948, the Elks of California donated \$26,000 worth of hides to our Order for the benefit of Veterans. This was the beginning of the Elks National Veterans Leather Program.

Today, Elks in 20 states participate in this program. Last year, more than 20,000 hides were collected, prepared and shipped for processing. The finished hides become craft kits, fingerless gloves for wheelchair-bound Veterans, or craft leather for Veterans hospital therapy and recreational programs. Total value of all leather products produced in 2010-2011 was \$273,221.

In 2001, the Elks began a partnership with Help Hospitalized Veterans (HHV). In 2010-2011, this non-profit organization produced 12,500 craft kits for Veterans in hospitals from leather we supplied, at no additional cost to the Elks or the Veterans. The kits can be assembled with relative ease into moccasins and other items.

To those hospitals with the proper leatherworking equipment, the Elks supplied more than 8,000 square feet of leather in 2010-11. Skilled Veterans turn this raw material into various items, some approaching

the level of art. The National Creative Arts Festival, sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs, exhibits many items created from leather.

Last year, 3,400 pairs of fingerless gloves were given to wheelchair-bound Veterans. These gloves are made of high quality deerskin embossed with the Elks logo, and greatly prized by their owners. The gloves can be ordered by a Veterans hospital at no cost. National Leather Program Chairman Dennis McAleese (Mountain Home AR Lodge No. 1714) also travels to events sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs and distributes the gloves personally to Veterans.

For information on collecting, preparing and shipping hides, or for the history of our leather program, please contact Dennis McAleese, Chairman, Veterans Leather Program, 384 County Road 852, Elizabeth, AR 72531-9603; (870) 488-5786; E-mail, kdmc@mtnhome.com

Free brochures and DVDs are available to State NVSC Chairpersons upon request. Please be aware that hides must be scraped, salted and palletized before shipping, and arrangements for delivery must be made in advance. Do not ship individual hides to tanneries, as they will not be accepted. We thank all of the hunters and Elk volunteers who make this truly unique program possible.

Grants and Appropriations

On February 15, at a meeting in Palm Springs, Calif., the ENF Board of Trustees approved appropriations and distributions for the 2012-13 fiscal year **totaling a record \$23.6 million**. Program-Related Grants and Appropriations Local Philanthropy [State Grants](#) Granted \$7.7 million to the state Elks associations through State Charities Grants, Special Project Grants and Bonus Grants. These grants help fund each state's major charitable projects, which include aid for people with disabilities, cancer research, children's hospitals, youth camps and providing safe havens for abused families. In addition, portions of these grants will help fund state Drug Awareness, Hoop Shoot, Soccer Shoot and scholarship programs, as well as other projects that best extend a state's philanthropic outreach.

[Community Investments Program](#) - Appropriated a record \$6.5 million for the Community Investments Program to invest directly in Lodge communities. **This includes the addition of Beacon Grants, \$1,000 grants available to every Lodge for an ongoing community service project.** Community Investments Program projects have a significant and lasting impact on areas where Elks live and work.

College Scholarships [Most Valuable Student Scholarship Competition](#) Designated \$2.296 million for 500 four-year scholarships for the 2013-14 through 2016-17 academic years [Emergency Educational Fund Grants](#) Reserved \$300,000 for one-year educational grants to the children of deceased or totally disabled Elks, who wish to obtain or further their college education.

[ENF Legacy Awards](#) Designated \$1 million for 250 four-year, \$4,000 scholarships for the children and grandchildren of Elks who have been members in good standing for at least two years. Youth Activities [Elks Drug Awareness Program](#) Appropriated \$676,650 to completely fund the Elks Drug Awareness Program, which promotes constructive and cooperative solutions to youth substance abuse through education. [Elks National Hoop Shoot Free Throw Program](#) Granted \$748,055 to fund the Elks' national free throw program, encouraging youth to lead healthy and active lifestyles.

Veterans Remembrance [Elks National Veterans Service Commission](#) Granted \$1.135 million to fund the Order's Veterans Service Program, which provides aid and comfort for America's veterans. **Elks Veterans Memorial Maintenance** Granted \$667,472 to maintain the Elks Veterans Memorial in Chicago.

Miscellaneous Grants

Reserved \$135,000 for miscellaneous grants, including the Gunther & Lee Weigel Medical School Scholarship and one \$25,000 grant to be awarded during the Elks National Convention.

Administrative Appropriations **Fundamental Expenditures** Appropriated \$1.9 million to help fund the day-to-day operations of the Foundation's Chicago office. **Programs Management** Appropriated \$461,150 to administer the Foundation's program and evaluation efforts.

GL Newsletter, March 2012 Veterans Message: Army of Hope mobilizes to help military families

by Amos A. McCallum, PGER Commission Member

HOPE -"Helping Others Promotes Elkdom." This was the theme for my year as Grand Exalted Ruler in 2003-2004. The previous February 2003, then-Grand Exalted Ruler Roger True suggested and the Elks National Veterans Service Commission instituted a new program, the "Army of Hope," to help families of Military Reservists and National Guard members called to active duty to protect our freedom.

Elks have been helping our military personnel and Veterans beginning with World War I, and we continue to do so today. Our troops have left Iraq, but we still have thousands of men and women fighting in Afghanistan who have families here that need our help. Therefore, we must continue to aid these families any way we can. That is why the "Army of Hope" is important.

There are many ways Elks can help these families to make their lives a bit more comfortable and hopefully less stressful until their family member(s) return. For military personnel serving overseas, CARE packages are welcomed and enjoyed. For families at home, we can supply them with phone cards, provide babysitting services, do lawn mowing or make minor repairs to their homes, i.e. screen and window repairs, plumbing and painting or provide transportation to and from appointments. Anything we as Elks can do to help these families while their loved ones are protecting us and our way of life will be appreciated.

Privacy laws prevent Reserve Centers and National Guard units from giving out the names and addresses of those families who have members overseas, so it is up to the Lodge ENVSC Chairmen to contact the military centers in their areas to give them their name, Lodge and contact information so this information can be given to the families for their use. Also a list of services the volunteers provide would be necessary and helpful.

These families deserve and need our help. If you already have a working Army of Hope, THANK YOU!!! If you do not have a program, I am disappointed and ask, "Why not?" I beg those Lodges to get one started ASAP. These men and women serving in our military are protecting our country, our freedoms and our way of life. The least we can do is help their families any way we can to make their lives less stressful.

Thank you for all you do for those families of our military personnel. For additional information, contact:

Robert Hennings, Director; National Veterans Service Commission; 2750 N. Lakeview Ave., Chicago, IL 60614-1889

Elks Care Elks Share