

The Rise and Fall of LONG BEACH Lodge No. 888

By Barry Brockman

When I was asked to write an article about Long Beach Lodge No. 888, I quickly realized that telling its story properly required more than simply listing dates and events. My research soon suggested that a more fitting title would be "The Rise and Fall of Long Beach Lodge No. 888."

In 1903, a group of Long Beach businessmen met to discuss forming an Elks lodge in what was then still considered a growing village. One of the organizers, T. C. Donnell, was a member of Shelbyville, Indiana Lodge No. 457. They believed that Long Beach would benefit greatly from having its own Elks lodge. Although the 1900 census recorded a population of approximately 1,700, local leaders estimated that the population had grown to nearly 5,000 by 1903.

The Grand Lodge was initially reluctant to grant a charter because it questioned whether a community could grow so rapidly in such a short time. Fortunately, Los Angeles Lodge No. 99 sponsored Long Beach's petition. No one could have imagined that within sixty years the new lodge would become the largest Elks lodge in the United States.



Long Beach Elks Lodge No. 888

On November 30, 1903, the Grand Exalted Ruler granted a temporary dispensation. Less than two months later, on January 13, 1904, twenty-six men were initiated as the charter members of Long Beach Lodge No. 888.

The lodge's first year included several noteworthy milestones. On May 8, the first life membership was purchased for \$100. Life memberships continued to be offered for several decades before the Grand Lodge discontinued the program.

The first Ladies' Social Night was held on May 30. Receipts totaled \$30.10, while expenses reached \$40.40, resulting

in a loss of \$10.30. Even in those early years, the lodge experienced the same financial challenges familiar to organizations today.

Another milestone came on July 21, when Long Beach Lodge received its permanent charter during the Grand Lodge Reunion in Cincinnati. Later that year, on September 13, members made their first official visitation to another lodge by traveling to Santa Ana Lodge.

Long Beach soon became the "Mother Lodge" to its first "Baby Lodge" when sixty candidates were proposed for the new San Pedro Lodge. At the time, members usually traveled to San Pedro by boat because roads were poor and bus transportation was limited.

In 1909, the lodge voted to use black cubes instead of black balls when rejecting candidates during membership elections.

On January 22, 1912, the initiation fee was increased to \$50, annual dues were raised to \$12, and life memberships increased to \$200.

Around this time, the lodge purchased property at Cedar Avenue and Ocean Boulevard for a new lodge building. Groundbreaking ceremonies were held in May 1913, and the new home at 19 Cedar Avenue was completed shortly afterward. The lodge would remain there for several decades.

By 1920, the Elks had become an important part of Long Beach's civic life through their patriotic and charitable activities. During World War I, members observed a one-minute (Continued on Page 2)

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Word Search: Answers at Elks1952.org

B.P.O.E. Trivia

What year did the Elks pass a resolution allowing women to become members? 1985, 1995, or 2005?

Garden Grove Trivia

What is the oldest High School in Garden Grove?

GG Elks Trivia

Who was Elk of the Month for September 2026?

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE GARDEN GROVE ELKS HISTORIAN COMMITTEE

CONTACT US AT HISTORIAN.BPOE.1952@GMAIL.COM WITH SUGGESTIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS OR COMMENTS

The Rise and Fall of LONG BEACH Lodge No. 888 (Continued from Page 1)

prayer each evening at 11:00 p.m. for the servicemen overseas, a tradition that preceded the familiar 11 O'clock Toast. Membership had grown to 1,218.

In 1929, construction began on a temporary one-story building while the existing lodge building was demolished to make way for a new facility.

The 1930–1931 lodge year opened with 3,911 members. The new Membership Chairman established an ambitious goal of recruiting 1,000 new members. However, the stock market crash and the onset of the Great Depression slowed both business and membership growth. By the close of the lodge year, membership had declined to 3,411.

Membership continued to struggle throughout the 1930s, falling to 1,825 by 1940.

On March 10, 1933, a devastating earthquake struck Long Beach, claiming 54 lives. The lodge building suffered extensive damage, forcing meetings to be held in the temporary building originally intended as a gymnasium.

Ironically, that temporary structure had previously been declared unsafe and unfit for occupancy by the City of Long Beach. Yet it was one of the few downtown buildings to survive the earthquake with little damage, allowing it to serve as the lodge's temporary home until repairs to the main building were completed.

The annual Elks Memorial Service had been scheduled for 8:00 p.m. on December 7, 1941. However, the attack on Pearl Harbor earlier that day greatly reduced attendance.

The following evening, December 8, the lodge met under wartime blackout conditions. Without electric lights, a class of candidates was initiated by flashlight. That same meeting also marked the beginning of numerous committees dedicated to supporting the nation's wartime efforts.

Jumping ahead to 1955, the New Building Site Committee proposed purchasing property on Willow Street from the City of Long Beach for a new lodge building. On October 17, the membership overwhelmingly approved the proposal by a vote of 607 to 24.

On November 12, 1956, the lodge voted to retain an architect at a fee equal to six percent of the building's construction cost.

On September 13, 1957, the New Building Committee presented plans for a new lodge estimated to cost approximately \$750,000.

The Ways and Means Committee then reported that the total project would require nearly \$1 million. At the time, lodge assets were valued at approximately \$700,000. The remaining funds would be raised through bank financing, memorial donations, building certificates, and the sale of additional life memberships. Both reports received enthusiastic approval from the membership.

Life memberships were sold for \$500. Upon the death of a life member, the family could request a refund of the original \$500. As of 2025, a small number of those refunds were still being requested.

Groundbreaking ceremonies for the new lodge were held on February 2, 1959. The event was attended by city and county officials, the Grand Exalted Ruler, and former Grand Exalted Rulers.

Membership at the close of the 1958–1959 lodge year had grown to 5,572.

On August 29, 1960, members gathered for the final time at the Cedar Avenue lodge before participating in a ceremonial parade of automobiles and floats, accompanied by uniformed dignitaries from numerous Elks lodges, to their new home on Willow Avenue.

By the end of the 1963–1964 lodge year, membership had reached 9,376, making Long Beach Lodge No. 888 the largest Elks lodge in the United States.

Over the years, many longtime members told me that the lodge's membership eventually peaked at nearly 12,000. Although I was unable to verify that figure through official records, there is little doubt that Long Beach Lodge No. 888 experienced one of the most remarkable periods of growth in the history of Elkdom.

As I researched this article, I came to realize that before describing the decline of a lodge, it is important to understand its birth, growth, and accomplishments. The history of Long Beach Lodge No. 888 is more than a record of membership numbers and buildings—it is the story of dedicated members whose efforts helped shape the traditions and values of Elkdom that continue today.

The next chapter will tell the story that I personally witnessed, beginning in 1981 and continuing through the final years of Long Beach Lodge No. 888. Stay tuned.



ELKS & VETERANS

By Jim Hernandez



The Elks have a long and proud history of honoring the men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces. Veterans Day is observed each year on November 11. The holiday originated as Armistice Day, commemorating the end of World War I. Fighting officially ceased at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918. In 1954, following World War II and the Korean War, the United States renamed the holiday Veterans Day to honor all military veterans who have served the nation, whether during wartime or peacetime.

Elks lodges across the country recognize Veterans Day with ceremonies, flag presentations, memorial services, and volunteer efforts at veterans' hospitals and care facilities. Many lodges participate in programs that provide emergency assistance, housing support, and recreational activities for veterans and military families. The Elks National Veterans Service Commission coordinates many of these efforts, encouraging members to demonstrate appreciation through meaningful acts of service.

Veterans Day reminds Americans that freedom is preserved through the dedication and sacrifice of those who wear the nation's uniform. The Elks' continued commitment to serving veterans ensures that this gratitude is expressed not only in words but also through action. By honoring veterans with respect, compassion, and community involvement, the Elks help preserve the legacy of military service and inspire future generations to value patriotism, civic responsibility, and the importance of caring for those who have defended our country.

At the Garden Grove Elks Lodge in February we host a Veterans Stand Down which is a community event connecting veterans with free meals, medical and dental care, housing assistance, legal services, employment resources, clothing, hygiene supplies, showers, and benefit counseling. Hosted with local partners, it supports veterans, especially those experiencing homelessness, while honoring their service through compassionate, coordinated assistance.

B.P.O.E. POSTCARDS - HISTORY IN THE MAIL

By Jim Spurlock

Postcards issued by and about the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks offer a vivid record of an influential chapter in American social life. Produced during the early 20th century, these cards documented the organization's national conventions, local celebrations, public parades, and imposing lodge buildings. Their colorful designs and carefully composed photographs served as both personal greetings and lasting souvenirs, preserving details of fraternal culture that might otherwise have disappeared.



The earliest and most decorative examples emerged during the postcard "Golden Age" from 1900 to 1915. Chromolithographic printing, embossed surfaces, patriotic imagery, and recurring elk motifs gave the cards a distinctive appearance. Many also carried the familiar fraternal greeting "Hello Bill," connecting the images with the language and traditions shared by Elks members.

National conventions generated another important category of B.P.O.E. postcards. Publishers produced special souvenir cards for the large annual gatherings, including the well-known 1907 convention in Philadelphia and the 1910 convention in Detroit. The cards allowed visitors to mark the occasion while giving host cities a colorful way to promote the crowds, ceremonies, and public excitement surrounding each event.

Real photo postcards, commonly known as RPPCs, added a documentary dimension from the 1900s through the 1920s. These photographic prints captured local Elks lodge buildings, clubhouses, and street parades with a level of detail that illustrated how the organization appeared in individual communities. Later linen- and chrome-era cards continued that visual record by featuring prominent multistory brick Elks Club headquarters in towns and major cities across the United States.

Together, the postcards reveal more than changes in printing and photography. They reflect the broad popularity of social and fraternal societies in early American life and show how annual conventions could draw large crowds and stimulate local souvenir publishing. Their value has grown with time, particularly because many of the downtown club buildings pictured on real photo postcards no longer stand.

Ultimately, B.P.O.E. postcards are more than collectible keepsakes; they are compact historical records of an era when fraternal organizations played a prominent role in American communities. Through their artwork, photographs, and convention scenes, the cards preserve the buildings, traditions, and public gatherings that shaped the Elks' presence across the nation, offering modern viewers a lasting link to a social world that has largely faded from view.



Halloween Rally

By Paul Escobar

Who likes to dress up for Halloween? What is your favorite costume? Costume parties are always fun, and the Garden Grove Elks Lodge has one every year. Part of the Elk Enders Halloween Rally is a fun filled night of dancing, laughing and good food. And if you are lucky, you may come across a scary witch, ghoul or vampire!

All are welcome to attend the Elk Ender's Halloween costume party. The highlight of the night is the costume parade. Everyone dresses in costumes, parades in front of the judges, hoping to win an award. Come for dinner, enjoy the music but stay for the fun! Keep October 24th free and join us all for some Halloween fun. Wear your scariest or funniest costume and you may win a prize.

If you are new to our lodge or maybe you haven't heard of the Elk Enders, they are an auxiliary RV club for members that enjoy sleeping under the stars. The Elk Enders enjoy monthly camping trips to surrounding camp sites for a weekend of fellowship. Mission Bay, Hemet and Santa Barbara are just a few of their favorite destinations. If you would like more information, the Elk Enders meet every 1st Wednesday at 7:00pm at the lodge.

YOUR AMERICANISM COMMITTEE PRESENTS THE ELKS TOTE + PIN



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\$20.00 Donation for BOTH!

STEVE LOBDELL: REFLECTING ON THE PAST AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

By Amber Spurlock



Steve Lobdell has spent more than two decades serving the Elks, advancing through lodge leadership and preserving the organization's history. Lobdell, a PDDGER and the appointed C.H.E.A. historian, joined in early 2001. His leadership record includes terms as Esteemed Lecturing Knight from 2002 to 2003, Esteemed Loyal Knight from 2003 to 2004 and Esteemed Leading Knight from 2004 to 2005. He later served as Lodge Trustee from 2008 to 2013, worked in Lodge Contracts from 2010 to 2017 and held the office of Exalted Ruler in 2007-2008 and 2017-2018. From 2018 to 2019, he served as District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler. Steve was assistant historian from 2003 to 2021 and has

served as association historian for four years.

His interest in Elks history extends to a memorabilia collection he began when he joined the organization. The collection includes Grand Lodge Session, reunion and convention badges dating from 1872 to 1917, as well as postcards featuring individual lodges, early conventions and Elk-themed comics. Among its rarest pieces are John F. Kennedy's membership card case, an original set of lodge officer jewels and a set of Antlers officer jewels. Steve said he considers the collection valuable in its entirety.

Lobdell's decades of leadership and dedication to preserving Elks history have made him a respected figure within the organization. His example continues to earn the appreciation of the Garden Grove Elks Historian Committee and provides a standard its members seek to uphold.



GARDEN GROVE ELKS SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE OPENS DOORS TO STUDENT SUCCESS

BY SUE SAWYER

Each year, the Garden Grove Elks Scholarship Committee works to make higher education and career training more accessible by promoting a variety of scholarship opportunities for local students. Through the generosity of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks and the California-Hawaii Elks Association (CHEA), students pursuing university degrees, vocational training, and those facing unique challenges can receive meaningful financial assistance.

The largest and most competitive program is the Most Valuable Student (MVS) Scholarship. Applications open each August 1st and close in mid-November. This year they close on November 12th. The Elks award 500 four year undergraduate scholarships totalling 2.52 million annually. This scholarship is available to high school seniors, as well as juniors who will graduate early and attend a four-year university. Students apply online and may select any participating Elks Lodge in their area. After entering their ZIP code, the application provides several nearby lodges to choose from. The Garden Grove Elks Lodge #1952 actively communicates with local high schools to promote the scholarship and encourages students to select Garden Grove as their sponsoring lodge. However, because students may choose any nearby lodge, Garden Grove also receives applications from students outside its immediate service area. That said, there is NO LODGE AFFILIATION required to apply for this scholarship.

Following the December deadline, applications are judged at the local lodge level. Most lodges in our district receive between 20 and 35 applications annually, although Garden Grove has experienced significant growth in participation. The three highest-scoring young men and three highest-scoring young women from each lodge advance to district judging. Our district includes eight lodges, meaning 48 outstanding students compete at the district level each January. From there, the top three young men and top three young women advance to state judging, with the highest-ranking students moving on to the national competition.

National winners are announced in March and may receive scholarships worth up to **\$4,000 per year for four years of college**. In addition, students who later attend medical school may qualify for one of twenty prestigious **\$30,000 scholarships** awarded as \$7,500 annually over 4 years. Even students who do not advance to nationals may still receive state-level awards. Last year, one Garden Grove applicant earned an **\$800 state scholarship** despite not advancing to the national competition.

Another outstanding opportunity is the **Legacy Award Scholarship**. Unlike the MVS Scholarship, Legacy applicants must be related to a living Elk, such as a parent, grandparent, or other qualifying family member. Applications opened on September 6, 2026 and close on February 1, 2027 at noon PST. Like the MVS competition, Legacy applicants advance through a rigorous judging process, with awards presented at the national level through the Elks National Foundation. (ENF) Students can also accept awards at the local or state level. The applicant must be a high school senior. If the students' parent and grandparent are both Elks members they must select the parents Elks Lodge on their application. To strengthen their connection to the Elks, students are selected and must complete an act of service at the lodge at least three times a year.



For students pursuing careers outside of a traditional four-year university, the **Vocational Education (Career Technical Education) Scholarship** provides year-round opportunities. These scholarships are available to students of any age preparing to attend trade schools or career training programs. Applicants must apply before their first tuition payment is due and may receive up to **\$1,000 per year for two consecutive years**. CHEA hopes to award at least 12

Vocational Education scholarships per lodge statewide.

The Elks also offer **Emergency Educational Grants** for students whose families experience unexpected hardships, such as the serious injury or death of a parent. In addition, a newer scholarship program assists students with unique needs and disabilities, with applications accepted throughout the year.

At the local level, the Garden Grove Elks Scholarship Committee has steadily expanded its support for area students. In its first year, the lodge awarded three \$1,000 scholarships from 11 applications. Last year, thanks to successful fundraising efforts, the committee awarded **eight \$1,000 scholarships** after receiving **53 applications**. The continued growth reflects increasing awareness of these valuable opportunities and the committee's commitment to helping students achieve their educational goals.

The Garden Grove Elks Lodge Scholarship Committee had an outstanding year, serving a large and highly competitive group of students. This past year, 23 students applied for the Elks Most Valuable Student Scholarship, with six applicants, three boys and three girls advancing to the District level. One of our female applicants continued on to the State level and earned a \$700 scholarship award. In addition, the Lodge received 53 applicants for eight \$1,000 local scholarships, with applicants representing three different districts and scholarship recipients coming from four different high schools. The quality of the applications was exceptional. While a score of 40 or higher is considered excellent, all eight scholarship recipients earned scores of 45 or higher, including one student who achieved a perfect score of 50. These numbers demonstrate both the tremendous talent of the students in our community and the dedication of the Garden Grove Elks Lodge Scholarship Committee to supporting local students in their pursuit of higher education.

Students and families interested in learning more about any of these scholarship programs are encouraged to contact **Sue Sawyer, Amber Spurlock, Kimberly Escobar, or Maria Terrones** for additional information and application guidance. They can also go to **Elks.org** and get all of the information and online application links.

Please **SAVE THE DATE** and join us for our next fundraising effort - the **3rd Annual Dollars for Scholars Game Night** on **November 14, 2026!** Come play some games, win some prizes, have some fun, and help some students achieve their dreams! Everyone wins at the Garden Grove Elks Lodge! **Scan the QR code to purchase your tickets today!**

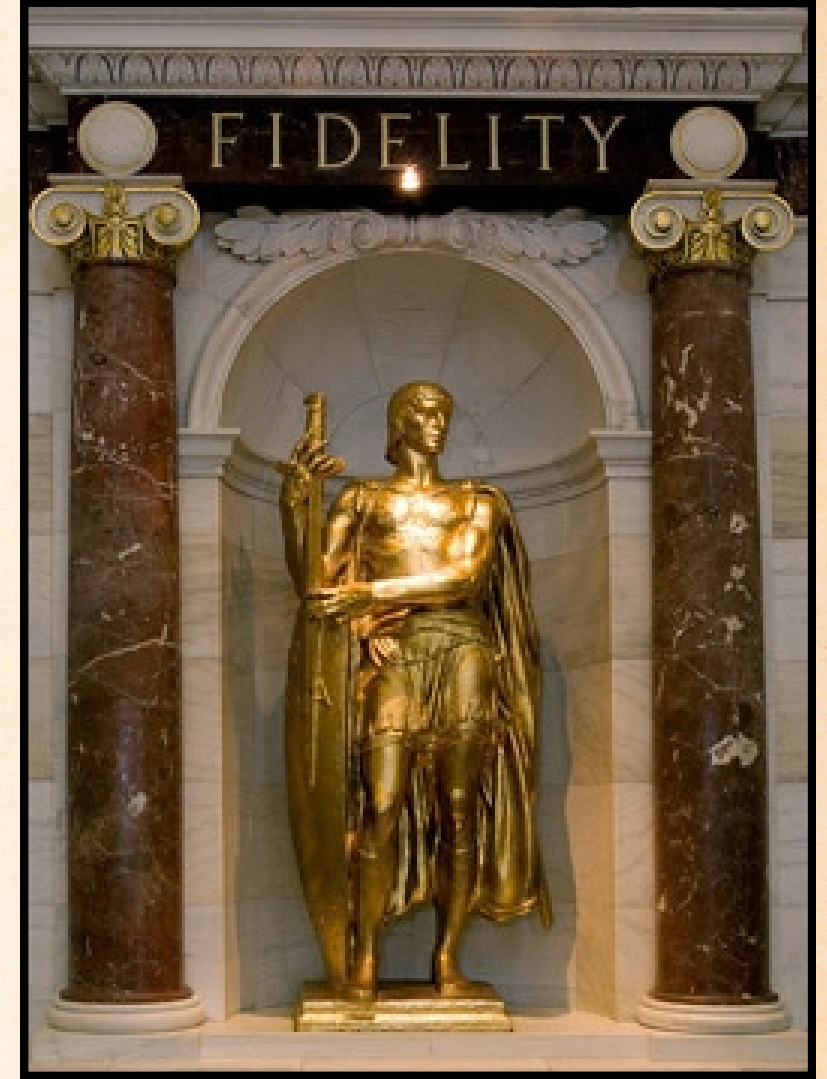
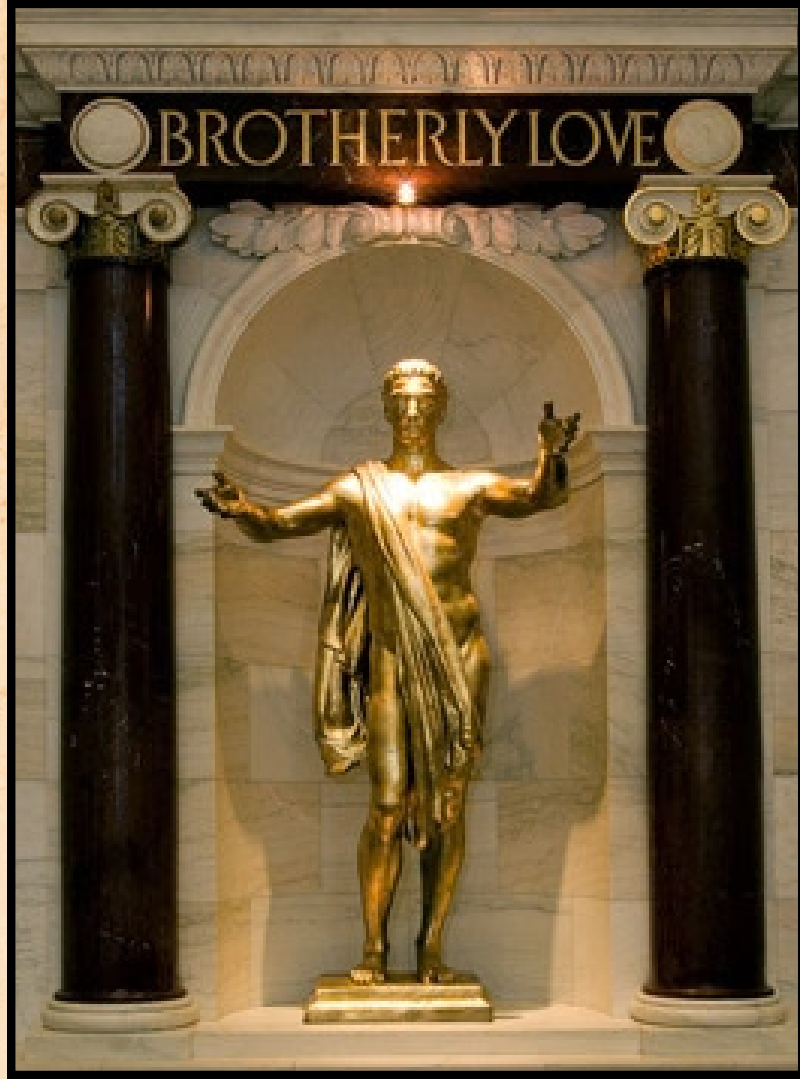


ELKS NATIONAL MEMORIAL AND HEADQUARTERS

As a member of the Benevolent Protective Order of Elks, there is one place that should be on your bucket list as a place to visit. Located at 2750 N Lakeview Ave, Chicago, Illinois, is the Elks National Memorial and Headquarters. During this year's Grand Lodge convention, there was a celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the memorial. It also tied in perfectly with our nations 250th birthday celebration on the 4th of July.

During the week of the Elk's convention, many members visited the memorial. I was one of those that checked it off my list. There are places that we see pictures of and see the beauty in them. But there are some places where a picture does not do justice. The Elks National Memorial is one of those places.

Once you walk through the front doors, you enter the main area. Four tall statues look down and demand your attention. Brotherly Love, Justice, Charity and Fidelity welcome you into this tall domed area with stunning artwork and intricately carved woodwork. As you make your way around and marvel over the artwork, it's hard to not to think about those who have walked before us. For the past 100 years fellow Elks have walked these same steps and have admired the same wonders!



As we walked, there were many display cases filled with old artifacts, donated by members. Each artifact told a story, every piece once worn proudly by a fellow Elk. Being an avid collector of Elk memorial, it was a bit surreal to see so many convention badges on display.

Our visit was a little different than most. I have a friend that works in the ENF office, and she arranged for us to tour the memorial before it was open. Sandy told us great stories about past Grand Exalted Rulers and a few movies that were filmed at the memorial. One of the things I enjoyed seeing was the blueprints of the memorial!

One exciting part of our visit was to see the contents of the time capsule that was opened during the 100th celebration. There were letters, coins and other leaflets from the original dedication day. Sandy had told me that they were going to start asking for items to be put into the next time capsule and asked if our lodge would like to have an item included. I had our Historian coins with me, so I gave her a coin to be included in the time capsule. Generations from now, members will be walking the same path we did and see our Garden Grove Elks #1952 Historian coin and wonder what story it tells.

The Elks National Memorial is truly a place worth seeing in person. I am thankful that we had the opportunity to witness and enjoy its beauty. There are many Lodges that are on my bucket list. New York #1 and San Francisco #3 are two that come to mind. San Francisco was also checked off the list this summer!

By Paul Escobar

Garden Grove Elks Lodge #1952

TRUNK OR TREAT

SUNDAY,
OCTOBER 25, 2026
4:00-6:00 PM

Elks Lodge Parking Lot
11551 Trask Ave.
Garden Grove, CA 92843

SAFE AND FREE
TRICK-OR-TREATING
FOR ALL KIDS IN COSTUME!

Pizza Special Available – 3:00–4:00pm
\$5.50 – Pizza Slice and Soda



Trunk or Treat – Starting a NEW Elks Tradition in Garden Grove

It's coming close to the time of year when it's going to get dark earlier. The hot summer nights are going to step aside and cooler nights will come. Fall decorations will be proudly displayed in neighborhood yards in anticipation for Halloween!

A childhood favorite is dressing up and touring the neighborhood, visiting each house, hoping to get their favorite candy. Trick or Treat is a tradition that most of us fondly remember from our own childhood and maybe our children's childhood too.

As children, we were instructed to wait until we got home so mom and dad could inspect our collection and throw out anything that looked suspicious (and to grab ones they like). Although Trick or Treat is an innocent tradition for kids, mean hearted adults seem to find a way to tarnish it. Trunk or Treat events were organized to help make the tradition safe for children.

Our lodge held its first Trunk or Treat event last year. We had approximately 20 cars participate. Each car was decorated and handed out many different treats. Candy was the most popular treat, but also small toys were given out.

Our community came out and had a wonderful time. So many kids were dressed up and enjoyed going car to car. The kids were able to collect treats in a safe environment, and the parents were able to enjoy and create fond memories with the children.

The event was held on Pizza Sunday, so all the families were invited to stay after and enjoy a pizza dinner. Many families took advantage of Pizza Sunday and had dinner in the patio area. The kids found our play area and had fun on the swings.

The Youth Activities committee will have its 2nd Annual Trunk or Treat event on October 25th. We hope you will participate and decorate your car and hand out treats. Or if you have young children or grandchildren, please bring them to enjoy the day. Once again, October 25th is also Pizza Sunday so enjoy dinner at the lodge and have a great time at the Garden Grove Elks Trunk or Treat event! Please pass the word.

by Paul Escobar



LODGE LORE

THE SPIRITS OF G.G. 1952

By Scott Singer

(In an eerie voice...) The Elks Lodge in Garden Grove seems quiet from the outside, but after midnight, the shadows lingering inside grow teeth! Welcome foolish mortals! What evil curses lurk in those shadows, like creaks in rooms that are doorless, a sudden chill in the air, a..... Nope, not that kind of ghost story.....

BUT.... At the Garden Grove Elks Lodge the building does hold more than community bingo nights, Pizza Sundays and social club gatherings. Members, old and new, as well as staff, say a few “unseen” members never really checked out and left the lodge after their passing. And these lodge ghosts will let you know they are there... and it could be startling to some. And these incidents of contact do not just happen in the middle of the night; they happen during dinner hours and lodge meetings!! We are fortunate that we have clairvoyant-sighted members in our lodge who feel the ghost’s presence. They believe in their own reactivity and responsiveness to sense these celestial spirits and have contacted them. During the annual Elk Enders Halloween Weekend celebration in October 2025, they conducted a séance in the East Room dining area where they were able to ascertain specifics about a few of the ghosts..... Do I have your attention now?

Through clues given, the ghosts identities included 2 women and 1 man. The women were both officers in Emblem, and the man was in lodge leadership. The man who we’ll call #16, was angry that he died and he casts a negative and heavy pall over the lodge at times. He seems to aim his wrath at women specifically which could be an acknowledgement to mid-20th century Elks who did not allow women as members. The women, who we’ll call Dorothy and Rose Marie, hang out mostly near the women’s bathroom in the club room and are very playful and much more loving in the aura they exude when present. While #16 will poke you firmly, grab your shoulders and put his hands around your throat, Dorothy and Rose Marie will touch you in a soothing and comfortable way, like a mother or grandmother. You’ll know which ghost you have encountered.

Something happened in the early Spring of 2026. Our clairvoyants felt a change in the spiritual feel of the lodge. Gone were the anger and heaviness of the previous spiritual environment. It was replaced by a warm, friendly and loving spiritual air, as if another happier spirit had entered and created a protective space. It became obvious to our clairvoyants through investigation what happened: The lodge had recently lost one of its beloved members; we call him Bear. When Bear passed away and joined the Elk Lodge spiritual realm, he wanted none of what #16 was selling! The lodge was Bear’s “happy place”, and no bully was going to cast a negative shadow over the building and people he loved! It is believed Bear chased #16 into the men’s bathroom in the club room to stay, coming out occasionally to wreak some havoc when Bear was elsewhere occupied. And the lodge has a much better spiritual juju these days.

Our clairvoyants want you to know that except for #16 our lodge ghosts truly mean no harm. They just miss being alive, participating in lodge events and interacting with current membership. They just really miss being noticed. So next time your alone and feel something while walking down the hallway to the lodge room, through the doorway into the club, dining in the East Room or standing during a closed lodge meeting, say hi to Dorothy, Rose Marie, Bear and even #16, and let them know you’re thinking of them and that they do still exist because we are Elks, and we remember and support all Elks, whether living or passed. As it says on the doorway walking into the Garden Grove Elks Lodge, “Through These Doors Pass the Best People on Earth.” Occasionally, they make themselves at home forever.

THE RICK ROSS ELKS OLYMPICS CLOSING CEREMONY

by Paul Escobar

Once again, it is time for the annual Rick Ross Elk Olympics! In 2025 our lodge reclaimed the Ross Cup in the 13th annual Elks Olympics. It takes a team effort to be victorious, and the Garden Grove lodge showed what teamwork can do. It came down to the last day of competition, for Garden Grove to come out on top. At the end of the day, we had a total of 38 points and Orange had 34 points!

The games officially started in late August with the Fishing event. The fishing event is not only open to Orange Coast district members but also open to Veterans that can be sponsored by each lodge. The Veterans are awarded medals too, but their medals do not count in the total points.

September did not disappoint either. Having Opening Ceremonies at the Garden Grove Lodge where several games were played. Cornhole, Hoop Shoot, Shuffleboard, Pool, Darts, Ping Pong, Ladder Golf, Horseshoes and the Phil Marquez Tray Race. It was a full day, and all the lodges had a great time. The Opening Ceremonies are the perfect opportunity to meet members from other lodges and reunite with old friends!

We had our local Santiago High School band and Drill Team lead our parade of lodges and the band played the National Anthem for us too. We had the lighting of the Elk Olympics cauldron too. Our Parade of lodges always shows great participation from each lodge. All representing their lodge in their lodge colors. In tradition with the Olympics the host marched in last. Garden Grove has hosted the Elk Olympics Opening Ceremonies since its start 14 years ago.

Through the month of October, we held events on most Saturdays and Sundays. Our lodge members enjoyed games such as Bowling, Golf, Pickle Ball, Beverage Pong, Axe Throwing and a newly added event Archery!

Chess was hosted by Mission Viejo and Captain Rick Moscoso PER. It was an exciting event and all the participants played well. At the end of the day our own Dan Binnix earned the gold, Jon Whittaker (Fullerton) received silver, and Mission Viejo’s Bobby Werner captured the bronze! It was also nice to see non-playing members attend to support the lodges!

The 2025 RREO came to an end on October 26th at the Huntington Beach Lodge. It was a spectacular ending to a great round of competitive games. Eric Skillman and Paul Escobar handed out the medals and made sure to thank all the participants and those involved in the planning of the event. The high point of the day was a surprise visit from the founder of the Elk Olympics, Rick Ross! With the help of Rick’s son, he made the trip from back east to attend the Closing Ceremonies. It was a great surprise for us all, and Rick enjoyed being part of the great event he started in 2012!

We are nearly finished with the 2026 Rick Ross Elk Olympics and as always, they have not disappointed. Every lodge has done their best and represented their lodge. We will close the events on October 25th at the Huntington Beach Lodge. We hope you will come out and support your lodge. And we hope that you have been attending the events and enjoying the friendly rivalries that have been created.





OLYMPIC COMMITTEE MERCH



Quantities Limited!!! See Paul Escobar to purchase your collector set today!

THE UGLY CHRISTMAS SWEATER

AND THE ELKS ... by Mark Schuster

There are few Christmas traditions where the goal is to look as ridiculous as possible. Yet every December, otherwise sensible adults proudly arrive at holiday parties wearing blinking lights, dangling ornaments, fuzzy reindeer, enormous snowflakes, tinsel and enough glitter to decorate a Christmas tree.

Welcome to the wonderful world of the Ugly Christmas Sweater

Christmas-themed sweaters first appeared commercially in the 1950s and were sometimes called “Jingle Bell Sweaters.” Unlike today’s intentionally outrageous creations, these early sweaters weren’t supposed to be ugly at all. They featured cheerful winter scenes, reindeer, snowflakes and other traditional holiday designs.

By the 1980s, brightly decorated Christmas sweaters had become much more noticeable in popular culture. But fashions change, and by the 1990s those once-festive sweaters had become decidedly uncool and their popularity plummeted.

But then something funny happened: being unfashionable became the whole point!

The modern Ugly Christmas Sweater Party is generally traced to Vancouver, British Columbia, where Chris Boyd and Jordan Birch organized a themed party in 2002. Guests were encouraged to find the most outrageous Christmas sweaters possible and proudly wear them. The idea caught on, and within a few years ugly-sweater parties were spreading throughout North America.

It probably shouldn’t surprise anyone that the Elks got into the act...

Elks Lodges across the country now hold Ugly Sweater parties and contests as part of their December festivities. Fullerton Elks Lodge #1993, for example, has combined its traditional Christmas Eve Egg Nog Party with an Ugly Sweater Contest. Culver City Lodge #1917 lists an Ugly Sweater Contest among its social activities. Other Lodges have combined ugly sweaters with Christmas dinners, music, karaoke, gift exchanges and charitable fundraisers.

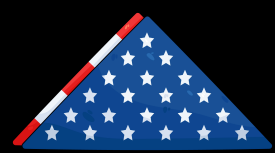
That combination of silliness and fellowship seems particularly well suited to Elkdom. After all, while our charitable work has a serious purpose, being an Elk has always included friendship, laughter and enjoying one another’s company.

So where does the Ugly Christmas Sweater fit into all this? Perhaps better than we might think:

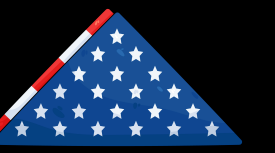
Underneath the flashing lights, stuffed Santas and questionable color combinations is something very familiar to an Elk: fellowship. It gives people an excuse to gather, laugh at themselves, welcome others and enjoy the Christmas season together.

The Elks may not have invented the Ugly Christmas Sweater. But when it comes to fellowship, good humor and finding another reason to gather with friends during the holidays, we certainly know what to do with one.





FLAG FOLDING AND RETIREMENT CEREMONY



By Stephanie Janji

Some traditions never grow old - they simply grow more meaningful with time. One of those traditions is the respectful retirement of the American flag, a ceremony that honors the symbol of our nation and the values we hold dear.

As the Americanism Chair for Garden Grove Elks Lodge 1952, I have had the privilege of participating in this solemn ritual and witnessing the deep respect our members and community show for Old Glory. A flag that has become worn, faded, or tattered has faithfully served its purpose. It has flown over homes, schools, businesses, and community gatherings. It has stood in the sunshine, weathered the rain, and proudly represented our country. When its time comes to be retired, it deserves more than disposal - it deserves a dignified farewell.

Our Flag Retirement Ceremony allows us to provide that honor.

There is something profoundly moving about standing together as a community while an American flag is retired with dignity. Veterans, Elk members, families, and friends gather side by side, and for a few moments, everyday distractions fade away. We remember the men and women who have worn our nation's uniform and those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the freedoms represented by those 50 stars and 13 stripes.

This year, we proudly continue that tradition- and add another meaningful moment.

During our "Fun Night" meeting on Thursday, October 29th, Garden Grove Elks will be folding unserviceable American flags in preparation for our upcoming Flag Retirement Ceremony. This step is more than practical; it is an act of respect. Each fold reflects care, gratitude, and reminds us why the American flag remains a powerful emblem of unity and patriotism. Please join us.

As Elks, patriotism is something we demonstrate through our actions and our commitment to community. Old Glory may be retired, but what she represents never will be. That is why we continue to honor the flag, honor our veterans, and keep this proud American tradition alive at Garden Grove Elks Lodge 1952.



WORD SEARCH

By Maria Cox

- HALLOWEEN
- OLYMPICS
- TIME CAPSULE
- RICK ROSS
- HAUNTED
- SCHOLARSHIPS
- FLAG RETIREMENT
- GHOSTS
- HONOR
- TRUNK OR TREAT
- LONG BEACH
- TRADITION
- UGLY SWEATER
- COLLECTIBLES
- POSTCARDS
- VETERANS DAY
- ELKS MATTER

Visit the History Page
at Elks1952.org
for the answers!

B.P.O.E. Trivia Answer

1995 - the 11 O'Clock Toast also changed,
from "absent brothers" to "absent members"

Garden Grove Trivia Answer

Garden Grove High School
(established in 1921)

GG Elks Trivia Answer



Mike Fiola



PLEASE LOOK FOR OUR NEXT QUARTERLY EDITION - COMING IN JANUARY 2027

GARDEN GROVE ELKS HISTORIAN COMMITTEE