



**History of the**  
*Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks*  
**Livonia Lodge No. 2246**



On May 18, 1961, a letter was sent from Spencer E. Puthoff, Elk Member, Plymouth Lodge #1530, to the Chairman, New Lodge Committee, Michigan Elks Association, requesting consideration of a new Livonia Lodge. In June 1961, permission was granted by Past Grand Exalted Ruler, Edward J. McCormick to proceed with formation of a Lodge in Livonia, Michigan.

On August 21, 1961 a letter was sent to approximately 330 local residents, who were already members of various Elk lodges throughout the area, to discuss forming a new Elks Lodge in Livonia. After several meetings, a request for a B.P.O. Elks Charter was submitted and granted by the Grand Lodge of the Order.

On Sunday, December 10, 1961 the new Livonia Elks Lodge No. 2246 was instituted with 153 charter members (only nine remain as Livonia Lodge members today). The ceremony was initiated by Officers of Plymouth Lodge No. 1780 at the Wayne-Ford Civic League Hall, 1661 North Wayne Road just south of Ford Road.



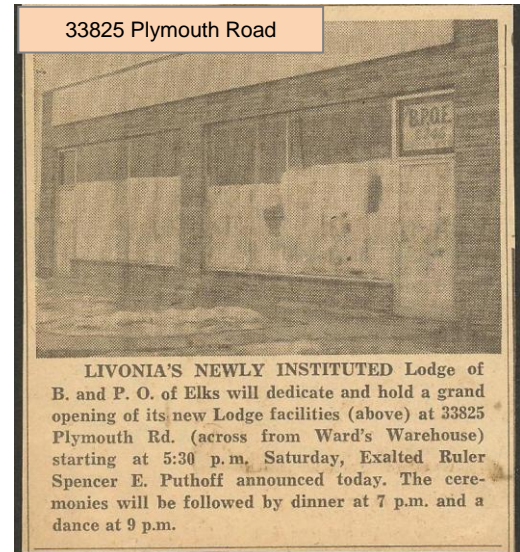
Livonia Elks 1st Class, December 10, 1961



Our first official lodge meeting was held on January 3, 1962 at Danny's Suburban Chop House, 30325 Six Mile Road, west of Middlebelt (later known as Vargo's). A regular meeting schedule was established for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month. By-Laws were also recommended to the members and accepted soon thereafter.

The task of finding a more suitable meeting place was of utmost importance and, in February 1962, we re-located to 33825 Plymouth Road, west of Farmington Road. A formal Dedication and Grand Opening to celebrate our new facilities was held on March 17, 1962.

Our first bar was a wood board supported by beer cases (later, a permanent bar was built.) Many dinner dances were held, however, all the food was cooked in electric roasters by the women of our Lodge because we did not have a kitchen.



### The Fawns Club began in October 1962

The initiation of 73 charter members of The Fawns Club and the first installation of officers of the newly formed club was held on October 6, 1962. Over the years, the Fawns were instrumental in various fundraising events. They often held rummage and bake sales, craft shows, ran a Country Store, and planned many dances and lodge activities.





In June 1964, Livonia Elks issued its first "official" monthly publication, titled "Old Bill." This publication placed second in the National Elks Bulletin Contest for 1965-66.

## ***Livonia Elks Earn Second In Nation***

Jack R. Murphy, Exalted Ruler of Livonia Elks Lodge No. 2246, has announced receipt of official notice from Grand Lodge Activities Chairman James A. Gunn that "OLD BILL", official monthly publica-



tion of the Livonia Elks Lodge, has placed SECOND in the National Elks Bulletin Contest for 1965-1966.

Singled out for special praise and the gratitude of his lodge brothers was H. Dow Tunis, 29843 Lori, Livonia. According to Murphy, "Mr. Tunis, who was Exalted Ruler of Livonia during 1964-1965, was instrumental in the formation of the publication just two years ago. He won the lodge contest for naming the bulletin and contributed a majority of the articles and pictures published during the first year." In June 1965, Tunis succeeded Richard Baade as Editor of "OLD BILL".

Murphy stated that, "The award is a great honor for Livonia and a singular tribute to Tunis. As a one-man committee with a borrowed camera, a beat-up typewriter, a sense of humor and originality, he contributed the maximum effort which was necessary to place Livonia in the national rankings."

The name "Old Bill" was taken from a 97-year-old tradition that is associated with Elkdom. Lodges throughout the country used the name "Bill" to welcome visiting brothers. Every lodge prided itself on extending its hospitality and greetings to a brother from another Elk Lodge.

The publication started as four pages of pictures and social event recaps. Due primarily to Tunis' contributions the bulletin soon reached eight pages and was climaxed with a 28-page edition last December, which included not only pictures and recaps but feature articles, editorials and local interest news items. It is mailed free of charge to 400 Livonia Elks. Due to the many requests received from all over the state, the current mailing list has swelled to over 500 copies each month.

The name "OLD BILL" was taken from the 97-year-old tradition that is associated with Elkdom. Over 2,000 lodges throughout the country use the name "Bill" to welcome visiting brothers. Every lodge prides itself on extending its hospitality and greetings to a brother from another Elks Lodge. Thus the name "OLD BILL", although not original, is unique as the banner on a lodge publication.

Livonia Lodge will be presented with a commemoration plaque at the Grand Lodge Convention in Dallas in July.

Note: The monthly publication was renamed "The Bugle Call" in September 1966.



As our membership increased and the Lodge prospered, it became apparent that larger and more permanent quarters were needed.

An ideal location was found at the corner of Plymouth Road and Denne Avenue with plenty of room for expansion.

Denne Land Company, Inc. was formed in 1965 and debentures were sold to the members in order to buy the property which consisted of approximately 3.5 acres.

#### History of Denne Land Company, Inc.

The following information was published by the Board of Directors of Denne Land Company in November 1971 in order to inform the members of the Livonia Elks Lodge about the purpose of the Company.

Plymouth & Denne Avenue



The new home of the Livonia Elks as seen from Plymouth Road. Located at the corner of Denne, one block east of Merriman.

#### HISTORY OF DENNE LAND COMPANY, INC.

Denne Land Company, Inc., was originally formed in 1965 by the Building Committee of the Livonia Elks Lodge #2246. Denne Land Company is a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Michigan and is restricted, by its charter, to activities that are concerned with providing land and building facilities for the Livonia Elks Lodge.

The need for this "extra" corporation (the Livonia Elks Lodge is also a non-profit corporation) is associated with the Elks Grand Lodge Statutes which prohibit any subordinate Lodge from directly investing in land or building unless they have funds equivalent to 60% of the total purchase price. Although the Grand Lodge statute was adopted during the Depression of the 30's, when many Lodges went bankrupt, it still remains in force today. At the time Denne Land Company was formed, the Livonia Elks Lodge was about four years old and was interested in purchasing land for development of the Lodge. With no substantial amount of cash on hand, formation of Denne Land Company enabled us to sell a sufficient quantity of debentures so as to raise the necessary down payment on a land contract for the purchase of the three acres of property we now own.

We moved into the "old house" in the spring of 1966 and it became our Lodge building. It was obvious, of course, that more facilities were needed, so a building program was put into planning. The initial plan recognized that we needed as much space as we could obtain, within a limited availability of funds. We began construction of a new building (now our Lodge Room, kitchen and washroom facilities) in 1967, and occupied the building for the first time in April, 1968. The financing for this effort was, once more, acquired through the sale of debentures to members and the Lodge itself and also from the five year contractor debentures which were issued to some of the contractors who erected the building. The contractor debentures were all paid off before they reached three years of age.

When our so called "new building" was erected in 1967-68, a patio, measuring 30' by 50', was poured immediately to the east of the building. With future expansion in mind, footings (comparable to the actual building) were also poured. In 1970, we recognized that our present building had been outgrown, and initiated

the program of closing in the patio for use as a larger lounge. Also, we occupied the old house on an appeal basis (as it does not conform to Livonia's commercial building code) which expires in August of 1972 and it may be necessary to demolish the house at that time. The construction costs of this latest effort were paid, principally, through Denne Land Company's operating revenues, although additional purchases of debentures by members also helped greatly.

The latest addition to our building, the lounge we presently occupy, was completed in September, 1971. It represents the latest part of our building, development program.

This is a summary of the history of Denne Land Company, Inc. from its inception to date.

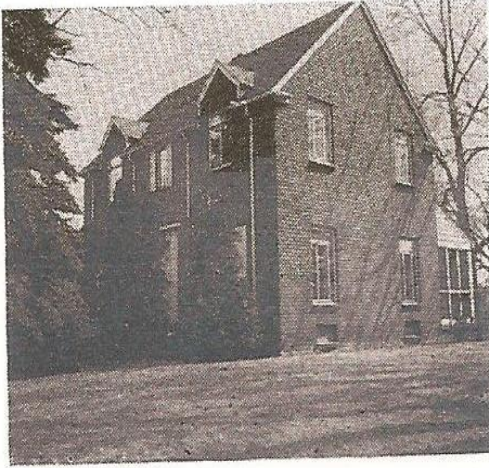
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In June 1966, Livonia Elks No. 2246 moved to their new address at 31117 Plymouth Road. The "old house" on the property served as our Lodge, complete with an apple orchard in the back (currently our parking lot). The former owner of the orchard sold apples out of a stand on Plymouth Road. The house was eventually renovated and was called the "Red Carpet Lounge."

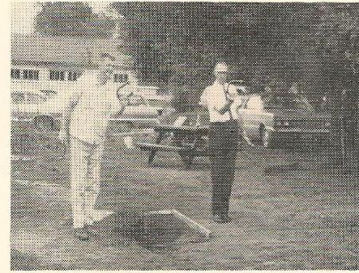
Following are various photographs from first edition of "The Bugle Call," September 1966, Volume 1 No. 1



Temporary home of the Livonia Elks. This building at 31117 Plymouth Road is serving as our interim location pending the construction of a new building at the same location. Though somewhat restrictive in indoor facilities the Elks and Fawns are finding the temporary quarters comfortable. It is nice to have the privacy of our own building, on our own land . . . and to know that in the not too distant future we will have a much better building with all the facilities we need. If you haven't visited our new location, stop by soon.



The afternoons are never lonely in the Lounge. If you've got a few minutes and you're in the area . . . drop by and say "hello".



Popular in the late afternoons and early evenings is the horseshoe court. Almost any day you can find a spirited match from 4 p.m. on.



Our picnic grove situated among the fruit trees. A popular spot on Sunday afternoons and the site of our Annual Picnic on September 18th.

### How About That New Parking Lot!

Yes sir, it's just great. The new parking lot, that is. Lots of room, easy parking, no mud, no sweat. And,



Our New Parking Lot.

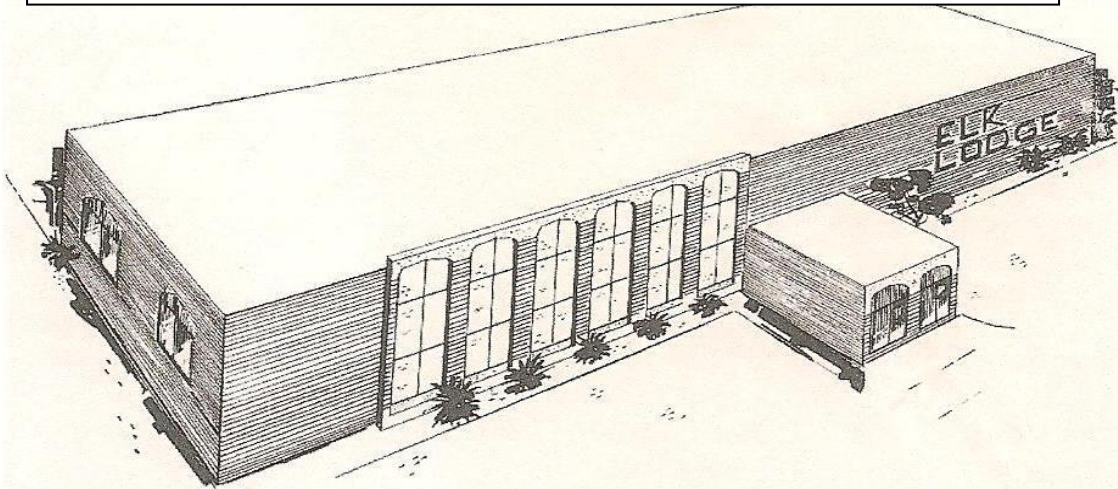
it's lighted! Entrances are off Plymouth Road and off Denne Road. Just great!



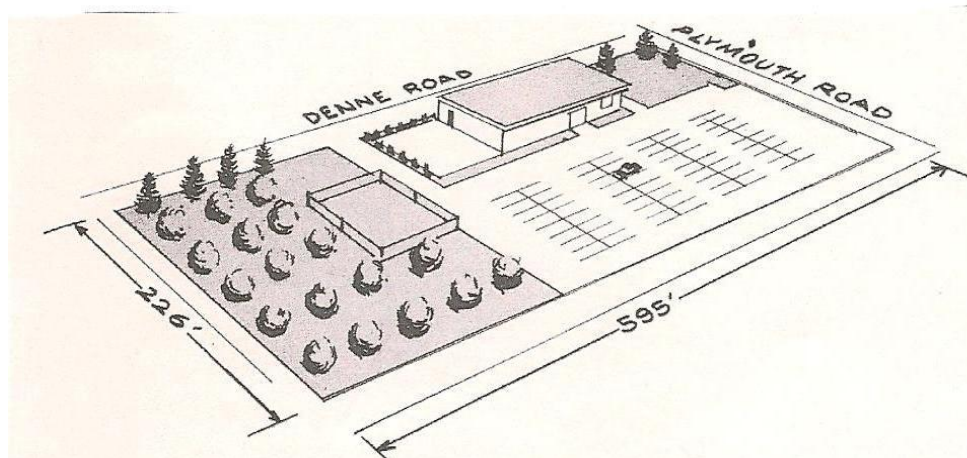
In August 1966, members approved the hiring of architect William Lindhout to design a new Lodge building. Denne Land Company sold debentures in various values from \$100 and up, to provide funding for the construction. After the first two structures were completed (Lodge Room and Bar/Lounge), the old Lodge house was torn down.

The new building was to include a large Lodge room and hall with kitchen facilities, an attractive bar and lounge, Officer, Committee, and Fawn meeting rooms, office for the Secretary, a card room, coat room, ample storage, and be completely air conditioned. Also included in the plans were a covered entranceway and parking lot to accommodate 60 cars, with expansion room for an additional 140 cars. In addition, outdoor facilities were to include a barbeque pit, horse shoe courts, shuffleboard, large picnic area, patio off the south end of building and children's play area.

**(Architect William Lindhout's building design below was not carried out.)**



The artist rendering of the exterior elevation of the new building illustrates the attractive design that will be incorporated into the construction of our new Elk Lodge. Note the enclosed entranceway providing an attractive admission to the building.



This "birdseye view" shows the location of the new building on the property. Also visible are the large parking area, the picnic grove, the children's play area and the patio.

In October 1967, Livonia City Officials joined officers of Livonia Elks in a ground breaking ceremony for our new Lodge building. One addition after another was built on the new building and many changes have been made over the years to facilitate our needs.

The Livonia Observer, Wednesday, October 11, 1967, Vol. 28 No. 58



LIVONIA CITY OFFICIALS join officers of Livonia Elks Lodge in ground breaking for the new \$175,000 temple at 31117 Plymouth Road. Mayor Harvey Moelke handles the first shovel of dirt before Elks' leaders. The group includes: (Front from left) Leading Knight William Yates, District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Ralph Soper, Exalted Ruler Bob Lyons, Mayor Moelke, Edward Pinardi and Council President Peter Ventura; (back from left) Robert Whall, Richard Baade, Howard White and Jack Murphy.

## Elks Break Ground For New Building

The Livonia Elks Lodge is going to spend \$175,000 to build a better clubhouse.

Ground was broken Saturday on the club's site at 31117 Plymouth Road, with quite a delegation of present and past officers participating.

Turning the earth in the usual kickoff manner was Mayor Harvey W. Moelke. Lending a hand was Robert J. Lyons, exalted ruler, and Edward F. Pinardi, chairman of the Denne Land Co.

With a group of club members stood Ralph W. Soper, district deputy grand exalted ruler; James E. Harris, south east district vice president; past exalted rulers Spencer E. Puthoff, H. Dow Tunis, Jack Murphy and Richard Baade, and Board member Howard White.

FIRST PHASE of the expansion is an addition to the two story house that became the Elks home two years ago. The next phase will be the remodeling of the present structure, to turn it into a lounge, and the building of an addition at the rear.

The lodge, organized here in 1961 with 153 members, has initiated about 500 new members since, Tunis said.

The primary goals of the order are charity, justice, brotherly love and fidelity. Livonia Lodge has consistently been in the top 10 among the 71 Michigan lodges, in donations to such charitable pro-

jects as the Michigan Major Project which aids crippled children and the Elks National Foundation which aids in medical research and academic achievement.

Livonia placed second in the nation in the lodge bulletin contest in 1966 and third in the district ritual contest. Its recreation league team won the city championship in 1966 and placed second in the state.

"The basic goal of the lodge is to help others--and have fun doing it," Tunis said.

The Order of Elks is celebrating its centennial this year with the motto "A Proud Past - A Challenging Future".

The "old house" after the first phase of the building expansion project.





On Sunday, November 10, 1968, Livonia Elks held a dedication ceremony to unveil a new memorial plaque honoring Livonia servicemen killed in the Korean and Vietnam conflicts. The money for the plaque was raised by placing canisters in business establishments throughout the City of Livonia.

Livonia Observer, November 13, 1968



Following is an excerpt from a letter by H. Dow Tunis, District Vice President, Michigan Elks Association to the Elks Magazine Publicity Chairman:

*"The brothers of the Lodge under the Chairmanship of Jim Jacobs, Chairman, Americanism Committee, conducted an extremely moving ceremony in front of their new building before approximately 190 people. Traffic literally stopped on Plymouth Road as the program moved from hoisting the new flag by the VFW Color Guard, to the unveiling of the memorial, to a three round volley and taps. Many cars pulled over to the side of the highway to watch and if we could count those who slowed down to see the ceremony our attendance probably would have surpassed four hundred. This was an event in the true image of our Order and one that made you very proud to be an Elk."*



### Various Milestones

- May 18, 1961 ..... Letter from Spencer E. Puthoff, Elk Member, Plymouth Lodge #1530, to Chairman, New Lodge Committee, Michigan Elks Association, requesting consideration of new Livonia Lodge
- June 1961..... Permission granted by Past Grand Exalted Ruler, Edward J. McCormick to proceed with formation of a Lodge in Livonia, Michigan
- August 21, 1961 ..... Letters sent to approximately 330 local residents, who were already members of various Elk lodges throughout the area, to discuss forming a new Elks Lodge in Livonia
- December 10, 1961..... New Livonia Elks Lodge No. 2246 was instituted with 153 Charter Members
- January 3, 1962 ..... First official Lodge meeting held at Danny's Suburban Chop House
- March 17, 1962 ..... Formal dedication and Grand Opening of Livonia Elks new location 33825 Plymouth Rd.
- October 6, 1962 ..... Fawns Club formed
- June 1964..... First "official" publication of news bulletin titled "Old Bill"
- January 1965 ..... Livonia Elks first appearance in Southeast District Ritual Contest
- 1965 ..... Denne Land Company, Inc. formed
- June 1966..... Livonia Elks moved to new address at 31117 Plymouth Rd.
- September 1966..... Newsletter renamed "The Bugle Call" (Volume 1 – Number 1)
- September 1966..... Elk of the Year Award adopted by the Grand Lodge  
Livonia Lodge named its first recipient - Gene A. "Skip" Tabbert
- October 1967 ..... Ground breaking ceremony held to commemorate construction of new Lodge building. Phase I included construction of new building addition to the "old house"
- March 1968 ..... Livonia Elks held its first meeting in the newly built Lodge
- November 10, 1968..... Livonia Elks unveiled new War Memorial Plaque honoring all Livonians killed in the Korean and Vietnam conflicts
- November 8, 1980..... Livonia Lodge and Livonia Recreation Department sponsored very first "Hoop Shoot" Contest for youngsters ages 8 through 13 years
- May 1982..... Wednesday Bingo moved to a new home located at the Joy Social Hall, 8600 Haller, Livonia, MI
- July 1982 ..... Wednesday Bingo moved to V.F.W. Hall, 27345 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI
- May 16, 1984 ..... "50-Uppers", Elks Retiree Club formed
- October 29, 1984 ..... Elks Sponsor first Pumpkin Patch
- September 1985..... Construction began on new Main Hall
- January 11, 1986 ..... First event held in newly completed Main Hall
- 1988 ..... Lodge membership grew to over 900 members
- 1988 ..... "Prime Time Players" group formed for members ages "50 & under"
- July 1988 ..... Livonia Elks merged with community leaders on new Drug Awareness Program



### Milestones (continued)

April 19, 1990 .....New Lodge Bingo started on Thursday morning at 10:30 a.m.

September 11, 1990.....Livonia Elks Lodge voted to recognize the Fawns Club as an auxiliary of the Lodge

September 24, 1996.....Livonia Lodge initiated their first female members – Ann Dise and Dorothy Kowalczyk

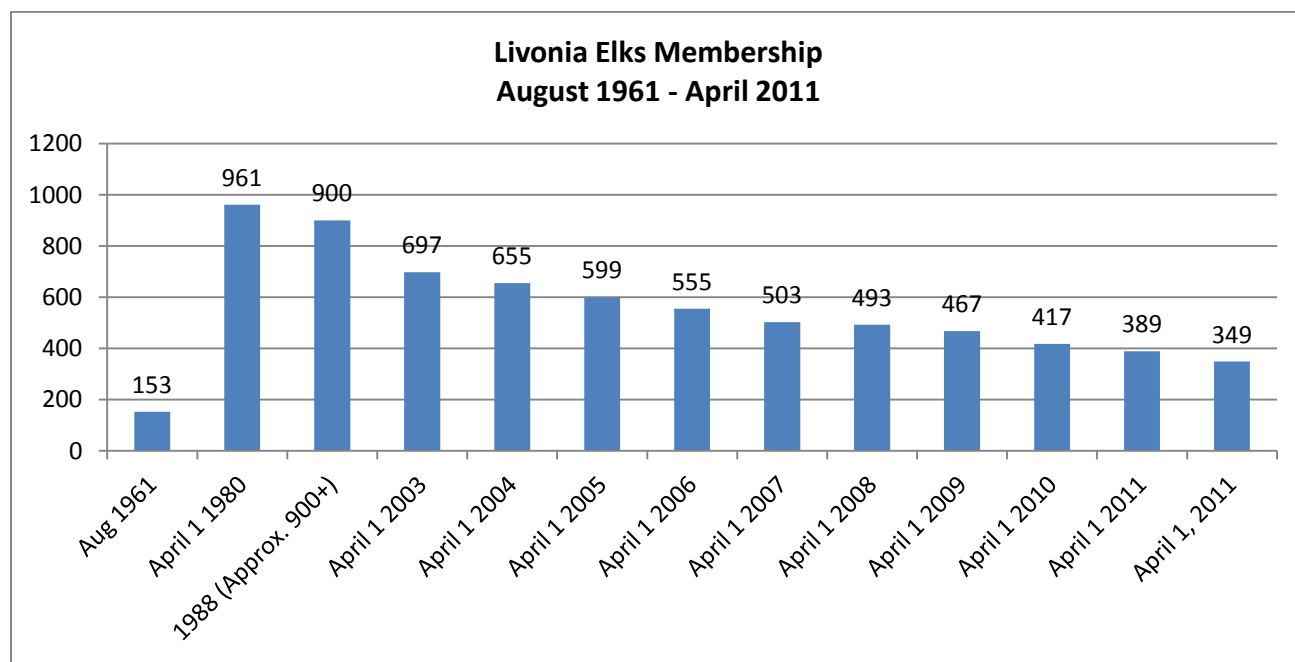
November 1998.....Project to renovate the Lounge completed after four years of planning

December 1, 2001.....Livonia Elks No. 2246 celebrated its 40-year history with a mortgage-burning celebration on December 1, 2001

### **December 3, 2011 .....Our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Livonia Elks Lodge is celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a special event on December 3, 2011. Our lodge is considered to be one of the finest lodges in the area and continues to participate in all the charitable works of Elkdom. Throughout our 50 years of existence, many members and their spouses have willingly provided countless hours of their time and energy by volunteering to support our lodge activities and functions and have provided several generous donations that made our lodge a special place we all can be proud of today.

Although our membership has declined significantly over the past several years, and we struggle to make ends meet during the current economic downturn, we are hopeful and determined to prosper.





### **Living Charter Members of Livonia Elks**

Richard Baade, P.E.R.  
 Arthur Kaiser  
 John Markham  
 Kenneth Radtke  
 Thomas Rossler  
 Charles Sears Jr.  
 Harry Trivax  
 H. Dow Tunis P.D.D.G.E.R.  
 John Westerholm

\* \* \* \* \*

### **The following members have attained 50 Years of Elkdom**

Richard Baade  
 Clarence Charest  
 Covert Culley  
 Arthur Kaiser  
 John Markham  
 Alvin Martin  
 Jerome Prendergast  
 Kenneth Radtke  
 Thomas Rossler  
 Charles Sears Jr.  
 Harry Trivax

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### **Life Members**

The Livonia Elks currently has 101 life members and 12 honorary life members.  
 To achieve life membership you must be an Elk for 35 years and 65 years of age or older.  
 Congratulations to all for your long dedication to Elkdom.

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### **Exalted Rulers and Elks of the Year Recipients**

Exalted Rulers of Livonia Elks Lodge No. 2246 are elected by the membership to a one-year term of office effective April 1 each year. Every Past Exalted Ruler will become a member of the Past Exalted Rulers Association upon the prescribed payment of annual dues to the Association, and shall continue as a member as long as he/she continues to be a member in good standing of the Lodge.

*Excerpt from the "Constitution and Bylaws of the Past Exalted Rulers Association of Livonia Lodge No. 2246"*  
*The purpose of the Past Exalted Rulers Association (P.E.R.s) is to foster the spirit of good fellowship between the members of the Lodge, and to render experienced counsel and assistance to the Lodge, thereby keeping the administration of the Lodge in safe and capable hands, and to make the Lodge a credit to the community and the Order.*

Each Exalted Ruler at the end of his/her term names a member(s) of the Lodge as "Elk of the Year," a coveted and distinguished honor based on the members contribution(s) to the Lodge.

*Excerpt from "The Bugle Call", Volume 1 – Number 1, September 1966*  
*"One of the Brothers in the Livonia Lodge will be designated as the local Elk of the Year, according to Exalted Ruler Dick Baade. This was one of the items discussed at the National Convention and adopted by the Grand Lodge as a policy for all Lodges throughout the United States."*

<b><u>Term of Office</u></b>	<b><u>Exalted Ruler</u></b>	<b><u>Elk of the Year</u></b>
1961, 62-63 .....	Spencer E. Puthoff *	
1963-64 .....	Alfred Den Braven *	
1964-65 .....	H. Dow Tunis	
1965-66 .....	Jack R. Murphy *	
1966-67 .....	Richard G. Baade .....	Gene A. "Skip" Tabbert – First Recipient
1967-68 .....	Robert J. Lyons *	George R. Herbst Jr.,
1968-69 .....	William J. Yates, Sr. *	James N. Portokalia, August J. Woltman, Harvey Moelke, John Funicello
1969-70 .....	Edward J. Pinardi *	Richard Baade, P.E.R., Virgil Coffman, Theodore Nasiatka, James Wilson, Sr.
1970-71 .....	Howard White *	Ronald E. Ickes
1971-72 .....	Osmand Shaw *	Virgil Coffman
1972-73 .....	George R. Herbst *	John D. Markham
1973-74 .....	Orlin W. Cusino *	Edward F. Pinardi
1974-75 .....	Frank C. Breuckman *	Edward A. Yasnios
1975-76 .....	John A. McLean *	David W. Balnaves
1976-77 .....	Donald Rodde.....	Charles V. Cook
1977-78 .....	John W. McMillan *	Albert F. Rice Jr.
1978-79 .....	Stanley T. Patyna *	John C. Mark
1979-80 .....	Ronald E. Ickes .....	Edward D. Glomski
1980-81 .....	James B. Fitzpatrick *	John J. McQuade
1981-82/83 ½ .....	Ronald D. Logan *	James McPhail
1982-83 ½ .....	Robert R. Bregi *	Kenneth E. Wood
1983-1984 .....	Firl N. Miller *	Larwrence A. Keeton
1984-85 .....	Norman C. Hovey .....	Warren K. Hunter
1985-86 .....	James E. Docherty *	W. Reed Clarke
1986-87 .....	Harold Sackey .....	Harry E. Evans
1987-88 .....	Robert Liston *	William A. "Bud" Ford
1988-89 .....	John J. McQuade .....	Jim Daugherty
1989-90 .....	James Brennan *	Gino Tavernaro
1990-91 .....	John T. Kuptz .....	William T. Patterson
1991-92 .....	James A. Corey .....	John T. Kuptz
1992-93 .....	Michael Mousseau.....	James R. Brennan
1998-94 .....	Dominic "Nick" Ferri.....	Farrell W. Grote

**Exalted Rulers and Elks of the Year Recipients (continued)**

<b><u>Term of Office</u></b>	<b><u>Exalted Ruler</u></b>	<b><u>Elk of the Year</u></b>
1994-95 .....	Robert Battle *	Harold Sackey
1995-96 .....	James J.J. Wasko .....	David Fisher
1996-97 .....	Kenneth Kowalczyk .....	Wayne Raylean
1997-98 .....	Dominic "Nick" Ferri .....	Charlie Hopps
1998-99 .....	Eugene "Geno" Grabinski .....	Dwight Hancock
1999-2000 .....	Michael E. Brennan .....	John Brooks
2000-01 .....	Paul Simons, Jr. ....	Carson Smith
2001-02 .....	David Fisher .....	Ed Mosden
2002-03 .....	Joseph Antonishek, Jr. ....	Pete Vanderlinden
2003-04 .....	David Rottermond .....	Russ Lantz
2004-05 .....	Joseph Antonishek, Jr. ....	Bruno Manni
2005-06 .....	Velinda L. Stenson .....	Robert J. Szaal
2006-07 .....	Stephanie J. Cox .....	Dominic "Nick" Ferri
2007-08 .....	Paul Simmons, Jr. ....	Denise M. Brennan
2008-09 .....	Eugene "Geno" Grabinski .....	Karl Swieczkowski
2009-10 .....	Vacant .....	Dave Reardon
2010-11 .....	Gary Rushford, Sr. ....	Ron Lang
2011-12 .....	Gary Rushford, Sr. ....	Rich Avedisian
2012-2013 .....	Vacant .....	

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 \* Deceased

**Past Fawn Presidents**

1962-63 .....	Betty (Wilhelmy) Puthoff *	1985-86 .....	Dolores Brennan
1963-64 .....	Agnes Yates *	1986-87 .....	Helen Ford *
1964-65 .....	Mary Bulloch *	1987-88 .....	Dorothy Gallagher *
1965-66 .....	Mary Bulloch *	1988-89 .....	Kathy Wasko *
1966-67 .....	LaVergne Murphy *	1989-90 .....	Lisa Wasko
1967-68 .....	Alice Feige *	1990-91 .....	Edith Thorpe
1968-69 .....	Agnes Lyons *	1991-92 .....	Peggy Vrba
1969-70 .....	Mary Glomski *	1992-93 .....	June McKennon *
1970-71 .....	Marion Kaltenbach *	1993-94 .....	Rosemary Olst
1971-72 .....	Marion Kaltenbach *	1994-95 .....	D. Brennan, R. Olst, P. Vrba
1972-73 .....	Jean Cox *	1995-96 .....	Mary Kavanagh
1973-74 .....	Fran Sickles *	1996 .....	Nancy Payden *
1974-75 .....	Bonnie Wiggins *	1996-1997 .....	Rosemary Olst
1975-76 .....	Judy Breuckman *	1997-98 .....	Rosemary Olst
1976-77 .....	Mary Glomski *	1998-99 .....	(Meetings Discontinued)
1977-78 .....	Marge Herbst	1999-2000 .....	
1978-79 .....	Dorothy Mark *	2000-01 .....	
1979-80 .....	Bonnie Wiggins *	2001-02 .....	
1980-81 .....	Dee Staub	2002-03 .....	
1981-82 .....	Margaret Wood *	2003-04 .....	Club re-established May 2004
1982-83 .....	Jean McQuade *	2004-05 .....	Janel Sauder
1983-84 .....	Margaret Kuptz *	2005-06 .....	Debbie Gartz
1984-85 .....	Helen Ford *	2006-07 .....	(Meetings Discontinued)

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 \* Deceased



Historical articles and photographs regarding the History of the Elks are available at <http://www.elkshistory.org/>. Following is an article from the website.

### How the Elks Began

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The moving spirit for the Elks was an Englishman named Charles Algernon Sidney Vivian. Born October 22, 1842, this son of a clergyman was a successful comic singer and dancer in the music halls of London. In November 1867, Vivian arrived in New York City to try his fortune.



Other actors and entertainers soon gravitated toward his magnetic personality. With everything closed on Sunday because of New York City Blue Laws, a group of theatrical people began meeting for their own amusement under Vivian's leadership. A loose organization was formed to make sure the larder was well-stocked for these gatherings. They called themselves the Jolly Corks, a name derived from a trick introduced by Vivian in which the uninitiated purchased a round of refreshments.

When one of their members died shortly before Christmas in 1867, leaving his wife and children destitute, the Jolly Corks decided that in addition to good fellowship, they needed a more enduring organization to serve those in need.

On February 16, 1868, they established the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks and elected Vivian to head it. Its social activities and benefit performances increased the popularity of the new Order. Membership grew rapidly. Elks traveling to other cities spread the word of the Brotherhood of Elks. Soon there were requests for Elks Lodges in cities other than New York. In response to these appeals, the Elks asked the New York State legislature for a charter authorizing the establishment of a Grand Lodge with the power to establish local Lodges anywhere in the United States. When the Grand Lodge Charter was issued, the founders then received the first local charter as New York Lodge No. 1 on March 10, 1871.



### How the Elks Began (continued)

Dissension soon erupted. Legitimate actors headed by George F. McDonald wanted to restrict membership to the theatrical profession. This view was opposed by Vivian and his friends. Taking advantage of Vivian's absence due to an out-of-town engagement, the McDonald group summarily expelled Vivian and several of his closest friends. Years later the Order rectified this illegal act, but it gave rise to a controversy whether Vivian was actually the founder of the Order. In 1897, a formal inquiry firmly established his right to this honored title.

Vivian continued, after his expulsion from the Order, to enchant audiences across the country. He starred with some of the largest road companies of the time. Together with his actress wife, the former Imogene Holbrook, Vivian set up a repertoire theater in Leadville, Colorado. Shortly thereafter he died of pneumonia on March 20, 1880. In 1889, the Elks moved his body from Leadville, Colorado, to Mt. Hope Cemetery, Boston, Massachusetts. Mrs. Vivian received a stipend from the Order her husband founded until her death in 1931.

The legacy of Charles Vivian continues to this day. In addition to aiding members in distress, the Elks raise money for children with disabilities, college scholarships, youth projects and recreational programs for patients in veteran's hospitals.

On June 14, 1907 the Order held a Flag Day observance. This tradition later was declared a national holiday by President Harry S. Truman.

During World War I, the Elks funded and equipped the first two field hospitals in France and built a 72-room community house in Camp Sherman, Ohio, and a 700-bed rehabilitation hospital in Boston, which they turned over to the War Department. They also raised money for the Salvation Army's frontline canteens.

Their loans to 40,000 returning veterans for college, rehabilitation and vocational education were the precursor of the GI Bill.

When World War II broke out, the Elks were the only civilian organization asked to help recruit construction workers for the military, a task that was completed three months ahead of schedule. The Elks also contributed more than half a million books to the Merchant Marines so that their men would have reading material on board ship.

The Korean War again brought out the best in the Elks. They donated more than half a million pints of blood to help wounded soldiers.

When the wounded from Vietnam needed help, the Elks responded. They provided the funds for a recreation pavilion at the Navy Hospital on Guam. The wounded at Tripler Medical Center in Hawaii were sweltering in the heat. When the Elks heard of their plight, they purchased 24 air-conditioning units so these patriots could recuperate in some degree of comfort.

When Operation Desert Storm took place, the Elks again led the support for our fighting men and women in the Persian Gulf. Subordinate Lodges undertook letter-writing campaigns to help keep up the spirits of the defenders of freedom. The Elks were also among the first to welcome them home and thank them for a job well done.

Our story is long; our work is humble; our history is proud. As long as there are those who need our help, the Elks will be there to give aid and comfort.



### **Eleven O'Clock Toast**

*Members and Guests:*

*You have heard the tolling of eleven strokes.*

*This is to remind you that with Elks the hour of eleven has a tender significance.*

*Wherever an Elk may roam, whatever their lot in life may be, when this hour falls upon the dial of night, the great heart of Elkdom swells and throbs.*

*It is the golden hour of recollection, the homecoming of those who wander, the mystic roll call of those who will come no more.*

*Living or dead, an Elk is never forgotten, never forsaken.*

*Morning and noon may pass them by, and the light of day sink heedlessly in the West, but ere the shadows of midnight shall fall, the chimes of memory will be pealing forth the friendly message,*

*"To our absent members."*

### **Origin of the Toast**

In regard to the Elks' 11 O'Clock Toast and its origin, we have to go back long before the BPOE came into existence. One of the main contributions of Charles Richardson -- in stage name of Charles Algernon Sidney Vivian and founder of the American branch of the Jolly Corks -- was to deliver into the hands of newborn Elks the rituals and traditions of a fraternal organization started in England around 1010 A.D., the Royal and Antedeluvian Order of Buffaloes, to which he belonged prior to coming to New York.

The RAOB, or Buffaloes as we shall henceforth refer to them, also practiced an 11 o'clock toast in remembrance of the Battle of Hastings in October of 1066. Following his victory, William of Normandy imported a set of rules, both martial and civil in nature, to keep control of a seething Norman-Saxon population always on the edge of a revolution.

Among those rules was a curfew law requiring all watch fires, bonfires (basically all lights controlled by private citizens that could serve as signals) to be extinguished at 11 each night. From strategically placed watchtowers that also served as early fire-alarm posts, the call would go out to douse or shutter all lights and bank all fires. This also served to discourage secret and treasonous meetings, as chimney sparks stood out against the black sky. A person away from his home and out on the darkened streets, when all doors were barred for the night, risked great peril from either evildoers or patrolling militia.

The hour of 11 quickly acquired a somber meaning, and in the centuries that followed, became the synonym throughout Europe for someone on his deathbed or about to go into battle: i.e. "His family gathered about his bed at the 11th hour," or "The troops in the trenches hastily wrote notes to their families as the 11th hour approached when they must charge over the top.

Thus, when the 15 Jolly Corks (of whom seven were not native-born Americans) voted on February 16, 1868, to start a more formal and official organization, they were already aware of an almost universally prevalent sentiment about the mystic and haunting aura connected with the nightly hour of 11, and it took no great eloquence by Vivian to establish a ritual toast similar to that of the Buffaloes at the next-to-last hour each day.

The great variety of 11 O'Clock Toasts, including the Jolly Corks Toast, makes it clear that there was no fixed and official version until 1906-10. Given our theatrical origins, it was almost mandatory that the pre-1900 Elks would be expected to compose a beautiful toast extemporaneously at will. Regardless of the form, however, the custom is as old as the Elks.