

# Community awareness is theme for 2017-18

Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

MALCOLM J. McPHERSON JR.

As I begin my journey this year, I want to extend my sincerest gratitude to you, the Elks community, for trusting in me to serve as your next Grand Exalted Ruler. I could not have achieved this honor without the unwavering support and guidance of many of my fellow Elks, family and friends.

My theme for the 2017-18 fraternal year is “Strengthening Elkdom Through Community Awareness.” By definition, community is “a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests and goals.”

Elks are community, and it is my hope for the coming year that by working together with the Elks National Foundation and through our more than 775,000 Members and nearly 2,000 Lodges nationwide, we can build both stronger communities and stronger Elks.

With the Elks mission of supporting veterans, aiding special and underprivileged children, and promoting the growth of our youth through scholarship, Drug Awareness and sports programs, we will ultimately build a bond with each other while making our local communities a better place to live.

For 2017-18, one of my goals is to increase membership. As we begin celebrating our 150th year of Elkdom, I ask that you promote the great work of Elkdom to your communities. To exist for 150 years, the Elks are doing great work. We must continue to inform our communities of our great works to increase membership and continue to strengthen our programs.

I challenge you to identify the specific ways in which you can foster the Elks values of charity, justice, brotherly love and fidelity in the places you live and work.

Pat and I are looking forward to meeting many of you in your Local Lodges and communities throughout our travels this year. Until then, I leave you with the old Irish Blessing: “May the road rise to meet you; may the wind be always at your back; may the sun shine warm upon your face...”

And may the hand of an Elk always be near.