



Minnesota Elks State Association Mid Year Conference

St. Cloud, MN
October 21-22, 2011



Agenda

- Local Lodge Websites
- Online Newsletters
- Email Communication
- Social Networking
- State Association Web Site
- Questions



Online Newsletters

- Grand Lodge does allow newsletters online
 - > Post on your Grand Lodge Virtual Home Page (VHP)
 - > Post on local lodge web site
- Benefits
 - > Reduced printing / mailing costs
 - > Timeliness
 - > More vibrant / eye catching
- Rules of the road
 - > Remove official lodge business from the newsletter before posting (e.g. anything requiring lodge, state or national vote)
 - > Recommend putting in login/password controlled section



Local Lodge Web Sites

- Some interesting statistics
 - > 26 lodges across Minnesota
 - > 7 have no web presence at all
 - > 10 have virtual home pages (VHP) on National Site
 - > 9 have “custom” web sites hosted elsewhere
 - Brainerd: <http://www.brainerdelks.org/>
 - Dakota County: <http://dakotacountyelks.org/>
 - Faribault: <http://faribaultelks.org>
 - Hopkins: <http://www.hopkinselks.org>
 - Hutchinson: <http://www.hutchelks.org/>
 - Owatonna: <http://www.owatonnaelks.org/>
 - Red Wing: <http://redwingelks.org/>
 - Rochester: <http://www.rochesterelks.org>
 - St. Cloud: <http://www.stcloudelks.org/>
 - > 5 have both VHP and custom web site
 - > 13 lodges have Facebook pages



Local Lodge Web Site Contest

- Local Lodge Web Site winners for 2011
 - > Announced in Lodge and Club Activities report
 - > Part of Grand Lodge contest for State and Local Web Site
 - > Criteria included:
 - Use of Grand Lodge VHP
 - Timeliness of information (i.e. was it dated)
 - Breadth of information posted
 - Use of social networking, primarily Facebook



What Makes a Good Web Site?

- Content
 - > Overview of Elks, programs, etc
 - > Lodge location (map), hours, meeting days/times
 - > Description of facilities
 - > Upcoming events / calendar
 - > Recent news / announcements
 - > Photo galleries
- Keeping it current
- Ease of use



Who is Your Audience?

- Local Lodge Members
 - > Upcoming events
 - > Recent news / announcements
 - > Newsletters
- Public at Large
 - > Who are the Elks
 - > Programs
 - > How to become a member
- Visiting Elks
 - > Facilities / RV capable
 - > Hours, location, directions



Web Site Presence – To Be or Not to Be

- Barriers to Web Site Presence
 - > Lack of web development skills
 - > Lack of time
 - > Commitment to stay current with all the news/events
 - > Other priorities
- Opportunities
 - > Ask the membership for help
 - > Consider local high schools, trade schools, colleges
 - Volunteer opportunities
 - Internship opportunities
 - Job seekers looking for experience (sometimes for free)



Email Communication

- Opportunities
 - > Monthly Newsletter Distribution
 - > Weekly update emails
 - > Special announcements
 - Lodge meetings, cancellations
 - Special Events



Email Sample – Weekly Update

From: info@hopkinselks.org
To: info@hopkinselks.org
Cc:
Subject: Hopkins Elks Weekly Update - July 25, 2011

Sent: Mon 7/25/2011 1:27

News of Note

Lodge Meeting Tonight There is a lodge meeting tonight at 7pm. This is the only meeting for July. Please attend and make your voice heard.

Golden Chefs Mary, Carol and Jane are cooking up ham sandwiches, homemade potato salad and baked beans. Only \$5.00 - what a deal! Serving at 1:00pm

Club Hours - Labor Day The club will be open from 10am - 6pm on Monday, Sept 6, Labor Day.

Raspberry Festival Volunteer Appreciation Brunch

This Weekend! Sunday, July 31, 10am-12pm. Calling all Raspberry Festival Volunteers? Stop in and enjoy a free brunch in appreciation for your efforts.

Throwback Steak Fry Night

Thursday, July 28, 6:30-8:30pm. We are rolling back the prices and adding garlic toast and pork chops to the menu. One Night Only!

Rib Cook Off Sign Up

The sign up for teams for this year's Rib Cookoff will be posted Monday, August 1 around noon time. Please get in and sign up early as space is limited and there are at least 16 teams who have expressed interest in competing and will be signing up.

Upcoming Events

Throwback Steak Fry Night Thursday, July 28, 6:30-8:30pm. We are rolling back the prices and adding garlic toast and pork chops to the menu. One Night Only!

Elks Family Picnic Saturday, August 13, 12-4pm. Enjoy burgers, brats and the annual horseshoe tournament. Kids



Email Sample – Special Announcement

From: info@hopkinselks.org Sent: Fri 9/9
To: info@hopkinselks.org
Cc:
Subject: Hopkins Elks Special Sunday Brunch - This Sunday!

Special Sunday Brunch - This Sunday!

To kick off the weekly Sunday Breakfast, the House Committee is sponsoring a special brunch this Sunday from 10am-1pm. For only **\$10/person**, you can enjoy the following:

Roast Beef
Ham
Egg Scramble
Omelets
Sausage
Swedish Pancakes
Cheesy Hash Browns
Veggies
Fresh Fruit
Muffins, Croissants, Fresh Breads
Quinoa w/ asparagus
Jan's Pies

Please sign up at the lodge or reply to this email if you plan on attending. Thanks and we hope to see you there!



Email Communication

- Implementation Options
 - > Google Mail
 - Easy to use
 - Some limitations on size of distribution list
 - > Email program (e.g. Microsoft Outlook)
 - Most commonly used, user familiarity
 - > Web site / email system integration
 - Requires specialized knowledge



Social Networking

- Facebook
 - > Thirteen lodges currently have Facebook presence
 - > Challenge is keeping it current
 - > Great vehicle for sending out “invitations” to lodge events
- Twitter
 - > Who? Why? How?
- Foursquare, other similar sites
 - > “Check in” – where am I right now?



MN Elks State Association Web Site

- Objective
 - > Promoting the State Association and Local Lodges
 - > Central location for state information including:
 - State Directory
 - Officers, trustees, committees and members, event calendar
 - Convention information
 - Annual state convention, mid-year, national convention
 - State wide events
 - Hoop shoot, Soccer shot, Bowling tourney, golf tourney, Bonspiel etc
- Where can I find it?
 - > <http://www.mnelks.org>



Future of the State Web Site

- Launch of new web site early next year
- Goals:
 - > Improve distribution of information
 - > Provide member resource center
 - Ability to download registration information for statewide events and publish the results
 - Gallery of sample templates for tickets, flyers, publications, newsletters
 - > Update the content as well as look and feel
- Suggestions?
 - > Contact Gretchen Peterson with any suggestions for how to improve the state site (email: elks@mnelks.org)



New Site Map

- Current News
- What We Do
 - > Youth
 - Scholarships
 - Drug Awareness
 - > Veterans
 - > Americanism
 - > National Foundation
 - > Become A Member
- Local Lodges, Officers
 - > Local lodges
 - (map, individual lodge pages)
 - > State Officers
 - > Committees
- Member Resources
 - > Events
 - Hoop Shoot
 - Soccer Shoot
 - Bowling Tournament
 - Golf Tournament
 - > Veterans
 - > Calendar
 - > Grand Lodge Contests
 - > Member Directory
 - > Forms, Manuals...
 - > Meetings/Conventions
- State Project: Youth Camp
- Memorial Ring Information
- FAQs
- Contact Us



Wrap Up

- Questions?
- More information:
 - > State Association Web Site
 - <http://www.mnelks.org>
 - > State Association Webmaster
 - Gretchen Peterson, elks@mnelks.org, 612-889-2915
 - > Local Public Relations Committee