



EMPIRE STATE ELK

The Official Publication of the New York State Elks Association and the New York Elks Major Projects, Incorporated Fall 2014 Issue



State President's Message

My fellow Elks – Here we are in September already and it seems like the year just started. My wife and I have only made three District visits so far, however, we can truthfully say that if the next fourteen are anything like the past three, it will be one fantastic year for memories, camaraderie,

and making new acquaintances. With only a portion of our great State behind us, it is evident that the good works Elks do will never cease to amaze us. We have experienced Flag Day services that brought tears to our eyes; we have visited a state-of-the-art CP Center to witness the real day-to-day operations of not only our Home Service Directors but also the local CP staffs as well; we have visited historic places and lodges; and marveled at the beauty and splendor of the Hudson River Valley. Throughout it all, we have found countless Elks who are truly "Hooked on Elkdom". Their enthusiasm, pride and consideration of others is second to none. It is truly a blessing to be able to witness and experience their love of family, home and friends.

Now, don't let me paint a picture that makes one believe everything is rosy; for it is not. Membership and membership retention remains a significant problem in most lodges. Without members, our workload increases and our output diminishes. Decreasing membership should be on top of every lodge's list of concerns. We need to keep our current members actively involved. We need to "Get Hooked on Elkdom" and remain hooked. Local communities can easily detect a lodge that is involved with community outreach and is visible doing community things. It's those communities that will take the bait and become interested in what we are doing. We need to use the resources provided through the Elks National Foundation and the various grants it offers. The resources needed to fund and establish ongoing charitable, Elk driven community projects are there for us to use. All we need to do is meet minimum requirements and we can reap maximum benefits. Ongoing community projects will spark increased involvement from the community and ultimately interest in becoming an Elk. They make getting "Hooked on Elkdom" easy.

We just concluded our Fall Conference in Albany and for those who attended the various workshops and seminars, or heard our Grand Exalted Ruler, John D. Amen from Denver, Colorado speak, heard the crux of what I alluded to above. We need to stem the loss of membership across the entire country; not just in our State or local Districts. The GER is 110% behind anything that can be done to increase Membership. It is his major push for the year and it should be ours also.

As the holidays approach, let us all keep in mind what Elks do best. We will soon be hosting various Veteran related functions; helping students prepare and submit scholarship applications; and hosting parties and dances for the less fortunate that highlight our awareness and compassion. Whatever the task at hand is, Elks should and will be in the middle of it because Elks Care and Elks Share. Proudly we must insure that everything we do gets the notoriety and attention it righteously deserves. We can no longer sit back and just wait for the good times to happen; we must step up and Elevate America before we lose more of our most precious resource – our members.

Have a wonderful Fall season. My wife Abby and I will be visiting many of you over the next few months and we look forward to hearing how each and every one of you have managed to "Get Hooked on Elkdom".

Fraternally,

JERRY SHOOK, President

State President Shook's Post Conference Travel Schedule

State Capital District	September 28 –28, 2014
North District	October 3-5, 2014
South Central District	October 10-12, 2014
Northeast District	October 17-19, 2014
North Central District	October 24-26, 2014
West District	Oct. 31-November 2, 2014
Southwest District	November 7-9, 2014
Southern Tier District	December 4-6, 2014
South District	December 12-14, 2014
Central District	December 19-21, 2014
West Central District	Jan.30-February 1, 2015
Ontario District	February 13-15, 2015
East Central District	February 20-22, 2015
Southeast District	Feb. 27-March 1, 2015
Bowling Tournament	March 27-29, 2015
East District	May 1-3, 2015
State Convention	May 29-31, 2015

State President Shook's Personal Biography

State President Jerry was born and raised in Stockport, New York. He graduated from St. Mary's Academy, Hudson, New York and received a Bachelor's degree in Architectural Engineering from the Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. He married his high school sweet heart, Abby in 1975 and they recently celebrated their 38th wedding anniversary. Together, Jerry and Abby have three children: daughter Karla of New York City; daughter Kelly of Miami, Florida and son, Kasey of Hudson, New York.

State President Jerry has been an active member of the Stockport Volunteer Fire Department for over 43 years. He showed his leadership abilities there by moving up thru the firematic and administrative offices serving as President and Chief of the Company. He has been an active participant in his children's growth serving as both sport coach and mentor. He has promoted and supported his daughters in their professional development as professional actresses; both with Broadway credits on their resumes.

After working for private industry in the railroad industry for over 13 years, he retired in 2010 from the New York State Department of Transportation where he served over 28 years in the oversight of Railroad Safety for the State's rail transportation systems. He currently fills his days working as Secretary of his Lodge and umpiring baseball and softball games.

"GET HOOKED ON ELKDOM"