# EKSIZE

Volume 2024 Issue 2 – May 2024 Official Publication of Tampa Elks Lodge #708, Founded 1902, Published monthly at 3616 W Gandy Blvd, Tampa FL 33611 Office: 813-831-4280 - Lounge: 813-839-8928



#### LODGE OFFICER\$:

EXALTED RULER - Tracy Horrell, PER LEADING KNIGHT - Edie Hanley LOYAL KNIGHT - April Holtzman LECTURING KNIGHT - Wendy Hall, PER SECRETARY - Rick Schneider, PER TREASURER - Kristie Horst ESQUIRE - Debbie Brennan INNER GUARD - Dee Cisneros, PER TILER - Kim Van Walker CHAPLAIN – Crystal Johnson 1 YEAR TRUSTEE - Tristan Reiber 2 YEAR TRUSTEE - Norman Benzing 3 YEAR TRUSTEE - Paul DeLand, PER 4 YEAR TRUSTEE - Laura Jones 5 YEAR TRUSTEE - Shelagh Gombarcik, PER

> House Committee Chair Jacque LoCicero, PLP

#### House Committee Members:

Daniel Armentrout, Dave Riplogle, Jason Brown, Janet Hill, Suzanne Moore, Ruth Levin

KITCHEN MANAGER Courtney Weil (courtney@courtneyscustomcatering)

Hall Event & Rental Chairman: Wendy Hall (nini336152@yahoo.com) 813-500-9433

> Elksize Editor: Georgia Hilficker georgiahilficker@gmail.com

#### Tampa Web Address - Tampaelks.com

#### **Club Hours:**

Mon - Thursday 4:00pm - 11:00pm Friday 4:00pm - 12:00am Saturday 4:00pm - 11:00pm Sunday 4:00am - 9:00pm

Lodge Secretary email: tampa708secretary@outlook.com

#### A Message From your Exalted Ruler, Tracy Horrell



Change can be good if you open yourself up to it and embrace it! You know ATTITUDES are contagious! Is yours worth CATCHING? Some of you may be asking yourself "What does this mean?" If you look up the definition of "contagious" in the dictionary you will find it means: to spread from one person to another by direct or indirect contact. Germs are CONTAGIOUS, laughter is CONTA-GIOUS, and yes, even attitudes are CONTA-GIOUS. Having a positive attitude can spread like wildfire, PASS ONE ON TODAY!

We have new things going on in our Lodge. We are modernizing our Lodge while staying true to our Elk traditions and values. Look for in the weeks to come a new sign out front! Thank you to our bingo committee for making this project a priority. We have other projects being discussed and will keep you updated. If you have an idea, please share it with our house committee.

Mothers hold their children's hands for a short while, but their hearts forever. Of all the gifts life offers, a loving mother is the greatest of them all. I love these quotes and wanted to share them with you. Mothers are truly special and we love them!

We invite you to our Mother's Day ceremony on May 12th. It will start at 3:00 pm and after the program, we will serve a light dinner. Look for more details on this event on Facebook and email blast.

Don't forget that the State Convention is coming up and you can find more information and sign up on the Florida Elks website. If you've never been you are missing out on a good time!

> I hope to see you soon at the lodge! In your service, Tracy Horrell, ER

## Your 2024-25 Committee Chairs

#### 708 Board of Directors - Chairman of the Board Laura Jones, Tracy Horrell, PER, Edie Hanley, Wendy Hall, PER, April Holtzman, Paul DeLand, PER, Shelagh Gombarcik, PER, Tristan Reiber, and Norman Benzing

Accident Prevention - Tommy Moore (tommoore4109@gmail.com) Americanism - Norman Benzing, (norm-kim@rtcol.com) Army of Hope - Daniel Armentrout, (Odannyboy@aol.com) Auditing Committee - Melissa Bertoch, (missbertoch@gmail.com) Drug Awareness - Edie Hanley, (ehanley73@outlook.com) ENF Fundraising - Shelagh Gombarcik, PER (Shelaghg@yahoo.com) ENF Scholarships - Paul DeLand, PER (dukeofdeland@hotmail.com) ENF Grants - Paul DeLand PER (dukeofdeland@hotmail.com) Government Relations - Rick Schnieder, PER (broric708@aol.com) Harry Anna - Kim VanWalker, (kmvanwalker@hotmail.com) Hoop Shoot - Patty Volpe (pattyandmrfox@gmail.com) LOE Liaison - Paul DeLand, PER - (dukeofdeland@hotmail.com)) Lodge Activities - TBD Membership Committee - Tracy Horrell, PER (tracywayh@gmail.com) Orientation - Shelagh Gombarcik, PER (Shelaghg@yahoo.com) Public Relations Committee - Kim VanWalker (kmvanwalker@hotmail.com) Ritual Committee - Frank Palladini, PSP, PGE (fjpal56@yahoo.com) Soccer Shoot - Patty Volpe (pattyandmrfox@gmail.com) Veteran's Services - Chris Ragusa (ragusachristopher@gmail.com) Will & Bequests - Richard Florance, PER (tracywayh@gmail.com) Youth Activities - Jackie Jacobs, (Jackie.jacobs1086@gmail.com)



#### **PLEASE NOTE!**

### Important information! State Laws Concerning Spouse Cards

As of May 1st, spouse card holders will not be able to

purchase alcoholic beverages. All lodges have been notified that we must abide by this requirement to ensure that we are in compliance with Florida law. How can you visit your lodge and have a cocktail? You can become an Elk or have your spouse purchase a few drink chips for you. While we know this may be an inconvenience, unfortunately, it is something that we must implement to meet state mandates. Thank you for your understanding.

Jacquie LoCicero, PLP Chair, House Committee

## Honoring One of Our Own...



## Longtime Elk and Veteran Chris Ragusa

## was recently recognized at Tampa Bay Lightning game.

The Tampa Bay Lightning organization chose Tampa Elks 708 Lodge

Veteran Committee Chairman, Chris Ragusa as their Anthem Salute honoree for their March 27, 2024 hockey game at Amalie Arena. Pictures of Chris from throughout his 37 years of enlisted and commissioned US Navy service were displayed on the Webtron screen for the 18,000 attendees. He then stood at attention as Sonya Bryson-Kirksey, a retired Air Force Technical Sargeant, sang the

National Anthem. Chris was initiated into the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks in 1988 at the BPOE Lodge 818 in Bowling Green, OH, and transferred his lodge affiliation after he moved to Florida in 2014.



## MAY ELK RECOGNITIONS

#### ELK OF THE MONTH...COURTNEY WEIL, PER

This hard-working PER has stepped up this year to give a helping hand in the kitchen with her amazing cooking skills! You may not see her as her tasks are usually taking place when the lodge is not regularly open but she is hard at work making banks for the bartenders, shopping for food, cooking up some delicious meals, and working hard to keep the cost of goods down. Please help us by congratulating her and stopping in for one of her meals on Mondays and Fridays. You will be glad you did!



#### **OFFICER OF THE MONTH...EDIE HANLEY**

Edie has stepped up this year to be our Leading Knight and from her first day in that position she has made sure to keep me posted on repairs that are needed, volunteering to help out with our veterans, Club Chivalry and Queen of Hearts, and shaking you down for a 50/50 chance always for a good cause. She is devoted as an Elk and always willing to lend a hand. Please congratulate her!



#### VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH...GEORGIA HILFICKER

What an amazing woman! From the moment this Elk year started she has been helping with planning installation food, Sunday dinners, and planning our end-of-the-year New Year's Eve bash. She is working hard to help Courtney with the cost of goods in the kitchen. She is a go-getter! She is always willing to help where she is needed! Please help me thank her for all her good deeds!



MAY

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## Supporting Reports

#### Chaplain's Corner by our chaplain, Crystal Johnson:

"Social connection is a healthy behavior, like eating an apple or getting enough sleep." H. Collins "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

1 Thessalonians 5:11

## Ladies of the Elks:

Looks like the month of May is going to be a hopping month for the Ladies. We are starting it off with our annual Kentucky Derby Horse Race on Saturday, May Jacquie LoCicero, PLP- President Shelagh Gombarcik, PER,PLP - Vice President April Holtzman - Secretary Laura Jones - Treasurer Suzanne Moore, PLP - Chaplain Ruth Levin - Parliamentarian

**Executive Board** 

4<sup>th</sup>. Come and enjoy a cocktail or two, partake in a meal and place your bet on the winning horse. After that, you can spend your winnings at our live and silent auction. This is a fun event for all ages.

On May 18<sup>th</sup> the Ladies will take a leisurely walk from Ballast Point Park for our annual Walk-A-Thon to benefit Childrens Therapy Services. We will meet at Ballast Point Park at 10am and chit chat our way through the shaded neighborhood. Not able to participate? No problem. You can sponsor one of our Ladies who is walking. No donation is too small. One hundred percent of your donation goes to Childrens Therapy Service, hope to see you there.

Hope to see you at a Ladies event soon! Jacquie LoCicero, PLP, President, Ladies of the Elks







On March 27tth Bonnie Atwood, Crystal Johnson and Edie Hanley presented a \$500 check from Tampa Lodge 708 to a program called My Warriors Place.

The program director shared how her son had been killed in Afghanistan. She knew she wanted to do something to honor veterans but she was not sure what. She prayed and often would talk to her son. She was looking for a sign. One day when she was at the beach she found a bullet in a wave by her feet. Could this be the sign?

Her son loved studying about World War II and the Vietnam War. Ironically, when she had someone look at the bullet they discovered it was a misfire bullet from the Vietnam War. There it was, her sign.

She was not sure what direction to go since she didn't have a lot of money. She was able to purchase property and set up some retreat houses for veterans, first responders, and law enforcement in Ruskin. If you qualify the nightly fee is a nominal donation. It is a worthwhile program and we were proud to present them with the donation. Edie Hanley, Leading Knight HELPING VETERANS ON BEHALF OF TAMPA 708 On April 13,

Edie Hanley.



Representative of the James Haley Hospital & Crystal Johnson, Deputy Representative were honored to assist Tiffany Ellis, a veteran who is receiving services from James Haley Hospital, with shopping for much needed work cloths.

Tiffany was referred to us by Ashley Sard one of the volunteer coordinator at James Haley.

It was such a pleasure helping this very deserving veteran on behalf of our Lodge.

Edie Hanley, Leading Knight

## **Grant Reports and Information**



## **Club Chivalry Report** Marching towards Summer

The March Club Chivalry Meeting had a lot of moving parts. First, we had an ENF Legacy Scholar, Luca Dye, come to help us. Legacy Scholars are required to do community service

with an Elks Lodge at least once a year. Lucas is a sophomore at the University of Tampa, He proved to be a very nice and helpful young man. Then we had the regular refreshments, and drawings for the \$25 gift card raffles.

We also had Loyal Knight, Edie Hanley come in as the guest speaker and talk about the Drug Awareness Program. When the students were asked if they knew somebody who had overdosed, at least 2/3rds of them raised their hands! This was a topic they needed to hear more about, and Edie, with her experience working for the Sheriff's Department, did a good job. She also provided them with a DAP bag with some literature, and a red ribbon.

While Edie was talking, most of the volunteers, Shelagh Gombarcik PER, Bonnie Atwood, Carolyn Miller, Lucas Dye and Patty Volpe, headed outside to a picnic area behind the cafeteria to hide Easter eggs. We had 305 of them, and there were only a few real hiding spaces, so most of the eggs were hidden in plain sight. There were 10 golden eggs with a special prize- when the finder opened them, they learned if they had won a \$10 gift card, or an extra bag of candy.

Even with all that going on, when the students found all the eggs and we still had about 15 minutes left to eat the candy and enjoy some free time outdoors before the bell rang. The last meeting of the school year is April 15<sup>th</sup>. Remember, to volunteer you must register as a volunteer with Hillsborough County School Board. That approval is good for 3 years. Let me know if you are registered.







Rita Smith, PER, Project Manager







## **Grant Reports and Information**

## Shining a Spotlight on Attendance at Chamberlain High School

This grant did not play out exactly as I envisioned it, partly because both our school connection and I had health issues. But we managed to get it done. Instead of rewarding one class and two teachers a month from October through March, we



ended up rewarding the winning classes and teachers in larger groups in February and March. With a larger March group of 4 classrooms equaling 121 students, ordering from a fast- food restaurant was not going to work. The School Liaison -Elk member Kristina Chowning, came up with a perfect solution – using the school's Culinary Department to cater the breakfast. They gave us a great price of only \$5.00 a head – we furnished the drinks. This meant that even more of the school knew that Tampa Elks were in the building! Of course, beverages for 121 are a lot of drinks to purchase, chill, transport, unload and serve – and it turned out to be pouring rain the morning of the big event. It also turned out to be scheduled even earlier than the February breakfast – we were due at Chamberlain by 8:30.

I was just a few days post-surgery and Betty Orcutt had a brace on her arm , so we could not assist with the unloading of all those drinks. Both Kristina Chowning and Shelagh Gombarcik, PER, were totally drenched by the time they got into the school. Luckily, our discomfort was not shared by the students who had earned the reward. The students were very glad to have great choices of beverages, free food, and a free period socializing in the cafeteria instead of in the classroom. We had a class of exceptional students with good attendance join us, and they even brought the Easter bunny along! Before we left, we had the pleasure of presenting some of the 12 gift cards that went to teachers who had perfect attendance from January through March, that was a lot of fun!

This was an unusual use of the Spotlight Grant, and we appreciate the fact that Elks National Foundation agreed that the Chamberlain HS project was an extension of our Robinson HS Project. Your donations to ENF fund projects right here in your community!





Ladies organization.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious meal prepared by our own Georgia Hilficker and the evening was topped off with a yummy black forest cobbler with ice cream. I want to thank all my officers for their commitment to serving our lodge and community. I want to thank the members for having faith in this group of officers and for all those who helped make it a special event.

Extra kudos to Shelagh Gombarcik for her hard work making the hall look so beautiful. An extra thanks to Frank Palladini, PSP, PGESQ, for his support and preforming the installation. Thank you to Georgia and her amazing kitchen crew for serving a great meal.

In your service, Tracy Horrell, ER

Let's welcome the newly installed officers for the Ladies of the Elks 2024-2025. The night was capped off with our beautiful candlelight ceremony and we were honored to have Marilyn Fratello, PLP install our 2024-2025 officers. The LOE is looking forward to an exciting and successful year.

Left to right; Shelagh Gombarcik, PER,PLP,VP, April Holtzing, Sec., Laura Jones, Treas., Jacquie LoCicero,LP, Suzanne Moore, Chaplain, Ruth Levin, Parliamentarian.



| OLUME 2024 ISSUE 2   | MAY  | OFFICIAL PUBLICATION-Pg 8                              |
|--|--|--|
| Upcoming   | ; Events a   | nd Projects  |
| CHIPS AND S  |  | 7085<br>Coxican<br>Dinner<br>Night<br>Coy 5th          |
| 2 ENCHILADAS (BEEF OR CHICKEN) REFRIED BEANS,<br>MEXICAN RICE, ENSALADA  |  |  |
| Extras:<br>Pickled Jalapeños<br>Extra Sour Cream<br>Queso Dip<br>Guacamole<br>Dessert:<br>Flan<br>Please make reservations | \$ 1.00<br>\$ .50<br>\$2.00<br>\$ 3.50<br>\$3.00<br>ON 708MEALS.OM 0 | TEXT GEORGIA AT 813-294-6200<br>YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION |
|  |  |  |



## COME ENJOY THE 2024 LADIES OF THE ELKS



## SATURDAY, MAY 4TH 7:00PM

DINNER SERVED FROM 5:30PM TO 7PM Menu - Bourbon Pork Sliders, Pimento Cheese Pasta Salad and Deviled eggs Horses on sale now \$10 per horse (See LOE board member to purchase) Betting windows open at 6:30 Live & Silent Auction - Derby Hat Contest Spin the Wheel for a GIFT CERTIFICATE Each Spin \$5 Certificates from \$5 TO \$50 Jello Shots & 50/50 for the Charity (TO BENEFIT THE LOE AND

THE CHILDREN'S THERAPY SERVICE)





#### Served Mondays 6pm to 7:30pm All Menus \$8.50 including tax

**May 6th** – Chicken Parm Sub, w/French Fries, or Antipasto salad over lettuce, both come with a sweet treat.

**May 13th** – Meatloaf Sandwich w/chips or 1/2 a Meatloaf Sandwich w/Split Pea Soup & both come w/a sweet treat.

May 20th – BLT Sandwich w/side or 1/2 BLT with Tortellini Pasta Salad both with a sweet treat.

May 27nd – Empanadas w/Rice & Beans or Copycat 1905 Salad, both come with a sweet treat.

Sides are subject to change depending upon availability.



QUEEN OF HEARTS

Drawing at 7pm

#### Thursday Nights Served 6pm to 7:30

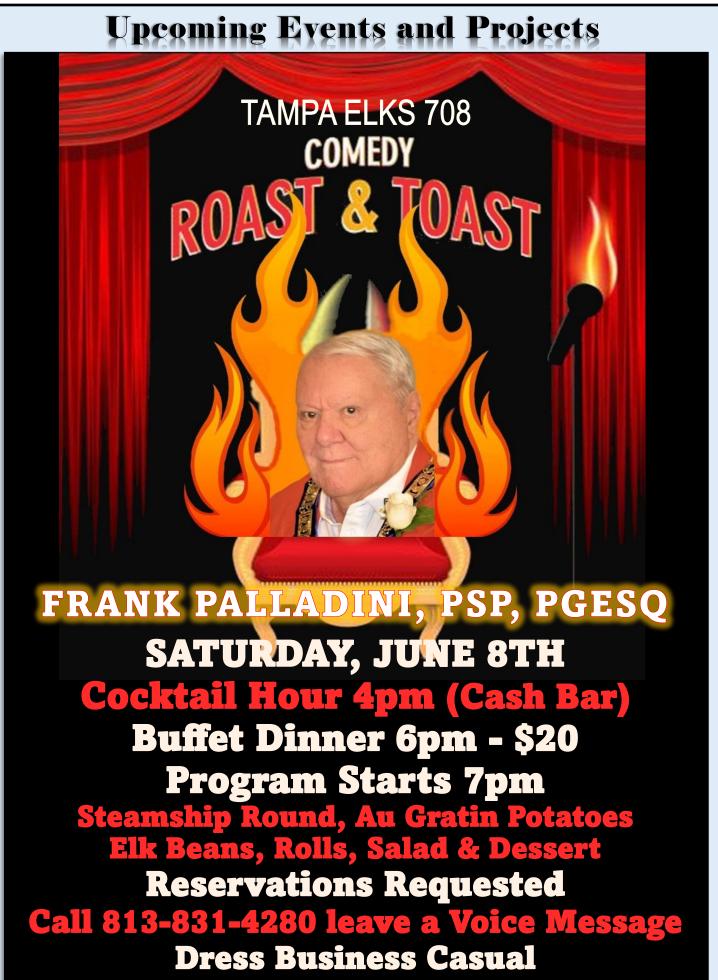
\*May 2nd - Spaghetti Night

#### \*May 9th - Grill Night

\*May 16th – Grilled Cheese & Tomato Soup or Rueben Sandwich w/French Fries or Grilled Chicken Caesar Salad

\* Wednesday – May 23th – Grill Night

\*May 30th – Italian Sausage w/onions & peppers & French Fries or Meatball Sub w/French Fries or Spinach Salad w/Hot Bacon Dressing





2023-2024 GOURMET CLUB

## This month's Hostess is <u>Ruth Levin</u> May 19th — 5pm

Check your dna & Grab that family Cookbook Irish, french, cuban Or Italian

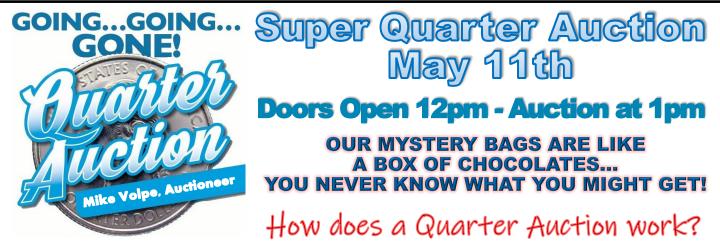
Bring a favorite Dish from your Heritage to share And a story to go With IT!





BRING A DISH OR A Donation and an Appetite

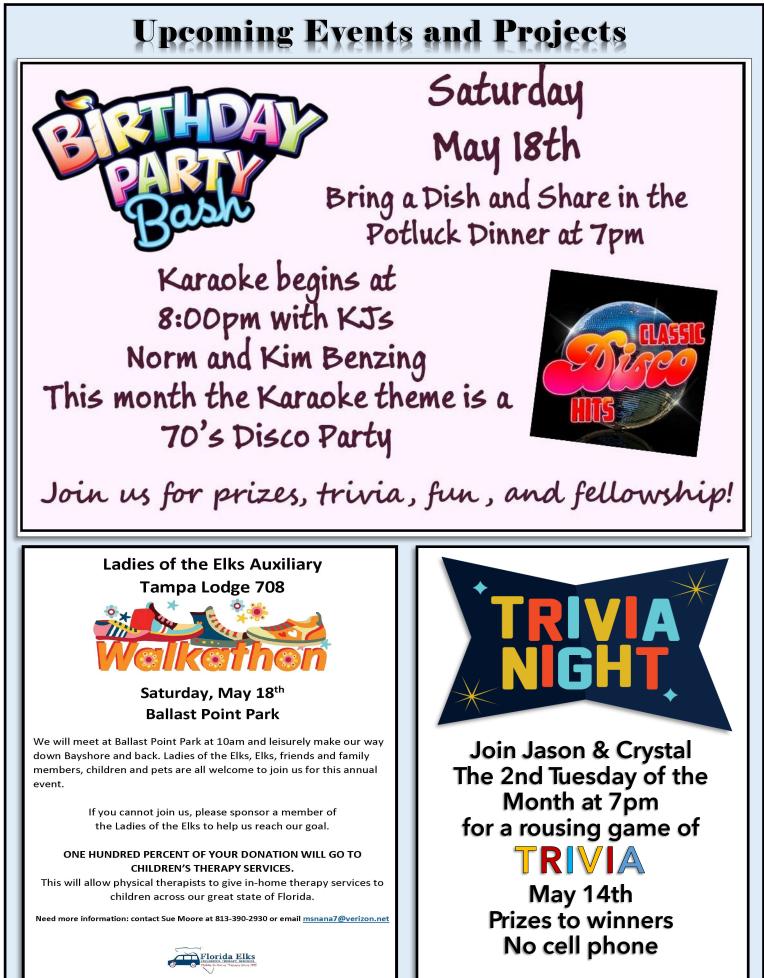
Trivia...Trivia...Trivia...Trivia



Entry fee of \$5 gets you a paddle and an event drawing ticket.

Additional paddles available for purchase. The number on your paddle matches a number in our drawing basket. Vendors will be present with goods for sale and donated auction items. Additional donated auction items will be showcased. When the auction begins, an item will be shown and a quarter value set. If you want the item, you put in your quarters, per paddle, and raise your paddle high! If we draw your number and you played it, then you win!

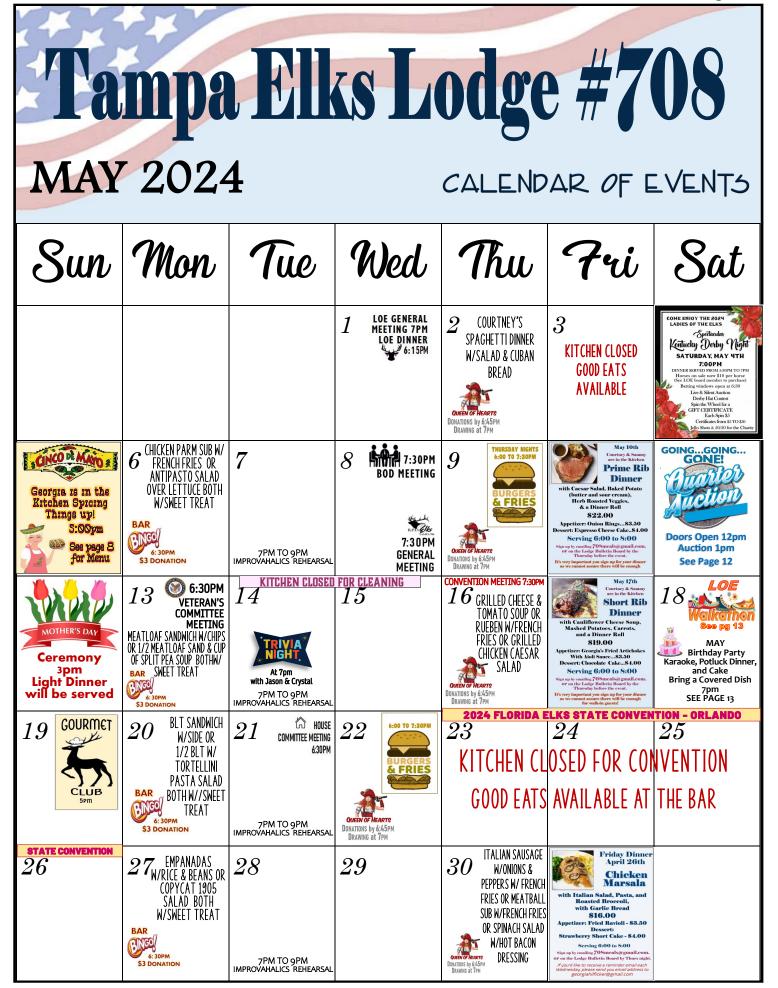
It's that easy! Grab your Quarters & Bring a Friend for a fun Afternoon Lunch Basket will be Available





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MAY





NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION U.S. POSTAGE PAID TAMPA, FL PERMIT #32



Ask to join our group on Facebook to receive updates and late breaking news. Tampa Elks Lodge #708



Please remember to send any change of address to: ampa708secretary@outlook.com

Support the Elksize and Be an SOB - Smiling 'Ole' Booster

\$10.00 a year defers some of the publication cost, allowing us to direct more of our income to the charities & organizations we support.

William Deen - Richard Florance, PER, - Bob Norton - Sandra Brantley Vera Wright - In Memory of Harold Wright - Pat Fennell



### Friends of 708

Marty Quire - In Memory of Bonnie Quire - Bonnie Atwood - Thomas Boyle Mr & Mrs Moore - Sharon Ford - Rick Schneider, PER - Mr & Mrs Suhrheinrich - Cynthia Edwards Steve Harmon - Marty Quire - Julie Wooley - Paul DeLand, PER - Paula Rousselle - Kim Williams Chris Ragusa - Mr & Mrs Hilficker - Debbie Osterbrock - Shannon Wheatley - Jason Brown Susie Harlow - Laura Jones - Ladies of the Elks - Theresa Seibert PDDGR - Mackinley Zewalk

#### **OUR CURRENT ANNUAL SUPPORTERS**

R. Florance, PER - K. Higgins - M. Flowers - G. Chiani - J. Brennan - R. Millaway R. Norton - B. Deen - J. Martin - S. Mackey - S. Owens - F. Smith - M. Waldbart - E. Clark C. McMullen - R. Millaway - J. Hall - A. DeQuesada - C. Venable - R. Bradshaw - F. Palladini R. Schneider, ER, In Memory of J. Schneider

This local program focuses solely on improving our lodge through generous member donations. All members are encouraged to sign up for the "Eleventh Hour Pledge". Your recurring pledge of \$11 a month will help maintain our lodge.