

Messages from the GER
Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler
MALCOLM J. McPHERSON JR.

Embrace charity and compassion this holiday season

Embrace charity and compassion this holiday season Christmas is certainly a time to visit family, socialize with friends, cook delicious meals, and shop for the perfect gift, but we must also remember the true spirit of the holiday. As Dr. Seuss famously wrote in the story of the Grinch, “Maybe Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more.”

For Elks, Christmas means a lot more. It’s the ideal time to put my theme of “Strengthening Elkdom Through Community Awareness” into practice and showcase the hope and charity that Elks have given throughout the past 150 years. There are many ways Lodges can give back to those who are alone or struggling this Christmas season, such as adopting a family in need of a warm meal or winter coat, donating gifts to children whose families can’t afford presents under the tree, or visiting with veterans who don’t have loved ones. Be sure to spread the word of your charitable efforts through your membership—I’m confident you’ll receive a positive response and many helping hands.

In addition, as you attend social events at your Lodges this holiday, remember to be kind and compassionate to one another. While the holidays are a fun and easygoing time for some, they can be difficult for others. It is our duty as Elks to extend the same help to each other as we do to our friends outside the Order. From our house to yours, Pat and I wish each of you a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy holiday season and New Year. We hope you all find a way to grow your hearts three sizes this Christmas.

Forget resolutions: Set one Elks goal for 2018

The new year brings an opportunity to start fresh. We make resolutions to stop procrastinating, eat healthier, exercise more, act nicer to others, and so on. Yet many of us set unachievable expectations and are left wondering why we abandon our resolutions by February.

Let’s resolve to get rid of resolutions this year and instead set goals that we can realistically attain. I challenge you to choose just one actionable goal that you can execute this calendar year within your Lodge, community, or the greater Order. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Share your pride in being an Elk by recruiting and installing a new member.
- Volunteer to chair a committee or event within your Lodge.
- Run for an officer position within your Lodge this coming March
- Seek out a new charitable initiative for your Lodge to support in your community.
- Master the Elks ritual process and help strengthen your Lodge’s ritual performance.

I hope these ideas spark a desire to make a difference in your community and work together with fellow members. If we give ourselves realistic goals, then we’re more likely to stick to them and ultimately become a stronger Lodge.

As Pat and I get back on the road again this month, another one of my goals for the remaining year is to promote our 150 years of Elkdom. As we get closer to our annual reunion in July in San Antonio, Texas, I challenge each of you to bring your great works of Elkdom into your local communities.

I look forward to hearing about the ways you are strengthening Elkdom as we continue this journey together.

See you in 2018!