

THE BUGLE

Brandon Elks Lodge #2383

800 CENTENNIAL LODGE DRIVE, BRANDON, FL 33510

ALL AMERICAN LODGE 1999-2000

PHONE 813-685-6469

FAX 813-643-5652



MAY 2021

www.brandonelks.org

Volume 21 Issue 5



Jim McCleary
Exalted Ruler

MESSAGE FROM YOUR EXALTED RULER

Elks Care - Elks Share

As my first written address to all of you as your new Exalted Ruler, I'd first like to once again thank PER Mark Vargo for his selfless leadership during a challenging year. As we look to the future of our Lodge, I began thinking of how we are going to rebound from the challenges presented by COVID. It will take many of us to do it! That is why I chose the theme of "Elks Revived, Elks Forward" for our 2021-2022 Lodge year. I want our members to feel reinvigorated about Elksdom, to renew the commitment to make our lodge a success and make a difference in our community. COVID has made a new reality for us all in many ways, but as more people get vaccinated, soon it will be time to kick the "new normal" to the curb and get back to the "old normal" that we all know and love. If you've been vaccinated, and you haven't yet come back to our lodge, I'd like to invite you back. We're still wearing masks until seated and have hand sanitizer available in the lodge. In the coming months, we'll have a lot of great activities for all of you to enjoy, starting this month with the Derby Party hosted by the BLOE on the 15th, and we will have our Memorial Day Picnic at the end of the month! In addition, if you can make it to our State Convention in Orlando, I would love to see you there! Finally, a big shout out to Jim Randall and all his volunteers that made the clay shoot benefitting our Boy Scout troop on April 10th so AWESOME! This fun event raised approximately \$7K for our Boy Scouts! What a phenomenal success! It's amazing what can be accomplished by Elks coming together in volunteerism! If you're wondering how you can help, please contact me! We have plenty of volunteer opportunities, and we certainly have fun when we work together! I look forward to serving you all this year. I remain grateful to all of you for what you do for our Lodge and Elksdom!

Fraternally,
Jim McCleary, Exalted Ruler

Elk of the Month

The Elk of the Month for April is Jeff Lavoie. Jeff has stepped up in a big way to help get our kitchen organized this month as well as volunteering for a bunch of snack bars and dinners. Now I know he gets a big assist from his wife Pat (or vice versa), and I would be remiss to not mention her, and we are really going to miss you both when you begin your summer travels across the country. Please stay safe and we can't wait for your return in the fall! Please congratulate and thank Jeff (and Pat) for being the Elk of the Month!



From the Secretary's Desk

If you have not paid your dues for 2021-2022 lodge year you are past due! Please pay your dues ASAP, so you remain an Elk in good standing! Plus, we'd really miss you!



Brandon Lodge Officers for 2021-2022 Elk Year



Jim McCleary
Exalted Ruler
813-763-9019



Marionette Sexton
Leading Knight
813-956-3776



Lou Valencia
Loyal Knight
813-376-9863

Joe Schreck
Lecturing Knight



Ed Campbell
Lodge Esquire
813-245-0827



Carolyn Greeson
Lodge Chaplain
813-436-0704



Robin Rutkze
Lodge Inner
Guard
305-498-5654



Lara McCleary
Lodge Tiler
203-988-5089



Mary Lou
Schreck
Secretary
813-689-2155



Nancy Price
Treasurer
813-477-7676



Nickie Wells
1 Year Trustee
813-716-8051



Delores Westfall
2 Year Trustee
813-363-1562



Larry Oliver
3 Year Trustee
813-767-0870



Ed Ciesla
4 Year Trustee
813-684-0122



Mark Vargo
5 Year Trustee
813-376-8855

1563



LOUNGE HOURS

Sunday: 1pm – 7pm
Monday - Thursday 4pm – 9pm
Friday 4pm – 10pm
Saturday 4pm – 9pm
MANAGER: WALTER BROOKS

Mary Lou Schreck

LODGE SECRETARY

Office Hours

MONDAY: 3pm – 5pm
WEDNESDAY: 3pm – 5pm
Or call for appointment

Nancy Price

LODGE TREASURER

Office Hours

MONDAY: 10am – 3pm
THURSDAY: 10am – 3pm
Or call for appointment

EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT
Dinner * Dancing * Music
OLDIES * COUNTRY * POP
Weekly PER & 50/50 Raffles
\$500 Club Drawing
9pm Absent Member Toast
Monthly Drink Specials

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 Social & Sports	31 11:00am - 4:00pm Memorial Day Picnic					1 7:00pm - 11:00pm Sweet 16- Lodge Hall
2 2:00pm Hawkins Memorial (Private) Social & Sports	3 BLOE Meeting PER Meeting	4 5:30pm -7:00pm Queen  Trivia or Cards, Pool snack bar open	5	6  STARTS: 6:30pm SNACK BAR:	7 Door: Carolyn Friday night dinner see page 4	8
9 8:00am - 11:00am BLOE Breakfast – Hall Social & Sports	10  Lodge Meeting 7PM	11 5:30pm -7:00pm Queen  Trivia or Cards, Pool snack bar open	12 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack MTG. - Hall	13  STARTS: 6:30pm SNACK BAR:	14 Door: Robin Friday night dinner see page 4	15 6:00pm - 11:00pm BLOE Kentucky Derby
16 1:00pm - 4:00pm FL Band Practice Social & Sports	17 7pm Governing Board Meeting	18 5:30pm -7:00pm Queen  Trivia or Cards, Pool snack bar open	19 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack MTG. - Hall BLOE Dinner 6:30 PM see page 5	20  STARTS: 6:30pm SNACK BAR:	21 Door: Lara Friday night dinner see page 4	22 6:30pm Trivia
23 Social & Sports	24	25 5:30pm -7:00pm Queen  Trivia or Cards, Pool snack bar open	26	27  STARTS: 6:30pm SNACK BAR:	28 FL State Elks Convention Door: Nancy Friday night dinner see page 4	29 May 27-29

Save the Date

May 10th, Lodge meeting

May 19th BLOE Dinner

May 20th 6:00 PM Brandon Boys

Lodge Meetings Are Open To Members In Good Standing and is the Place to Discuss any Lodge issues. 2nd Monday of each month!

Dress code for meetings is long pants and collared shirt for men.

Skirt, Dress, or long slacks for women.

PER Meeting – 1st Monday
Lodge Meeting 2nd Monday of month, 7pm
Governing Board mtg – 3rd Monday at 7pm
BLOE Ladies Meetings – 1st Monday of month at 7pm
Member Illness / Convalescence: Notify Lodge Secretary

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
2nd Sunday BLOE Breakfast
\$7
Tuesdays 7pm Boy Scouts

Please RSVP for Dinners
RSVPBrandonElks@yahoo.com

MAY MENU ITEMS

TO BE ASSURED OF A MEAL, PLEASE RSVP TO RSVPBRANDONELKS@YAHOO.COM
BY 10 A.M. THE DAY BEFORE THE MEAL.

MAY 7TH

TERRI & ED- \$TBD
SALAD
ENTRÉE: GATOR MARSALA
SIDES: PASTA, GARLIC BREAD
DESSERT

MAY 14TH

TBD

MAY 21TH

TBD

MAY 28TH

TBD



CALLING ALL CHEF'S! We are in desperate need of volunteers to cook Friday night dinners!

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE consider stepping up to cook a Friday night dinner for your fellow Elks! What you cook is up to you!

Kitchen Manager Needed

The Elks Lodge needs a member to manage the Kitchen.

This position requires coordinating with member cooks to arrange for Friday night dinners and Tuesday and Thursday night snack bars.

Controlling the Kitchen by maintaining the cleanliness of the Kitchen and passing health inspections.



BLOE BITS

Next Meeting is May 3rd at 7:00 PM
Hoping to See You There!

By: Terri Ciesla
B.L.O.E. President

April has been filled with lots of Elks activities and lots of fun.

We started out with our first meeting for the new year where we recognized Grace Weigand as our Lady of Distinction for April. We are extremely grateful and thankful for all she does for our ladies' group. Congratulations Grace.

I was so happy to see folks getting back to normal. Over 80 folks attended the Spring Brunch we held. It was so much fun with the yummy food, over 10 vendors, the wonderful Jenny Roberts speaking and many auction items. I want to thank everyone that helped to make this event happen.

Be sure you tell all your friends about the Horse Race event we are having on May 15. This event is always so much fun!! A brief reminder, you can be a horse owner for \$10 and name your horse, you can be a jockey for \$5 or you can just join us for dinner and bet on your favorite horse and jockey. Tickets for the event are \$10 and are available at the bar or from Terri Ciesla. I know you and your friends will have a lot of fun!

Please join us on the second Sunday of the month for breakfast and on the third Wednesday of the month for our ladies' dinner. The next breakfast is on Mother's day May 9. Hope to see you there.

I am looking forward to all the monthly events we have planned.

"That risk you are afraid to take, could be the one that changes your entire life." Kylie Francis

See you at the lodge, Terri

Brandon Ladies of Elks



MAY LADY OF DISTINCTION

Whether it is helping at Sunday Breakfast, Wednesday Night Dinners or Catering you will always find our April Lady of Distinction lending a hand. She goes about her work prepping, setting up and cleaning up with little fanfare. She always continues her cleaning up by bringing tablecloths and napkins home to wash. Her husband and her prepare the Wednesday Night Dinner in March every year and this year, even with the pandemic, we still made a substantial profit. She is fierce when it comes to selling raffle tickets. Her raffle selling skills are a force to be reckoned with as she makes sure she attends all events going on when we have baskets and people are so used to her asking for raffle money, they automatically take out their wallet when they see her coming. She is fun to work with and a fabulous trivia player, but her real skill is on the golf course. Just in case you haven't guess it yet, our Lady of Distinction for April is **Grace Weigand**.

2675

500 Club Winners

The 500 club names recently drawn were: Lee Harvey, Kim Oliver, Stephen Ferrar – NOT SIGNED UP // Donna Martineau, Mary Ann Kramer – SIGNED UP!
Congratulations!

Brandon Ladies of Elks

Wednesday May 19th, 2021
Nancy's Famous Meatloaf Dinner



Guest Chef – Nancy Price

Time: 6:30 – 7:30 pm Cost \$8

Menu: Meatloaf, mashed potatoes, veggies and dessert

RSVP: RSVPBrandonElks@yahoo.com

Bingo Schedule

2706

Bingo Helpers	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Table 4 6:30	Barbra	Grace Weigand	Barbra Myers	Grace Weigand	Bob
Table 4 6:30	Sandy/Jim	Mary Ryan	Barbra	Sandy/Jim	Mary Ryan
Table 4 6:30	Trudy Wade	Trudy Wade	Trudy Wade	Trudy Wade	Trudy Wade
Call Bingo 6:30/7:45	Nicky Wells	Mark Vargo	Ron Mathews	Jane Moon	Ron Mathews
Call Bingo 7:45/9:00	Nancy Price	Mary Lou Scribner		Rick Weigand	Marionette
Call Bingo 6:30/7:45	Jeannie Barfield	Jeannie Barfield	Jeannie Barfield	Don Moon	Jeannie Barfield
Call Bingo 7:45/9:00	Lori Underberg	Sharon H	Beth Benham	Jeannie Barfield	

We are still looking for a few more volunteers to help with Bingo - Call Marionette at 813-956-3776



Brandon Lodge #2383 Hosts Food Drive and Gift Card Drive-Thru

Our Brandon Lodge continues to be active in supporting our local community. SWC DVP Sharon Hammersla, PER Mary Lou Scribner and Veterans Chair Robin Rutzke hosted the third "Drive-Thru Drop-Off" on Saturday, March 20th. They manned the event from 8:00 am to noon.

The purpose of the drive-thru was to make it easy for our members to be involved and contribute to our community. Members were asked to stop by and drop-off food donations and/or gift cards to local restaurants and/or grocery stores. All donated food to be contributed to the local food bank sponsored by Nativity Church. All gift-cards to be donated during a presentation to the Captain of Brandon local Fire-Department, Fire Station 18.

Thank you, members, the day was successful! The drive successfully collected 433 pounds of food that SWC DVP Hammersla dropped off at the Nativity Food Bank warehouse. Mary Lou Scribner, PER, said she was proud of the generosity of our Brandon members; 30 gift cards with a total value \$600 was collected to be presented to the Brandon local Fire-Department.

Robin shared, "There is more to this than just collecting food and gift cards for our community. It is also a much-needed opportunity for many of our Elk members to just get out and visit, as some members are still self-quarantining and limiting their outside exposure. With a drive-by, they can stay in their cars, food is unloaded, and we can stand outside and just chat." Sharon stated that she visited with members that she's never seen before because they are members who were installed right before COVID hit. These newer members said they were happy to be able to do something positive for our community. Brandon Elks Care – Brandon Elks Share



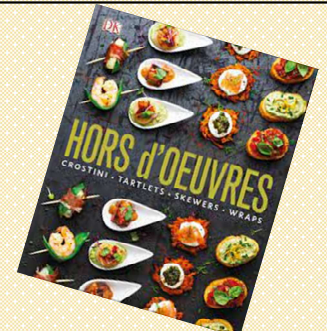
March 19th, 2022

Get your tickets early

\$50 each – comes with 2 drinks and Hors d'oeuvres

WIN up to \$2,500

See Marionette Sexton to purchase tickets



Annual Calendar

The annual calendar will be updated to reflect any dinners or events that will take place in the Lodge. You should also check the Brandon Elks Facebook page and Brandonelks.org for events. Please RSVP for Dinners "brandonelksrsvp@Yahoo.com"



Elks Care Elks Share



BRANDON ELKS #2383 PARTNERS WITH JAMES A. HALEY HOSPITAL

The Brandon Lodge #2383 has a long-standing partnership with the James A. Haley Hospital. For many years our Lodge has visited the Veterans for holidays, invited Veterans to Wednesday Night Veterans dinners and hosted special Veteran picnics.

On Saturday, March 6th, Brandon Veteran Chair Robin Rutzke invited Geoff Hopkins, M.Ed. Chief of Recreation Therapy at James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital, to join the Southwest Central District (SWCD) during a planned event for the SWCD visitation of Florida State Elks Association President Rudy Masi and his wife, PER Dolly Masi. Robin asked Rudy if he would do the honor of presenting a contribution to Geoff Hopkins, made possible by the Freedom Grant awarded to our lodge. Anybody who knows Rudy knows anything dealing with supporting our Veterans is extremely dear to his heart.

FSEA Rudy presented Geoff with \$750 in Olive Garden Gift cards along with a check for \$300. Olive Garden works with James A. Haley in meeting the Veterans dietary restrictions. Geoff said the \$300 donation will be put to good use in supporting their annual picnic for their long-term patients. This year, due to COVID, this picnic will be held at the hospital. It is everyone's hope that next year's picnic can again be held and hosted by our Lodge.

Geoff shared that as a child he had fond memories of visiting the Elks with his father. Naturally this led into a conversation inquiring into Geoff's knowledge of Elkdom and resulted in an invitation by President Rudy for Geoff to become an Elk. As a result, Geoff will be sponsored by President Rudy Masi and will be joining the Zephyrhills Elks Lodge #2731 as an Elk.

Thank you everyone for making this past year a great year for veteran support in our lodge. Even though it has been a hard year for all, we never forgot those who served and gave up so much of their life and family time for us and to our country. Without you and many other lodge members, we could not accomplish as much as we do for our veterans. You make the difference! With your continued support we can keep assisting our vets in many ways. *"So long as there are veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them."*

v/r

Robin, Veterans Committee Chair



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"...whoever is kind to the needy honors God." Proverbs 14:31



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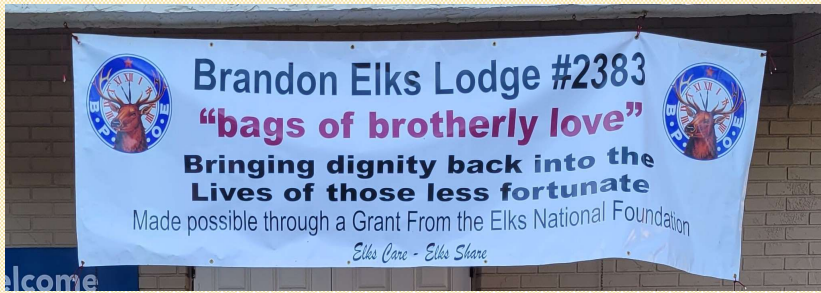
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It is with great thanks and good news that the Homeless Initiative Outreach sponsored by Bell Shoals Baptist Church and co-sponsored by Brandon Elks Lodge was a great success on April 13th. It has been over a year since we have had an outreach and the community was definitely ready and welcoming. We want to thank all the volunteers that helped bags of brotherly love with this event and donations from members that keep us going. Thanks to Ed Campbell and his girlfriend Elaine for working the clothing table with the church's volunteers; Sharon Hammersla for working at our table handing out the bags of brotherly love along with Monica Rodriguez. Thanks also to Monica for donations submitted from her company, Care Plus, in the form of water and item donations for the bags that we will put to good use in the month to come. Thanks to Kathy Eldridge who supplied baseball caps where these will be used for a project that Sharon Hammersla and Robin Rutkze have coordinated for veterans. A special thanks to our Exalted Ruler Jim McCleary and his wife Lara who took time out of their workday to come and join us for a couple of hours to help distribute the bags. Jim and Lara even escorted several of the homeless while getting their choice of clothing at the clothing tables. We handed out 191 bags between the homeless that attended the event, bags given to the church that help the homeless on a continuing basis, the sheriff deputies, and the Tampa Police Dept. officers that keep the bags in their vehicles at all times in case the need arises for someone in the community, and organizations of Gracepoint and DAACO that help the homeless on a daily basis with housing and food assistance along with other necessary needs. Bags of brotherly love also received many donations of food, socks, and hygiene items from fellow partners for the homeless which will help to continue our mission of bringing dignity back to the lives of those less fortunate. We are so proud of our members and volunteers that share in this program represented by the lodge. Our partners are constantly commenting how wonderful the donations are being used and put together in the bags. We do not know when the next major outreach will be, but we will let everyone know as soon as we know. In the meantime, we will continue to assemble bags of brotherly love and fill a community need to help the homeless and those less fortunate. Thanks again to all of our wonderful lodge members and taking on this much needed project to show the true spirit of Elks Care, Elks Share.

Bags of Brotherly Love
Bob and Elisa Blair
813-758-8894



Helping Those Who Served!

The Brandon Lodge has a long-standing history to be proud of with supporting Veterans and our lodge has been there for years in various ways supporting the homeless Veterans of Liberty Manor. Liberty Manor for Veterans is a not-for-profit organization that houses homeless Veterans and helps them transition back into civilian life and to be independent and productive citizens.

Recently our Lodge donated \$750 of our awarded Spotlight Grant to help the disabled veterans housed at Liberty Manor. Robin Rutzke, Brandon's Veteran Chair, interacts frequently with Liberty Manor. Robin picked up on a "need" to help the physically disabled Veterans residing there. Their current bathroom consisted of a tub which required them to swing their legs over to take a shower. The Veterans' physical disabilities and/or age made this a challenging and precarious task. Robin saw a need, and our Lodge stepped up to support our Veterans.

With the Spotlight Grant funding, our lodge made a donation to purchase a low base walk-in shower. In March of this year, David Lindsay, the backbone of this organization who donates his time and many talents to the Veterans, did all the remodeling work himself. The Veterans see this upgrade as a true luxury; one that the Brandon Lodge is proud to have been able to provide. Founder and CEO Connie Lindsay said, "The veterans are thrilled to have this walk-in shower completed. It was so necessary due to their limited ability to lift their leg over a traditional tub. This is a true Easter blessing. Thank you to all!"

As Long as there are Veterans they will never be forsaken or forgotten by the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks!

Once again.....Brandon Elks Care and Brandon Elks Share!

**VETERANS AFFAIRS
Committee Chair
Robin Rutzke**

**BPOE Inner Guard
USAF (ret)
305-498-5654**



Any questions or concerns about the Veterans the Elks Lodge serves or note worthy Veteran events, please address them with Robin.

God Bless our Veterans.



St. Patrick Day Picnic for Liberty Manor Veterans

It continues to be a challenge on how best to support and interact with our Veterans during the continuing COVID restrictions. However, Brandon Veteran Chair Robin Rutzke (and retired Air Force Senior Master Sergeant) continues to come up with creative ways to put the awarded Spotlight Grant to good use.

On March 17th, Robin, along with fellow veteran Glenn Garvey and SWCD VP Sharon Hammersla, visited Liberty Manor for Veterans with a plethora of goodwill and gifts! Because of the Spotlight Grant, our lodge was able to provide a picnic lunch while Robin, Sharon and Glenn visited with the Liberty Manor residents. The Veterans enjoyed a typical picnic of fried chicken, deli sandwiches, and baked beans along with a St. Patrick's Day dessert. In addition, all the picnic supplies, such as plates, plastic utensils, paper towels, cups and disinfecting wipes were provided. And more importantly, the Veterans enjoyed and appreciated the interaction during the visit.

In addition, our lodge provided Liberty Manor \$700 in Walmart gift cards. Normally our lodge hosts the monthly dinner for the Veterans, however, due to COVID, the Veterans are not able to attend. Connie Lindsay, founder and CEO of Liberty Manor, said the Walmart gift cards will be put to good use to purchase dinners for the veterans as needed. One Veteran even put in his request for pizza for one of their movie nights.

The Veterans were also gifted with an abundance of household items for the kitchen as well as bath towel sets for each Veteran. Robin said it's the little things that are really appreciated by our Veterans, and it touched her to watch each Veteran's appreciation as they picked out their bath towel set. One of our Brandon members made an anonymous donation of a case of cat food and container of treats. One of the Liberty Manor Veterans, while struggling with cancer, has adopted a stray cat which the house has adopted. This Veteran was brought close to tears at the thoughtfulness of this gesture. Sharon said that "our hearts were full."

A total of \$1,364 from the awarded Spotlight Grant was put to good use during this Patrick Day visit with Liberty Manor. Our Lodge is proud to be able to make a positive difference for our Veterans and we are grateful to our Brandon Grant Coordinator, SWCD VP Hammersla for her diligent work applying for the Elk's generous grants. While we Elks don't do this for recognition, CEO Connie Lindsay did present the Lodge a Certificate of Appreciation which was much appreciated.

**10510 Riverview Drive
(813) 671-3121**



1260

**Riverview, Florida 33578
813) 671-3730 Fax**

**Kevin Talbert
Director / Owner**

**Linda Hinkle
Office Manager**

**Mark C. Vargo, Sr.
Director / Owner**

Brandon Elks Lodge #2383

800 Centennial Lodge Drive
Brandon, FL 33510

****Change Service Requested**



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Every Thursday Night at 6:30pm
Brandon Elks Lodge



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