



## The Rack

*The Official Newsletter of the St. Cloud Elks #2843*

JANUARY 2010

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Meeting the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday  
7:30 P.M. at  
The East side VFW #4847

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**December 2009 GER Message:**

**A Message from Grand Exalted Ruler James L. Nicholson**

**To All District Deputies, Exalted Rulers, Officers and Members:**

So much of what we do as Elks can be viewed as family-oriented. Hoop-Shoot, Drug Awareness activities, Americanism Essay Contest, Soccer Shoot, Mother's Day observances, Antlers and much, much more, should bring families together and to the Lodge. However, if your Lodge is not emphasizing these programs, you may be missing the boat.

Family-oriented is where we want to be. Mom and Dad both work and both want to spend what available time they have with their family. Add to that concerns about the economy, and you can see why young families may not be active in the local Elks Lodge. We must meet them where they are.

From a pragmatic standpoint, we must be mindful of the many demands upon the time and resources of young families, and plan our Lodge activities accordingly. Underlying all of this is the fact young families must be a primary focus of our membership efforts.

Luckily, we are family-oriented as an Order. We have youth and family programs in place that are high-quality and nationally recognized. Assess your Lodge's participation in the programs mentioned above. Gear more of your activities to those that young parents seek for their families.





### From our Exalted Ruler

We have made it through the holidays and are entering 2010. This Christmas season we were in the St. Cloud Nights and Lights Parade and Sauk Rapid Lights Parade. Dan and Brad decorated and readied the float for the parades. Those who were able to participate in the parades handed out 1,000 drug awareness bags at the St. Cloud Parade, and another 800 at the Sauk Rapid's Parade. We also initiated two more members in December.

The Michel's are hosting a New Year's Eve Party at their home December 31<sup>st</sup>. The second Sunday in January the lodge hoop shoot will be held at the YMCA in St. Cloud. Bringing January to a close, Brad Slocum will be hosting a party for Jerry and Brenda Schultz's visit at his home on the 30<sup>th</sup>. As of right now that is all I know.

Steven Zinken  
ER

**Herman Wisneski  
Minnesota State President**



**Just One More**



**Happy New Year!!!!** It is the start of a New Year and everyone is making resolutions. Some people resolve to quit smoking, lose weight, exercise more, or learn a new hobby or whatever. But as Elks the resolution we can all make and keep is to get involved in our lodges. Each lodge is made up of Doers and Sitters. The Doers do and the Sitter sit and the Sitters bitch when the Doers do not do it fast enough. Look in the mirror and see what type of Elk you are. Now is the time to take stock of your participation in your lodge. If you are a Doer, thank you for fantastic service and keep up the good work. If you are a Sitter, now would be a good time to change. Your lodge needs your help. You can work on a committee, take over a project, and help other Elks in doing the good works of the lodge. You can even decide that you want to be an officer in the lodge. There are always openings for lodge officers and trustees. The jobs are difficult or time consuming, **BUT THEY NEED TO BE DONE**. This organization is made of volunteers, people decide to help, and no one pays them to do the job. The events and projects that happen at your lodge do not just happen by magic, people decide to do them. Those people are other members of your lodge; they could use your help in doing the event or project. You might find that when you become involved with your lodge that you began to understand what truly means to be an ELK; that you may find yourself becoming a Doer rather than a Sitter. Ask any officer, trustee or committee person how you can help make your lodge better. Remember it just takes "Just One More" to make a difference in your lodge.

Herman Wisneski, President  
Minnesota Elks Association

### December, 2009 Veterans Message:

**Over the last few years, efforts by community organizations such as the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks and government agencies have reduced the number of homeless veterans, but there is much more to do.**

**The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) estimates that there are over 130,000 veterans who are homeless on any given night, and in the course of a year, almost 280,000 veterans will experience homelessness. Who are these homeless Veterans? They are male and female, young and old, and served their country in war and at peace. Almost half served in the Vietnam era. The majority of homeless veterans reside in major population centers, but they are found in suburban areas and rural communities as well.**

**Why are they homeless? Homelessness has a wide array of causes. Lost income due to job loss, reduced salaries or benefits, home foreclosures, and a shortage of affordable housing all contribute to the problem. Perhaps the chief cause of homelessness, however, is the mental condition of its victims.**

**In earlier conflicts, such Veterans were sometimes diagnosed with 'shell-shock'- an obvious and almost immediate reaction by some soldiers to combat. Symptoms of 'shell-shock' included tiredness, lack of concentration, and headaches. Eventually, the men suffered mental breakdowns making them unfit for combat.**

**Today, these conditions are referred to as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders, or PTSD. PTSD may take months or years to reveal symptoms. Untreated, PTSD can lead to depression, inability to focus, and alcohol and drug abuse. This can cause job loss, domestic violence, homelessness, and even suicide. During the Vietnam era, very little, if anything, was known about Post Traumatic Stress Disorders. It is not surprising, therefore, that so many of our nation's homeless are veterans of that period.**

**While the VA is now actively screening military personnel after discharge, there are hundreds of thousands of Veterans who have never been screened.**

**It is essential to get these veterans whatever help they need, to get them back to being complete, productive citizens. They answered their country's call in its time of need. It is our duty to help them in their own time of need.**

**What can you do?**

**Determine the need in your community. Contact your mayor's office, or search state and community websites for homeless veterans programs and initiatives. If your Lodge has a VAVS Representative, ask them to discuss this with the homeless coordinator of the hospital in which they work. These programs may need food, clothing, essentials, and/or volunteers.**

**Stand Downs. Many hospitals and community based outpatient centers host 'Stand Downs' for the homeless. 'Stand Downs' give homeless Veterans 1-3 days of safety and security where they can obtain food, shelter, clothing and a range of other types of assistance. Find out what the Elks can do to help by contacting your local Veterans Administration facility.**

**Send a financial donation to your nearest homeless Veteran provider if you are unable to participate in a program directly.**

**Fundraisers to help Homeless Veterans: Dinners, dances, walks, and motorcycle rides are but a few ways to raise funds.**

**Stewart Israel (Plymouth, MI Lodge 1780), the National Chairman of the Elks Adopt-A-Veteran Program, is very active personally in working with the homeless in his community. Brother Israel would be happy to share his experience with Lodges wishing to be more actively engaged in helping our homeless Veterans.**

**You can e-mail Brother Israel at [stewizzy@yahoo.com](mailto:stewizzy@yahoo.com), or write to him at:**

**Stewart Israel, Chairman, Adopt-A-Veteran Program, 40225 Newport Drive, Plymouth MI 48170-4739**

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## **State Calendar of Events**

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|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| • State Ritual Contest          | January 9, 2010                | Minneapolis   |
| • Exalted Ruler Seminar         | January 23 - 24, 2010          | Wadena        |
| • State Elks Bowling Tournament | February 2010 (all 4 weekends) | Alexandria    |
| • State Hoop Shoot Contest      | February 6, 2010               | Hutchinson    |
| • Elks International Bonspiel   | February 26 - 28, 2010         | Eveleth       |
| • Regional Hoop Shoot           | March 20, 2010                 | Iowa City, IA |
| • State Officers Budget Meeting | March 28, 2010                 | Minneapolis   |
| • Youth Camp Opening            | May 7 - 9, 2010                | Youth Camp    |





Happy New Year to all...Here's to continued success to our Lodge and health, happiness to everyone.

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**See you all at the meeting! Sign up a new member. It's the only way we can guarantee that our lodge will survive. Membership is everyone's job!**



**If you have anything you would like to add to the newsletter, sent it on to me at [patpr@charter.net](mailto:patpr@charter.net)**