

April 2018

April is for Active Youth

It's hard to believe that Pat and I are already more than halfway through this journey. We have met so many members of this outstanding organization and are constantly moved by the great work that you're doing in your states and local communities on behalf of Elks. As we continue down the road, I want to take another moment to recognize an important part of Elkdom—our youth. As you might know, I got my start in the Elks at a young age, and I hope to inspire others to get involved early and build a foundation for the future.

With the Hoop Shoot National Finals happening in Chicago this month, there's no better time to remind ourselves that the young people in our communities are the future of Elks. More than a free throw basketball contest, the Hoop Shoot challenges kids both mentally and physically and is a constructive way to teach kids that hard work and practice can lead to reward—qualities that will help kids grow both inside and outside of the Elks. In addition, the growing Soccer Shoot program is another way to instill these values in our children.

As the school year winds down for older kids, encourage them to remain focused in their work and to consider applying for the many scholarship opportunities available through the Elks on the national, state, and local levels.

Finally, to our youngest Elk members, it is your fresh perspective, positive outlook, and determination to succeed that will carry this organization into its next 150 years. I encourage all young Elks to get involved in your Lodges as much as possible, as well as actively recruit new members. I can't wait to see the great things you will accomplish.

How will your Lodge invest in your youth this year? From scholarships to hoop and soccer shoots to Antlers and the Youth Recognition Program, there are already so many wonderful national programs in place to support our young people, and I look forward to seeing all the new ways you'll do so in your communities. See you out there.