

Gatlinburg Elks Lodge

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Gatlinburg Elks Lodge
#1925

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~~--- Exalted Ruler~~

CHRIS DAVIS

Leading Knight

DAVID HUBBS

Loyal Knight

HAROLD FINCHUM

Lecturing Knight

RICHARD ROGERS

Esquire

KERRY RICHARDSON

Secretary

BUD RICE

Treasurer

DOUG HARTLEY

Chaplin

BONNIE FINCHUM

Tiler

DAVID FAIRCHILD

Inner Guard

MIKE FITZGIBBONS

Organist

VICKI LEWIS

TRUSTEES

Leo (Benny) Benson

Douglas McGrath

Donald Gillespie

Winnard Wilemon

Bill Duncan

A WORD FROM THE EXALTED RULER

Fellow Elks:

There is one thing that you will hear from nearly everyone who attends an Elks' Grand Lodge Session: every Elk should attend at least one. It is indeed impressive to see such a large gathering of Elks in one place; nearly 4500 at the Orlando meeting, but once you get adjusted to the scale of the event it would be familiar to every Elk.

The Grand Lodge opened Sunday night with welcoming remarks from PGER Robert Grafton of Gainesville, Fla. The invocation was given by Grand Chaplain Rev. Father Jeffrey L. Wald and after a most impressive Parade of State Flags, Service Flags and presentation of the Stars and Stripes, the gathering offered the Pledge of Allegiance. GER Louis J. Grillo gave the main address and the meeting adjourned until Monday with the benediction.

On Monday morning reports by Grand Exalted Ruler Grillo, the Committee on Judiciary, the Board of Grand Trustees and the Elks National Fund were given. Afterwards came the election of the new Grand Exalted Ruler, Arthur "Jack" Frost of Oak Ridge. This was especially fun for the Tennessee delegation since we gave Jack a celebration lasting about ten minutes. After the session was adjourned for the day, I attended a luncheon for all Exalted Rulers, about 2500 of us, where we were exhorted to increase the Elks membership halting its decline of recent years.

On Tuesday came the reports of committees, hour after hour of reports of committees. This was pretty boring but it is the nuts and bolts work that carries on the Elks mission. Wednesday's session was devoted to balloting on issues of importance to Elks. Perhaps the issue that generated the most passion involved the Initiation Ritual. It was proposed that the Statues be amended to allow an optional degree team to administer the initiation instead of the Lodge officers. The pro side of the debate centered on the importance of having an impressive ritual and the con side emphasized the privilege and responsibility of the officers conducting the ritual. This resolution was defeated by a close vote of 1405 to 1534. Another vote of interest involved lowering the age requirement for membership from 21 to 18. This was defeated because it would open lounges to police enforcement of the age requirement for liquor sales.

Thursday we had the fun of having the top Male and Female Most Valuable Student scholarship winners presented. Tracy Ming of Ohio is headed for Harvard University to study international relations, and Robert Ryan of Arizona is going to Stanford for economics. Both of these students were awarded sixty thousand-dollar scholarships. Also we heard from Hoop Shoot winners Karlie Samuelson 10 years old from California, who scored a perfect 25 for 25 free throws, and Nicholas Fortenberry 9 years old from Georgia, who won a three-way shoot-off between two other competitors. The last order of business was the installation of the incoming officers, and how proud all the Tennessee Elks were of Jack Frost who will do an excellent job for the Elks.

Chris Davis, ER