



NEVADA STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION

MY SPOUSE WANTS TO BE A
LEADER IN THE ELKS LODGE
WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Adopted By:
Past State Presidents Advisory Council

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Guideline of Terms

- **DDGER** – District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler
- **PDDGER** – Past District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler
- **ER** – Exalted Ruler
- **NSEA** – Nevada State Elks Association

1.0 My Spouse Wants To Be A Leader In The Elks Lodge. What Can I Do To Help?

To answer that question and many others we need to go right to the basics, the very foundation of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

Those are the key words **BENEVOLENT** and **PROTECTIVE**. Elks are first and foremost patriotic American citizens. The great purpose behind their existence is charity of thought, word, and deed. Because your spouse has pledged him/her to these purposes and is working his/her way through the chairs of his/her Lodge, it is obvious he/she is dedicated to these principles. You spouses are committed to your spouse's obligations or you wouldn't be here.

2.0 What is My Role Going To Be?

Host/Hostess, visitor, helper, explainer, sounding board, quiet comfort provider... This list could go on all day. Your spouse will be assuming the control of a large business composed of the Lodge and Club organization. He/she will have a Lodge Secretary and probably a clerical secretary, but he/she will need you most of all, because the important things that go on will involve people.

All decisions you make this year must be screened through him/her, because he/she is the Elk. He/she will consult with Grand Lodge Statutes, Grand Lodge Manuals, and local By-Laws if there are questions. He/she will refer to the budgets for the year to advise you if there is any money to decorate, buy gifts, etc.

In a nutshell, you will plan, organize and then do it.

3.0 Are There a Lot Of Expense To Being ER?

By this time your spouse has already made the major expenditure for Tux and Lodge Uniform. You already have had experience with the costs of conventions, etc. When your spouse is ER you will find that there are some unavoidable extra expenses: phone calls, postage, gas, new clothes for conventions, babysitters.

Obviously you can keep most of these to a minimum by good planning and working ahead. As to the new clothes, you may not want to trim that down, but they are not in any sense required. If you are in doubt about any activity, "Is it required?" or "Is it only traditional?", do ask the PDDGER or PER spouses who have been there before you.

4.0 What About Protocol

This topic can be summed up in a very few words **COURTESY AND RESPECT**. Much of what you need to do is governed by the same proper etiquette that you would employ when entertaining in you own home.

The **Protocol Manual** provided by the Grand Lodge should be available in your spouse's Lodge office and it might be well to ask your spouse to purchase one for his/her desk at home. This clearly addresses issues concerning Elk dignitaries. You can transfer the ideas to the spouses, but good manners will always serve you well. In addition, when preparing for an official activity,

counsel can be sought from Past State Presidents, Past District Deputies, Past Exalted Rulers, and their spouses in your own Lodge.

5.0 I Don't Understand Some Things. Why Do We Have a President and District Deputy?

Your spouse belongs to one Lodge. There are fifteen Lodges in our State.

The President's job is to inform the Lodges about the programs in the State Association and to report to the State Association about the Lodges.

Your Lodge is also part of the Grand Lodge of Elks, the National organization under the guidance of the Grand Exalted Ruler. The Grand Exalted Ruler appoints one member from each of the more than 250 Districts nationwide as his Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler for the District.

His/her job is to inform the Lodges about the Grand Exalted Ruler's and the Grand Lodge Programs. He/she is to check all records of the Lodges and to report to the Grand Exalted Ruler on the progress of the Lodges. He/she also coordinates Grand Lodge visitations.

6.0 Do I Entertain The Spouses Of The President And DDGER?

These visitations are customary on the occasion of the official visits of the Lodge. The President and the DDGER will advise the Lodge of the date of their visits and will announce if they will be accompanied by their spouses. It is then up to you and your spouse to decide **if** you are going to entertain the spouses and how. This is not mandatory but **certainly is traditional**. If you are not going to entertain these spouses, your spouse should notify the President and DDGER as soon as possible to avoid any embarrassment to them and to you.

If your Lodge invites visiting spouses, you, as the Exalted Ruler's spouse, should send an invitation as soon as possible specifying the activities, time schedule and type of dress.. These spouses should be guests of the Lodge. If the Lodge cannot afford this, they should not be invited.

Gift giving is optional.

If your Lodge is visited by State President, Past Grand's, or the present Grand Exalted Ruler, consult your Protocol Manual and your DDGER for advice.

7.0 How Do I Keep track Of What Is Going On?

First ask your spouse to keep you informed.

Your Spouse's Lodge, the NSEA and the National Grand Lodge each publish regularly a magazine or bulletin to help you keep informed. Your local bulletin should be read as soon as it arrives so you can get those important dates on the calendar and so you don't miss the special activities.

The NSEA has a newsletter that will supply additional other news dates, places, etc., for conventions and valuable information for planning, whether your Elk is Inner Guard or Past District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler (PDDGER).

Of course, the National Elks Magazine in addition to dates, places, etc., has many articles of interest to anyone. If your Elk is not reading all three, he/she probably will be as soon as he/she finds you so well informed.

8.0 What About The Meetings, Conventions, Etc.?

Many Lodges have social gatherings that are not mandatory but traditional. Many times they are held in conjunction with the DDGER Clinic. The Lodge does not pay anyone's expenses. But this is basically a time to get together socially for Elks not just officers. Don't miss it.

The DDGER Clinics are held at three different locations during the year with an area provided for the spouses to visit while the members are at work.

If at all possible, do attend these functions with your spouse. You will make many wonderful friends.

The State and Mid-Term Conventions are opportunities to develop a support group among your counterparts from throughout the State. Try to stay with the group. The easy friendship of chatting in an elevator or sitting in the lobby or drop-in visits to rooms is a very easy way to get acquainted.

At the Grand Lodge Convention this is of course doubly important. Usually only ERs and DDGERs are there. So if you are staying in one place you have an opportunity to become fast friends, spending an important week of your spouses' Elk careers together.

Do not make plans until you look at the meeting schedule. Your spouse will have meetings and this is why his/her Lodge sent him/her. There is always free time to "do" the local sites.

Grand Lodge Convention meetings are in the morning.

9.0 What Can I Do To Make Things Go Smoothly?

Wear your badge - Visitors have trouble with names too.

When you are at the Lodge, remember you are a representative of all Elks spouses. Circulate and meet visitors, if you are nervous in your home Lodge, how must they feel. Never leave guests alone.

If the officer's spouses bunch together, others feel very left out. Treat people as if they were guests in your home.

Go to Indoctrination. Meet the spouses of the candidates. Let them know what Elks are all about, from the spouse's point of view.

Talk can be a four letter word if it is gossip. Don't allow careless words to damage Lodge relations and friendships. Frequently things are repeated not as you said them and much harm is done.

Elks believe that the family comes first - attend as much as you can but do not neglect your family.

For all occasions be sure the dress requirements are clearly stated.

Always dress for the occasion. At Conventions you represent yourself, your spouse, his/her Lodge and Elks in general. Dress and act like the spouse you are.

Upon completion of the scheduling of the social events of your Lodge give a copy to the State President and DDGER so they may make arrangements to attend one or more of your functions.

You need a directory or at least have your spouse keep his/her close at hand. NSEA publishes a directory with Lodge Officers (and spouses) names and addresses.

Do keep notes to help your successor. But even more important is to keep open lines of communication among all of the officers spouses. The involvement in meaningful activities this year will help them to be better prepared and much more at ease next year. Don't try to do it all alone. The mark of a good leader is the ability to delegate responsibility in an organized manner.

Continuing cooperation between all the Lodge Officers and their spouses makes a much happier and better Lodge in every way.

Everyone at on time or another needs answers. Don't be embarrassed to seek help. Call Past State President, District Deputy or Grand Exalted Rulers spouses for answers to any questions or situations you can't solve.

10.0 Suggestions For Sending Invitations To Special Function, Official Visitations, Installations, Etc.

Dedications and/or New Lodges

- Past Grand Exalted Rulers from Area 7
- State President
- See Suggested List

State President's Official Visit

- Past Grand Exalted Rulers from Area 7
- See Suggested List
- Optional-Past State Presidents form nearby Lodges
- State chairmen from nearby Lodges

Grand Lodge Dignitaries

- Past Grand Exalted Rulers from Area 7
- See Suggested List

DDGER's Visitation

- A Past Grand Exalted Ruler
- See Suggested List

Installations

- A Past Grand Exalted Ruler

See Suggested List
PLUS- own preferences

Invitations: Request RSVP acceptance only

SUGGESTED LIST

Past Grand Exalted Rulers from Area 7
 Donald Dapelo, NSEA Sponsor
 Kenneth Moore
 James Grillo
District Leaders
Current DDGER
State President
State Vice Presidents
Past State Presidents
Past District Deputy Grand Exalted Rulers
Others— at Lodge preference and PDDGER or PSP not considered active.

Mailing Addresses — see directory

REMEMBER

President coordinates State functions
District Deputy coordinates Grand Lodge functions.