



The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks

Ritual

New Mexico Elks Association - 2022
Jeff Gordon, PER – NMEA Ritual Chairman

WHAT IS RITUAL?

- A ***ritual*** is a sequence of activities involving gestures, words, actions, or objects, performed according to a set sequence
- Ritual is a feature of all known human societies
- Rites of passage, oaths of allegiance, dedication ceremonies, coronations, presidential inaugurations, marriages, funerals are some examples of ritual
- The word "ritual" is first recorded in English in 1570, and came into use in the 1600s to mean "the prescribed order of performing religious services", or more particularly a book of these prescriptions

THE HISTORY OF RITUAL

- The Elks originally borrowed several rituals, traditions, and regalia from The Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes and the Freemasons.
- By the first decade of the twentieth century, much of this had been abandoned as the Elks sought to establish their own identity.
- In 1868, the committee completed the work of the adoption of the name Elks and created the Constitution, Rules, and Regulations of the Order; the same committee continued to work on a Ritual
- Being actors, it was second nature to memorize the Elks Ritual as they memorized the parts that they performed

THE PURPOSE OF RITUAL

- Ritual helps us become more in tune with what is truly meaningful; it has so much importance that it stands the test of time
- Rituals assist in renewal of self, it supports connection within our community, and it keeps tradition alive in a conscious way.
- Ritual helps us to become more effective in exemplifying the teachings of our Order and to better prepare our new Members to become contributing active Elks

RITUALS OF THE LOCAL LODGES

- The Ritual prescribes the duties of each Officer during Lodge Meetings
- Ritual describes how the Lodge Room should be laid out
- Ritual outlines proper procedures for voting
- Ritual makes all Lodges unified

Lodge Meeting Opening and Closing

- Opening helps put us in the proper frame of mind prior to conducting the business of the Lodge
- Prayer and recognizing the Flag of our Country
- Closing allows us to reflect on the accomplishments of our meeting
- Allows us to show our reverence to God and Country

Death of a Member

- Helps us to reflect on the life of our departed Member
- Gives us a chance to share our remembrance of them



Initiatory Ritual

- The whole purpose of the exemplification of the Initiatory Ritual is to impress upon the candidate the lessons that it teaches.
- There is no activity throughout Elksdom that more consistently and continually furthers the fundamental principles of our Order than a dignified and impressive rendition of the ritual.
- One of the most important contributions the Officers of all Lodges can make is an impressive induction of a candidate into our great Order.
- Properly exemplified, it provides the new member with a road map of how to be an effective Elk and a faithful, productive member of society

Initiatory Ritual

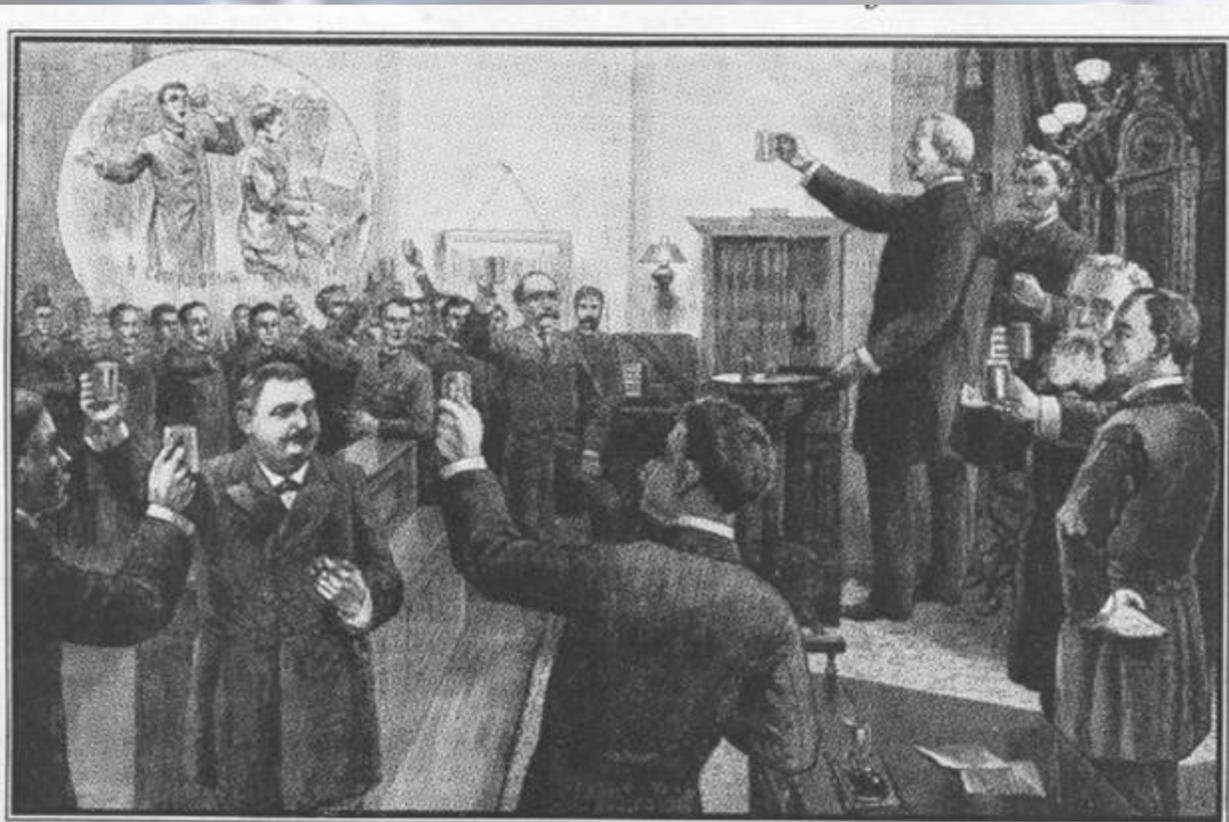
- Since its inception, Elks Ritual was committed to memory
- In 2011, the Membership proposed and voted to do away with the memorization of the Rituals of our Order
- The proponents of the resolution said that it would be easier to get Officers within their Lodge if they did not have to memorize the Rituals. Our Lodges still have difficulty in filling all Officer Chairs some 11 years later
- It would be good for all Officers to be familiar enough with their parts that they can at least read them with feeling and dignity

Installation of Officers

- Officers take the Oath in front of the Membership
- They promise to fulfill their duties to the best of their ability



Eleven O'clock Toast



The 11 o'clock toast to the absent: an Elk custom

Culver

Regular meetings of Subordinate Lodges have always been held at night. In the earlier days, they were usually held on Sunday nights and were concluded about eleven o'clock. As the participants departed, the Brothers made inquiries about the absent Brothers and expressed sympathetic interest in the causes of their absence.

RITUAL OF SPECIAL SERVICES

- It gives us a chance to show our appreciation to certain people at certain times of the year
- Since they are public services, it helps us shine our light to our communities
- It can help us with Membership when our community sees us as the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks
- Taking out an ad in the local newspaper and posting on social media can help with attendance from those who are not yet Members

Flag Day Service

- To be held on June 14
- Public Ceremony
- Grand Lodge mandated



Elks Memorial Service

- To be held on the first Sunday of December annually - Mandatory
- To remember those Members who have passed away during the previous year



Elks Funeral Service



Elks Graveside Service



Veteran's Day Service

- November 11th
- Public Service



POW/MIA Remembrance Day

- Held on the 3rd Friday of September
- Public Service



Other Special Services

- Observance of Mother's Day – Second Sunday in May
- Observance of Father's Day – Third Sunday in June
- Flag Retirement Ceremony
- Mortgage Burning Ceremony

CONTEST INITIATORY RITUAL

- Our Ritual contests provide a means for Elks who have prepared to exemplify the teachings of Elkdom to be rewarded for their time and effort and to be recognized for their contribution to the future of Elkdom



DISTRICT

- A District Contest gives the opportunity for a Lodge to compete at a smaller setting
- Can help give the team confidence leading to the State competition
- District Contests have not been held lately due to waning interest in Lodges wishing to memorize the Initiatory Ritual which is required to compete in any Contest

STATE

- The winner represents NMEA at the Grand Lodge Ritual Contest
- All-State Awards for High Score for each position
- Flag Charge Contest (*Outgoing Exalted Ruler only*)
- Jolly Corks Toast (*open to any Member in good standing*)
- PER 11 O'clock Toast (*open to any Past Exalted Ruler*)
 - Winner will represent NMEA at the Grand Lodge 11 O'clock Toast Contest

GRAND LODGE

- Compete at Grand Lodge against other states
- All American Awards for individual performance for each position - 58
- William A. King Award for the High Score in each Division - 6
- Top two teams from the Eastern and Western Divisions move to the Final Four
- Winner of the Final Four is the National Champion
- Three Lodges from New Mexico have been National Champions
 - 2008 – Roswell Lodge 969
 - 2010 – Artesia Lodge 1717
 - 2012 – Carlsbad Lodge 1558

RITUAL CLINIC 2021

- Saturday and Sunday, October 29 – 30
- Rio Rancho Lodge 2500
- Saturday, 9 am – 4 pm
 - Officers, Ritual of the Local Lodge, Ritual of Special Services
- Sunday, 8 am – 4:30 pm
 - Initiatory Ritual, Judge Certification Testing

CONCLUSION

Constitution of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America

— ARTICLE I —

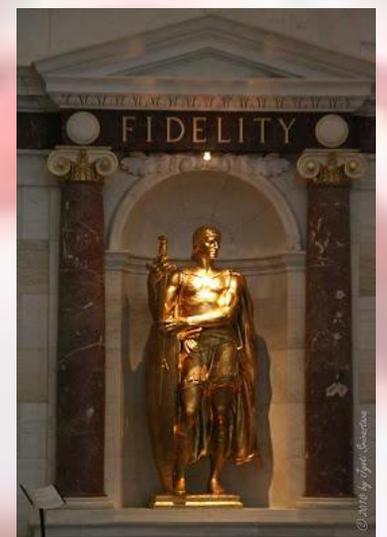
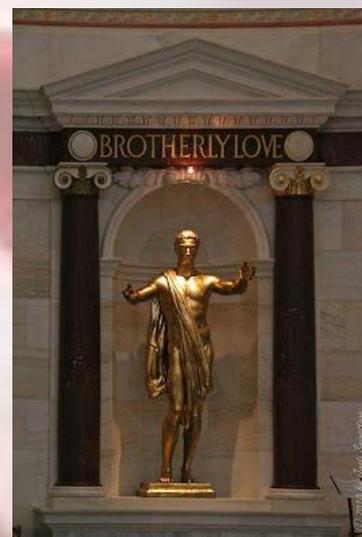
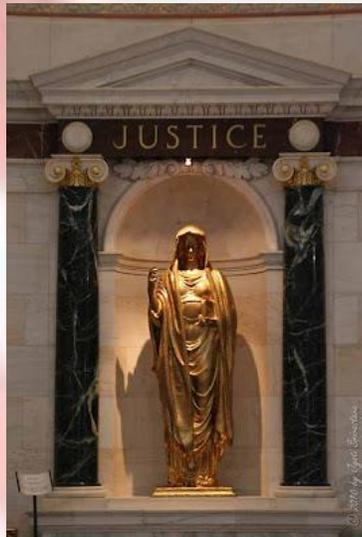
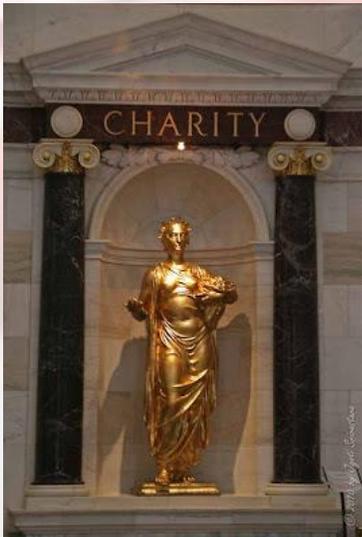
THE SUPREME LAW

Section 1. This Constitution, the Statutes enacted by the Grand Lodge not in conflict therewith, and the Ritual, shall be the Supreme Law of the Order.

- Ritual plays an important part in our Lodge
- It unifies Elks and Elks Lodges across the country

CONCLUSION

- It upholds the traditions of our Order
- It can impress Members of their duty as an Elk
- It can show our community what our core beliefs are and the principles that we uphold as Elks:



CONCLUSION

