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Ron Hicks' Official Notice of Election as Grand Exalted Ruler



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Ronald L. Hicks elected Grand Exalted Ruler

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...The day's reports having been concluded, the assembled Elks turned to the election of their leadership for the following year. The slate of officers that were nominated and unanimously elected included Grand Esteemed Leading Knight Charles Van Dyne of the Kenton, Ohio, Lodge; Grand Esteemed Loyal Knight Robert Ferda of the Bremerton, Washington, Lodge; Grand Esteemed Lecturing Knight Arnold Blackmon of the Ocean Springs, Mississippi, Lodge; Grand Trustees Larry Tomberlin of the Albuquerque, New Mexico, Lodge and Paul Ryan of the Willmar, Minnesota, Lodge; Grand Secretary Bryan R. Klatt, of the DeKalb, Illinois, Lodge; Grand Inner Guard Edward M. Willis of the Dover, Delaware, Lodge; and Grand Exalted Ruler Ronald L. Hicks of the Fredericksburg, Virginia, Lodge. (Continued below)



Grand Exalted Ruler-Elect Ronald L. Hick is escorted to the dais for his introduction Monday at the Grand Lodge Session by Past Grand Exalted Rulers Lester "Ted" Hess and James C Varenhorst. GER-elect Hicks later shares a kiss with soon-to-be-First Lady Nancy.



Hicks is a forty-three-year Elk and served for three years on the Grand Lodge Committee on Judiciary and four years on the Board of Grand Trustees. During his term as a Grand Trustee, Hicks was centrally involved in preparing the sale of the Elks National Home. Hicks was elected president of the Virginia Elks Association in 2009 and has been recognized by his state association as both Elk of the Year and Officer of the Year.

Hicks was nominated by his two sons, Joseph and Jason Hicks, both of whom are Past Exalted Rulers of the Fredericksburg Lodge. The nomination was seconded in an emotional speech by Past Grand Trustee Eric Mulholland, who was originally endorsed as the candidate for Grand Exalted Ruler but was forced to withdraw his candidacy due to a serious illness. The announcement of Hicks' election was followed by an exuberant celebration. A video was displayed offering the congratulations of Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe, following which supporters from Hicks' Area 3, along with a group from Mulholland's native Area 4, streamed into the hall, led by a pair of stilt-walkers.

Once order was restored, the newly elected Grand Exalted Ruler spoke about his vision for the Order, which is encompassed in his theme of "Elks Pride—Community Focus." Elks Pride, he explained, "represents our dignity, our joy, and our self-respect." He encouraged the assembled Exalted Rulers to foster this pride through their example: "Be enthusiastic in all you do, learn to share your pride and energy, listen and take time for others, overlook faults, and don't dwell on the negative." In particular, he noted that orientation can be an important part of making new Elks into committed members, and that orientation can be considered "the first step in member retention."

Community Focus, according to Hicks, "is greatly enhanced when driven by Elks Pride." He enjoined the assembled Elks to be proud of their great services to the community, and to share their accomplishments with others. "We offer great appeal to those who know who we are and what we do. We just need to let them know." He also encouraged every lodge to take advantage of the \$18,000 in grants available through the Elks National Foundation Community Investment Program.

He closed by asking the assembled delegates to "Please join me this year in working to grow Elkdom through your Elks Pride and Community Focus."