

Greetings,

I have exciting news to share with you. It is my pleasure to announce to my Elks family my engagement to Kristin Doll, 4yr Trustee. Our first date in 2016 was at the Wausau Elks Lodge, so I thought it would be appropriate to propose to Kristin there as well. After some secretive cleaning and painting, I asked Kristin to marry me after a private dinner upstairs in Charlie's Heaven. I would like to thank Chef Brian Pekah and Amanda Pekah for making that night so wonderful, Scott Walhart for his help in preparing the room, and all of our friends and family who helped us celebrate.

Several weeks ago, we received an email from the wife of an active member who was concerned about the political rhetoric in the lounge and at Lodge events. She went so far as to say that the incessant political commentary at the Lodge made her question whether she would want to become a member herself. I believe she makes a good point, and one that is worth some self-reflection by all of us. Like many you, I also have strong political opinions, but the Lodge is not the place for them. The Lodge is the place to focus on what binds us together as brothers and sisters in Elkdom, and what we can do to foster an atmosphere of fraternity and camaraderie. Divisive political commentary is counterproductive to this, and can alienate current and prospective members. Please keep politics out of our Lodge.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank my friend and fellow Elk, PER Arnie Luechau. Arnie recently received the honor of being named Elk of the Year for the Northeast District. Additionally, in the spirit that earned him this award, Arnie also donated his snowblower to the Lodge after our aging snowblower finally gave up the ghost. Congratulations and thank you again Arnie; your donation and continuing support is truly appreciated.

I would also like to encourage all of you to participate in and enjoy our upcoming events this month. May 3-5 is the State Convention in Appleton, which is open to all members. If you have never been to a State Convention, I highly recommend it. The Shriner's Onion Sale is May 11th, Mother's Day Brunch is May 12th, and we have Initiation of new members at the Lodge meeting on May 16th. I encourage all of you to attend the initiation to greet our new members and renew your own obligation.

Lastly, for the remainder of my year as ER, I will be relinquishing my parking spot next to the elevator every Friday for our members and friends who are veterans. Each week, the name of a veteran will be drawn at random from our Lodge roster, and they will get the ER parking spot the following Friday. The winner of the parking spot will be contacted the week prior, and their name will be posted on the parking spot's sign that Friday.

Thank you all for your continuing support at patronage, and I hope to see you all at the Lodge.

Fraternally Yours,

Adam Doede Exalted Ruler



NEWS FROM THE LODGE SECRETARY

I would like to start this month's message by thanking those who commented on the one that appeared in last month's bulletin. Whether the reaction was positive or negative, at least some members read the publication. That being said, I need to clarify several points. First, I am not advocating that we dispense with our opening and closing rituals and instead move our meetings to the bar as did the San Clemente Rotary club. Rather, I simply wish to point out that good things can happen when we "think out of the box." Any successful organization remains so by staying relevant. That means members and the public completely understand how the organization fits into today's world. Sometimes that requires "rebranding." Our financial troubles are no secret and in fact are well detailed. So what's next? As the old saying goes, there are no more awards for predicting floods, only for building arks.

April 1 brought the start of a new Lodge year. Our official membership count stands at 627 as compared to 658 starting the past year. To date, 154 members have not paid dues for the new year. Because we must pay the \$23 required by Grand Lodge and Wisconsin Elks, regardless of whether all members have paid their dues, \$3542 came from our treasury to pay our total assessment. If you have not yet paid your dues, please do so immediately so that we can restore that money.

Ridge