



GRAND LODGE Convention News

WEDNESDAY JULY 2, 2025



Delegates consider resolutions in Legislative Session

By Ruth Kellar

Convention News Reporter

On the second day of the Grand Lodge Convention, delegates passed four and rejected three resolutions to amend the Statutes and Constitution of the Order during the legislative session. Delegates also heard from several Grand Lodge committees and commissions concerning their activities over the previous year and their plans for the year ahead, and congratulated the All-American Lodge winners and the champions of the Ritualistic Contest.

The resolutions that failed included a proposal to make participation in the physical loss and crime coverage policy provided by the Grand Lodge optional for Lodges. Two proposals dependent upon the passage of this resolution, and which permitted Lodges to satisfy the bond requirements for the Lodge Secretary and the Lodge Treasurer through an outside insurance company, also failed.

Resolutions that passed included a proposal to add a new section to the Laws of the Order defining what constitutes a Lodge Affiliate; a proposal clarifying that the suspension of the social privileges of a Member applies to all social functions and social activities of the Order; a proposal clarifying that if a Lodge adds the Secretary and Treasurer to the Board of Directors that the Lodge must ensure such action is consistent with its corporate documents; and a proposal authorizing the issuance of electronic membership cards and requiring Lodges to recognize them in the same manner as paper cards. A national webinar will be made available at Elks.org sometime during the following weeks that will provide more information regarding electronic membership cards.

Prior to the legislative session, Grand



In his speech during Tuesday's Legislative Session, GER-Elect Bryan R. Klatt explained how Elks can "Be The Difference" this year. Photo: Gary Rohman/Rohman Photography.

Trustee Chairman Timothy F. Jaeger, in his final report, indicated that the 2026-2027 dues would be fixed at \$6.50 for the Grand Lodge, between \$15.00 and \$25 for the insurance assessment, and \$5.50 for The Elks Magazine.

While the results of the voting were being tabulated, Grand Secretary Bryan R. Klatt gave an update on the Disaster Relief Fund, which provided \$50,000 worth of emergency aid to Elks Members over the course of the past year. Klatt reported that the Disaster Relief Fund received a total of \$1,046,315 over the past year and has \$1,129,281 on hand to respond to disasters.

Government Relations Committee Chairman William J. Bryan reported that the total national giving by the Order in time, money, and in-kind donations had been extremely generous over the past year. Bryan congratulated the Elks on increasing their giving, which had already crossed the threshold of half a billion dollars

last year, by more than \$15 million, amounting this year to a total of \$520,524,340. Next up was Harley R. Eckert Jr., Chairman of the Auditing and Accounting Committee. He announced that around 13% of Lodges have not submitted the appropriate financial documents. He stressed the necessity of Lodges doing so to avoid problems with the IRS.

Next, Grand Secretary-Elect Carl Seibert gave a Chicago and Grand Lodge report, during which he commended GER-Elect Klatt's 17 years of service as Grand Secretary. Seibert also noted that nearly a third of staff at the Elks headquarters in Chicago have worked there for more than 15 years, diligently supporting the Grand Secretary's Office and all the programs and their associated departments.

GER-Elect Bryan R. Klatt then took the podium and spoke about his program for the coming year, which he

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Registration Final Tally

On this last day of the convention, the grand total number of Elks, Spouses and Guests is:

Grand Exalted Ruler	1
Past Grand Exalted Rulers	19
Grand Lodge Officers	8
Grand Trustees	8
Grand Forum	6
Grand Lodge Committeemen	77
District Deputies-Designate	229
Special Deputies	29
Representatives to Grand Lodge & Alternates	1,463
State Presidents	44
State Secretaries	35
Grand Lodge Members	1,635
Non-Voting Members	1,917
Guests	860
Vendors	31
Combined Totals:	6,362

3RD DAY BUSINESS SESSION

08:00 Call to Order	Douglas A. Schiefer, GER
— Invocation	Rev. Christopher J. Ford, Grand Chaplain
— Pledge of Allegiance	All
Memorial Service	Randy P. Shook, PGER
PR & Membership Marketing Report	Richard F. Gathen, Director
Installation of 2025-2026 Grand Lodge Officers	Bruce A. Hidley, PGER
Grand Exalted Ruler Remarks	Bryan R. Klatt, GER
Installation of DDGERS	Bryan R. Klatt, GER
Announcements	Jeffrey A. Rodier, Grand Esquire
Special Resolution	James L. Nichelson, PGER
Presentation PGER	Carl T. Seibert, Grand Secretary
Presentation of Jewels to outgoing G/L Officers	Douglas A. Schiefer, PGER
Presentation	Carl T. Seibert, Grand Secretary
Special Presentation	"GER Badge", Carl T. Seibert, Grand Secretary
Special Presentation	Minnesota "Ring", gift from State Ass'n
Special Presentation	Alaska "PGER Watch", Douglas A. Schiefer, PGER
Special Presentation	Alaska "GER Watch", Bryan R. Klatt, GER
Appointments	Bryan R. Klatt, GER
Presentation of G/L Officers & Committee Chairmen	Bryan R. Klatt, GER
Closing Ceremony	Grand Lodge Officers
Benediction	Rev. Christopher J. Ford, Grand Chaplain
Grand Lodge Closed	

G/L FRATERNAL COMMITTEE

All American Lodge winners 2024-25

Division I – [1-150 Members]

- First: Duarte, CA No. 1427
- Second: Norfolk, VA No. 38
- Third: Virginia Beach, VA No. 2268

Division II – [151 to 225 Members]

- First: Norwalk, CA No. 2142
- Second: Cedar Grove, NJ No. 2237
- Third: Tri-Cities, WA No. 2755

Division III – [226 to 300 Members]

- First: Homer, AK No. 2127
- Second: Arcadia, CA No. 2025
- Third: Moreno Valley, CA No. 2697

Division IV – [301 to 450 Members]

- First: Park Ridge, NJ No. 2234
- Second: East Stroudsburg, PA No. 319
- Third: Jackson, TN No. 192

Division V – [451 to 700 Members]

- First: Roseville, CA No. 2248
- Second: Chandler, AZ No. 2429
- Third: Muskegon, MI No. 274

Division VI – [701 Members and up]

- First: Santa Maria, CA No. 1538
- Second: Orange, CA No. 1475
- Third: Merced, CA No. 1240

The Convention Newsletter can be found online at elks.org/convention/default.cfm

NEW YORK ELKS DAY AT YANKEE STADIUM

Sunday, August 24 at 1:35 p.m.
Red Sox at Yankees

Tickets purchased from the QR code or link below come with a limited edition New York Yankees—New York Elks hat. Five dollars from each ticket goes to the New York Elks Major Projects fund.

For questions, contact statesecretary@nyselks.org

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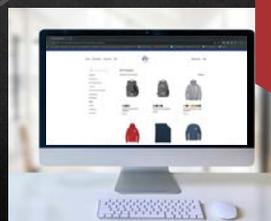


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TUESDAY'S RESOLUTIONS BALLOTING RESULTS

2025-01—To make participation in the physical loss and crime coverage policy procured by Grand Lodge optional for Local Lodges and to require proof of alternative insurance coverage. **830 YES, 2,122 NO. FAILED.**

2025-02—To allow a Lodge to satisfy the bond requirement for the Lodge Secretary through an outside insurance company. **845 YES, 2,120 NO. FAILED.**

2025-03—To allow a Lodge to satisfy the bond requirement for the Lodge Treasurer through an outside insurance company. **872 YES, 2,093 NO. FAILED.**

2025-04—To authorize the issuance of electronic membership cards, allow the Office of the Grand Secretary to determine requirements, and require Local Lodges to recognize an electronic membership card in the same manner as paper cards. **2,502 YES, 456 NO. PASSED.**

2025-05—To define what constitutes a Lodge Affiliate. **2,778 YES, 190 NO. PASSED.**

2025-06—To clarify the suspension of the social privileges of a member applies to all social functions and social activities of the Order. **2,836 YES, 134 NO. PASSED.**

2025-07—To clarify, if a Local Lodge adds the Secretary and Treasurer to the Board of Directors, the Lodge must ensure such action is consistent with its corporate documents. **2,779 YES, 164 NO. PASSED.**

ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION

Continuing a Legacy

In April, 350 high school seniors received Legacy Awards from the Elks National Foundation. The \$4,000 scholarships are available to the children and grandchildren of Elks.

Legacy Awards scholars are required to perform three instances of service with a Lodge over the four years they receive the scholarship. This empowers them to connect with neighbors in their communities and pave their own paths with the Elks.

Six Legacy Awards scholars took this commitment one step further by attending the Chicago Scholar Service Trip in May. While there, they served with organizations addressing clothing needs, fighting food insecurity, supporting veterans, and promoting sustainability.

Does your Lodge have a Legacy Awards winner? Visit secure.elks.org/Leg to find out!

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has titled *“Be The Difference.”* Klatt proceeded to give examples of how Elks should continue to make tangible differences in the lives of others: by making veterans feel personally supported, by engaging the youth of our communities through the Drug Awareness Program, Soccer Shoot, and other Elks initiatives; and by retaining the Members that make community outreach possible. Klatt also reminded Elks that each Lodge will have up to \$11,000 worth of ENF Community Investment Program grants to use over the course of the coming year. Finally, Klatt encouraged Elks by reminding them that they are “the cream of the crop,” and he expressed his profound excitement at being able to travel around the country and see them at work.

Activities Committee Chairman Michael B. Bryant gave his committee’s report and announced the results of the Community Projects Contest. He noted that the Soccer Shoot

had conducted its virtual national championship, with participation by 26,000 children in 27 states, and congratulated the five boys and five girls who were national champions in their respective age-groups. He also presented the Marvin M. Lewis Award, which honors those Elks who volunteer with Boy Scouts of America programs.

Next, Fraternal Committee Chairman Gwendolyn B. Parker congratulated the winners of the Americanism Essay Contest, which was held in four divisions with the theme, “What Does

Patriotism Mean To Me?” The four top winners received a \$1,000 prize. She announced that the 2025–2026 contest theme will be *“What Does Service to Your Country Mean?”* Next, she announced the 18 winners of the All-American Lodge Contest (Page 3).

Ritualistic Committee chairman Steve D. Rysdam closed the session by announcing the final results and recognizing the winners of the national Ritualistic Contest. In addition, the final results of the Callicott 11 O’Clock Toast Contest and the Mulholland Flag Charge Contest were announced. ★



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Congratulations to 2024-25 Ritualistic Contest Winners



First Place — Carthage, NY No. 1762 (96.9149)

Exalted Ruler Michael D. Rohr; Leading Knight Kody Heukrath; Loyal Knight Eric Luther; Lecturing Knight Connor Ashlaw; Esquire Andrew Smith (not pictured). Standing, from left: Chaplain Jeremy Thesier; Inner Guard Sam Thesier; Candidate Robert Sligar; Coach Brian Scott.



Second Place — Reno, NV No. 597 (96.9028)

Exalted Ruler Rachel Drake; Leading Knight Antonio Ricci; Loyal Knight Justin Hoch; Lecturing Knight Melissa Fitch; Esquire Sean Brennan. Standing, from left: Chaplain Heidi Julius; Inner Guard Joy Brackney; Candidate Holly Kinney; Coach Ken DuBois; Coach Dee Boskie; Coach Max-Noel Shen; Coach Frank Reynolds III (not pictured).



Third Place — Santa Clarita, CA No. 2379 (96.7264)

Exalted Ruler Mike Brandriff; Leading Knight James McKenna; Loyal Knight Danise Davis; Lecturing Knight Ilia Banks; Esquire/Coach Jay Larkins. Standing, from left: Chaplain Jeannette Fisher; Inner Guard Rob Forsberg; Tiler/Coach Kelvin Swanson; Candidate Linda Edwards; Coach John Rivetti; Coach Wayne Edwards; Candidate Roger Lowe (not pictured).



Fourth Place — Kenton, OH No. 157 (96.1454)

Exalted Ruler Derryck Menard; Leading Knight Marty McKinley Gray; Loyal Knight Stacey Hamilton-Davis; Lecturing Knight Kristin Grimshaw; Esquire Dylan Menard. Standing, from left: Chaplain Amanda Lodge; Inner Guard David Faulkner; Candidate/Coach David Beazley; Coach John Hines; Coach D. Jack Buroker (not pictured).

2025 CALLICOTT 11 O’CLOCK TOAST CONTEST



- Winner: Elizabeth Dye, Redondo Beach, CA No. 1378
- Second: Aaron Ballew, Carlsbad, NM No. 1558
- Third: Jennifer Caputo, Saugus-Everett, MA No. 642
- Fourth: Mark Stuparich, New York, NY No. 1

2025 MULHOLLAND FLAG CHARGE CONTEST



- Winner: Robert Bornstedt, Kelso-Longview, WA No. 1482
- Second: John Hines, Kenton, OH No. 157
- Third: Robert Sligar, Carthage, NY No. 1762
- Fourth: Derek Sommer, Littleton, CO No. 1650