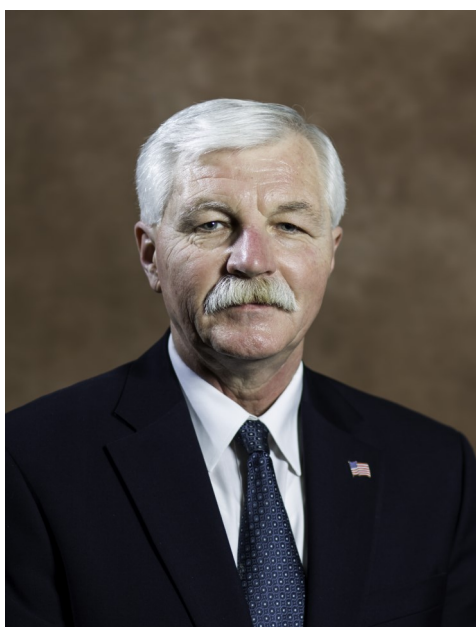




EMPIRE STATE ELK

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STATE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Phil Conaty
2017-2018

**“Elkdom:
Fellowship through Giving”**

Let me close by saying that Elkdom is not about talk, it is about action. As an Elk you can accomplish some of the finest actions of your life. This Order is special, and it is special because you make it so. I challenge you to a greater good, so that when your day is done, you can say I shared “Fellowship through Giving.”

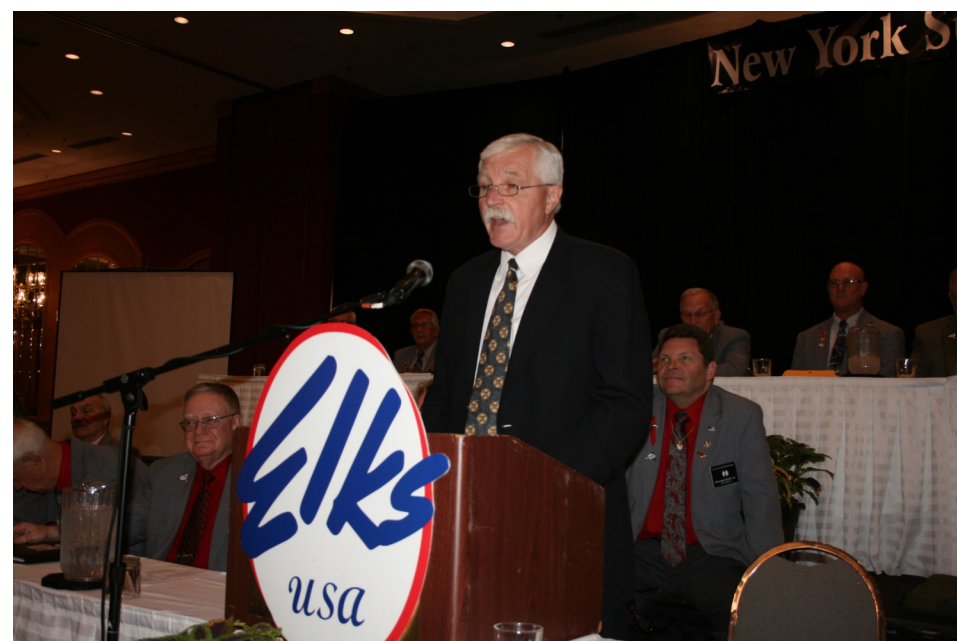
Enjoy what remains of the summer and whatever you have planned for the Labor Day weekend. Betsy and I look forward to seeing you in Albany during the Fall Convention and as we continue our travels throughout the State.

Faternally,

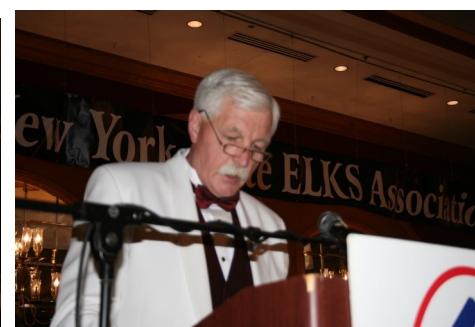
Phil Conaty, NYSEA President



Phil Conaty is pictured above being escorted to the Dias by Past State President Paul Galarneau and Past State President Phil Holowacz following his introduction at the Spring Convention. IA few minutes later, he delivered his acceptance speech for State President. (Picture below.)



Phil Conaty and his wife Betsy are pictured above minutes before he was installed as the New York State Elks Association President for 2017-2018. He is pictured below delivering his inaugural speech as State President.



My Fellow Elks,

It is hard to believe that the summer has flown by and Labor Day is upon us. Grand Lodge and Reno seem like a distant memory but I have to tell you that carrying the State Flag during the Opening Ceremony and representing all of you dedicated Elks throughout New York State was a tremendous honor and it is a memory that I will cherish forever. I thank you for allowing me to serve you as your President this year.

Speaking of Grand Lodge and Reno, the Elks National Foundation showed a total of nine films that tell the story of the impact we are making across the country. You can watch them at enf.elks.org/2017Films. I encourage you to make them a part of your indoctrination program for new members.

Please allow me to comment about my aims and goals for this fraternal year. My motto is “Elkdom: Fellowship through Giving”. I chose it because it rings so true to me. It sums up what we, as members of this benevolent order, are all about. The fellowship that we share and the plethora of charitable works that we do.

I know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, Elks everywhere throughout this great State are daily making a huge difference in the lives of others and while doing so - are enjoying the fellowship of their fellow members. I will be extolling that good work, as Elks are “fleet of foot to relieve the unfortunate”. I also know, that we can do more. It is my fondest wish, that, as I serve you this year, I can encourage you and embolden you to put new smiles on children’s faces, to befriend a veteran, to discourage drug use or to expand your commitment to our State Major Project – Cerebral Palsy. When we initiate new members, we extend our right hand in token of the renewal of our obligation. This year, I am asking you to renew your commitment to our charitable works and to make an even bigger difference in the lives of others.

This year, as I take on the pleasant task as your roving ambassador, I will be promoting all our Grand Lodge and State Programs. It is my intention, though, to pay special attention to Veterans, Membership, Publicity and Elks Training.

As everyone knows, it is our pledge – “So long as there are veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them.” Let us all this year, renew our commitment to that pledge. We have a number of programs designed to help those in need as we continue to serve our nation’s veterans. I know that many Lodges make visits to local VA hospitals. But there are many veterans living amongst us, who don’t have family or a limited family and are lonely. Adopt one. Participate in our Army of Hope program if you don’t already.

A word about membership. It is the lifeblood of our Order. Please join me in striving to make this year as we approach our Sesquicentennial, the year where we show a positive gain in membership! We do a decent job of recruiting new members and we must see that we initiate them promptly. We need to get them in the front door quickly and get them actively involved with us in the “noble work to which this order is dedicated.” At the same time, we need to shut the back door. We have lost out too many members out the back door in recent years. These members were good enough for us to work to attract them; they should merit us working to keep them. We must do our best to again unite them with us making a difference in our communities.

A word about publicity. We don’t do enough of it. We are not a secret society but sometimes we sure act like it. We need to do more and spread the good news of Elkdom. By and large, the public does not know what we do. I profess that I am not the most technologically savvy person. The smartphone that I carry, is a heck of a lot smarter than me. But what I see, is that the print media is going the way of the dinosaurs. The scary truth is that young people do not read the papers anymore. They get their news, they shop, and they interact with their friends and do everything else via their smart phone. It is critical that each and every Lodge have an informative and up to date website. Gone are the days when you spend a lot of effort preparing a news release, submit it to the local paper or radio station and then hope that they run it. Today, you get to choose what is “published” on your website. Use it. Make your website or Facebook page – vibrant. Today, if you can’t find it by googling, it does not exist. Make sure that your lodge exists. Use your website or Facebook page as a recruitment tool. Particularly, with the younger folks that we are seeking to attract as we lose members to age or demits to warmer climates. And by the way, keep up with Betsy and me, as we travel this year by clicking on the Facebook page that has been set up for us.

A word about Elks Training. This was a Grand Lodge Program that was discontinued. We, as a State Association, saw a need and reinstated it as a State Program. I can tell you that there is a need. The vast majority of the questions that I get concern the statutes and Accounting and Auditing. And most of them are not very difficult – if you have opened the statute book or the Auditing and Accounting manual. Our Lodges are a business and they need to be run like one. Based upon the number of Lodges that are now being audited by the IRS, the IRS certainly knows that we are a business. I challenge each and every Lodge to participate in this important program and find a way to make it fun. If you have any questions about how to do it, call the Mid-Hudson District. They are doing an outstanding job with it.

“Elkdom: Fellowship through Giving”