

TO: Exalted Rulers; Secretaries; District Deputies; Vice Presidents; Grand Lodge District Sponsors
RE: Ritual at the Mid Winter Conference – Saturday, February 19, 2022

PLEASE pass this information on to all who is attending the mid winter and let that member decide if they would like to do the competition.

1) **The ritualistic meeting:** 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM.

2) **Competition times:**

- a) Individual, 11 O' Clock Toast: 9:00 AM until 12:15 PM
- b) Team - TBD

3) **Ritual Clinic in the afternoon:**

- a) The regional chairman will be at the conference and holding a clinic in the afternoon.
- b) Time to be determined

4) **The individual competitions:**

- a) The positions that will be competing:
Exalted Ruler, Leading Knight, Loyal Knight, Lecturing Knight, Esquire and Chaplain.
- b) **These positions are for the current officers only. It is NOT an open competition.**
Current ER can only do ER, Leading Knight only Leading Knight, etc.
- c) There is no set time for any position. Whenever anyone is available, for any position, they are more than welcome to perform.
- d) The performing member may bring in another member to give their charge to.
- e) The Esquire position is the only position that will have department as part of the charge:
 - Hailing sign, Salute to the Flag, Voting sign and the Wave of the hand
- f) During the Esquire charge, the raps of the gavel, by the Exalted Ruler, will not be given.
- g) Each competition has been sent with this letter.
- h) There is no set time for any position. Whenever anyone is available, for any position, they are more than welcome to perform.

5) **11 O' Clock Toast:**

- a) 4 divisions:
 - ER Only; Current Loyal Knights; Open (for any member in good standing) and DDGER's/VP's vs. Past State Presidents:
 - For DDGER's/VP's vs. Past State Presidents:
All scores for each "team" will be totaled and each person on the highest scoring "team" will receive a special plaque.
ALL are EXPECTED to perform, even if someone won in the competition before.
- ER ONLY:
 - a) The winning ER will have the choice to attend the next Grand Lodge Convention and perform in the 11 O'Clock Toast Competition.
If the ER does not wish to attend, the next highest score in either the ER or OPEN competition will have the chance.
 - b) The committee will reimburse up to \$500.
- b) The performing member may bring in another member to give their charge to.
- d) To start the competition, someone from the ritual committee will say "It is the hour of recollection".
- e) There is no set time for any position. Whenever anyone is available, for any position, they are more than welcome to perform.

6) Lodge Team Competitions:

a) I hope that a Lodge or Lodge(s) will put together a team. We would like to see the current officers at their perspective positions, but if a P.E.R or two needs to be brought in please do so.

7) Saturday Night Banquet:

I will announce and recognize all the winners, at the Saturday night banquet. Plaques will be awarded to all winners. The plaques will be mailed because I only want to order if the position has not been performed.

PLEASE get this information out to the members, at Lodge meetings, newsletters, etc., and give them the opportunity to compete. The Open 11 O' Clock competition is open to any member in good standing.

Any help needed, please contact me and I will be more than happy answer any questions.

I have enclosed all positions that a member may compete in.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Fraternally,

Ben Godlewski – WEA Ritualistic Exemplification Chairman
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cc: Jerry Brien – WEA President
Dave Hagen – WEA President Elect
Lou Sulsberger, PGER – Grand Lodge Sponsor
WEA Ritual Committee Members

11 O' CLOCK TOAST

You have heard the tolling of eleven strokes. This is to impress upon you that with us the hour of eleven has a tender significance. Wherever Elks may roam, whatever their lot in life may be, when this hour falls upon the dial of night, the great heart of Elkdom swells and throbs. It is the golden hour of recollection, the homecoming of those who wander, the mystic roll call of those who will come no more. Living or dead, Elks are never forgotten never forsaken. Morning and noon may pass them by, the light of day sink heedlessly in the West, but ere the shadows of midnight shall fall, the chimes of memory will be pealing forth the friendly message, " To our absent members."

Exalted Ruler (1 of 2)

I welcome you to this station for final instruction. You may well be proud that the Members of this Lodge have deemed you worthy of their confidence. I trust that you may continue to merit their approval, and become a true and faithful member among us. To accomplish this, you must at all times have in mind the solemn and binding Obligation which you have so recently assumed, and I charge you that your highest duty as an Elk is to keep it inviolate. Conscience will not permit you to expunge a paragraph, eliminate a sentence, or evade a responsibility; nor can you lay it aside when you leave the Lodge room, for it must henceforth be your constant guide and faithful monitor.

The cardinal principles of our Order are Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity. Each has been adopted as the motto of a station in the Lodge, Fidelity being the motto of this, the principal station. It is symbolized by the Star which shines above our Altar.

Fidelity implies strict adherence to our Obligation and faithfulness in the discharge of our duty as members of society.

As time runs on, in sun and shade, may you bear with you ever in life's changing course the sense of obligation and of wrong, and in your heart the rapture of a high resolve.

Life's story has been often told, yet all must solve anew its problems for themselves. Our time upon the stage of action is but brief, yet in the drama each must play a part. The character is left for each to choose; a villain if we will, or person of honor, holding high above all things – high as Hope's great throbbing star above the darkness of the dead – respect for virtue, and love of family and home and friend.

'Mid swiftly changing scenes that mark the action of the play, we by each other oft may be aided in our part, or from each other catch inspiration for a high resolve; and to this end exists the Brotherhood of Elks.

Exalted Ruler (2 of 2)

The Order of Elks is distinctively American. Linking the destiny of our Order with the destiny of our Country we have made its Flag the symbol of the crowning virtue.

Please salute our Flag. **** Do not have to raise flag – NO deportment ****

As this emblem is first in our hearts as loyal Americans, so is it close to our Altar as loyal Elks. The gentle breezes with lingering caress kiss the folds of no flag which can compare with it in beauty. There is no such red in budding rose, in falling leaf or sparkling wine; no such white in April blossom, in crescent moon or mountain snow; no such blue in woman's eye, in ocean's depth or heaven's dome; and no such pageantry of clustering stars and streaming light in all the spectrum of the sea and sky.

In the name of this great Brotherhood, and on behalf of this Lodge, I present you with this, our Flag. Preserve it as a memento of this occasion, and may it ever stimulate you to the performance of your full duty in the preservation and defense of all it represents.

**** Do not have to lower arms – NO deportment ****

Finally, strive diligently that the name of Elk as borne by you may be worthy of an American citizen – one who loves his/her fellow man.

Esteemed Leading Knight (1 of 2)

The emblem of this station is the Flag of our Country; and its motto is Charity, the cornerstone of every Elk structure, the highest virtue of every Elk creed. The daily gifts we bestow increase our own riches. The help we extend to those in need is added to our own strength. The witchery of wealth is not in having, but in sharing. The real benefactors of mankind count their store in what is given, not in what is saved.

But, as Elks, we teach not alone the charity of alms, but the higher and nobler charity of thought, word and deed. Our whole influence in life is determined by the good deeds we do rather than by the emotions we feel. The kindest feeling may vanish, the best resolve may be forgotten; but the influence of a good deed, honestly and promptly performed, will continue forever.

There's a legend that in olden times a feast was laid on high Olympus for all the gods, and thither each did bear the goddess of his highest choice, until the throng had filled the mountain top.

Wealth and Riches came resplendent in their robes of gold, and Greed and Avarice their companions were. Peace came, and all did wonder that she leant upon the arm of War. Justice and Mercy entered, and between them proudly walked the god of Right. Faith came with Doubt, and Hope entered by the side of Fear.

Thus, each in turn, until at last, uninvited and unattended, came sweet Charity, in flowing robes of purest white, and in her arms she bore a wilderness of flowers, dear tokens of remembrance for them all.

Then Wealth and Riches drew their gorgeous robes aside, while Greed and Avarice protested loudly that one so poorly dressed should royal feast attend. Charity gave them answer soft and mild:

Esteemed Leading Knight (2 of 2)

“Have I in truth no welcome here, and is there none in all this company who will my companion be? Behold, I bring you sweetest flowers in offering and beg that you accept them from my hand. Royal robes would not befit me well, for what grace I have is not in figure nor in form. True, I come in simple raiment, unannounced, yet Misery and Want await me at the door. I speak to you of their distress, and argue for their cause.”

Whereupon the gods with one acclaim did vote her purest, truest, noblest of all the Graces, ladened her with royal gifts, proffered her a crown and begged that she would sit upon the throne.

But she made them answer, that she sought her throne not among the gods, but in the hearts of mankind; and, commending kindly deeds unto them all, went again upon her way.

This legend teaches us that Charity is the greatest of all the virtues; and that it should ever rule us in our hearts and in our lives, leading us to speak no unkind word, to harbor no evil thought, to bear no malice, to support no wrong; but to nurture, love and protect; to condone, forgive and forget.

Esteemed Loyal Knight (1 of 1)

Upon the Altar before which you have just assumed the solemn Obligation of our Order, there lies the open Bible. It is the emblem of this station, whose motto is Justice.

You have sworn to support the Constitution and comply with the Laws of this Order and the By-Laws of this Lodge. Justice requires that your observance of that Obligation should be full and complete, for the first lesson it teaches is that of duty and obedience to constituted authority.

When you have signed our roster and received your membership card the Secretary will present you with a copy of the Constitution and Statutes of this Order and the By-Laws of this Lodge.

I charge you to familiarize yourself with their every provision; for, while Justice is not vindictive, it is exacting; and no violation of your Obligation, no failure to perform your fraternal duty, can be permitted to pass this station unnoticed. But the Order of Elks not only exacts from you the strict performance of the duties of membership; it likewise bestows upon you cherished rights and privileges which its whole power and authority will ensure and protect. Should you feel at any time that these rights have been invaded, the courts of the Order are open to you. The decision of its highest tribunal should be accepted as final.

Esteemed Lecturing Knight (1 of 1)

I welcome you to this station which is dedicated to Brotherly Love. Upon our Altar it is symbolized by the Antlers of Protection. The animal from which our Order derives its name is noted for gentleness and timidity. It is strong of limb, fleet of foot, quick and keen of perception. So should we be: quick to hear the cry of distress, timorous of doing wrong and fleet of foot to relieve the unfortunate, thus conforming to the Golden Rule which should govern all mankind.

In this rule, which is the foundation and groundwork of our Order, Brotherly Love finds its perfect expression; and it is best exemplified by practicing the teachings of our motto – “The faults of our Members we write upon the sand, their virtues upon the tablets of love and memory.” It softens the stern realities of life and manifests itself in good fellowship, in sympathy, and in kindness of thought, word and deed. It has smiles and laughter for us in seasons of joy, and it sits with us in the shadow and weeps in the hour of bereavement. It teaches us to scatter flowers along life’s pathway and to speak words of kindness to the living as well as to cherish the memory of the dead.

As we therefore have opportunity, let us do good unto others, for we pass this way but once. We cannot retrace our steps nor call back the days that are gone; but the passing moment is ours long enough to grasp the hand in friendship, to lighten each other's burdens, to bring rest to the weary, and to comfort those who mourn – this is Brotherly Love.

Chaplain (1 of 1)

Our Father Who art in Heaven, we have gathered as Thy children, to renew our Obligation of Brotherhood. Prosper us in this labor of love. Bless this Candidate, and grant that he/she may become a true and loyal member among us, exemplifying the virtues of Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity. In all our endeavors for good, lead us and all Elks into the green pastures of knowledge, and beside the still waters of peace.

Amen

Esquire (1 of 2)

The membership card, which will be presented to you by the Secretary, is a means of identification. It shows that you are a member in good standing in this Lodge. You should carry it with you at all times. You are required to present it in order to gain admission to this Lodge, and without it you cannot gain admission to another lodge.

The hailing sign is made by bringing the hands in one circular movement to a position over the head, palms to the front. It denotes the spreading antlers of an elk. It should be given only in front of the Altar in the Lodge room, while the Lodge is in session or when ordered by the Exalted Ruler.

The civilian salute to the Flag is made standing erect with the right hand over the heart.

A military salute to the Flag may be rendered by Military Personnel, Veterans and First Responders. ***** **Do not do any movement for this instruction** *****

The voting sign is made by uplifting the right hand, palm to the front.

The gavel in the hand of the Exalted Ruler is the emblem of authority. One rap (RAP) calls the Lodge to order, or seats it when standing; two raps (RAP RAP) call up the Officers; three raps (RAP RAP RAP) call up the entire Lodge. At the opening of the Lodge, when called upon so to do, you will exhibit your membership card to either the Esteemed Loyal Knight or the Esteemed Lecturing Knight.

If you wish to gain admission to this Lodge when it is in session, you will give an alarm at the outer door, which will be opened by the Tiler. To him/her you will exhibit your membership card. If found correct, you will be admitted to the anteroom, and will then advance to the inner door and give a rap for admission. (RAP on door by Inner Guard) The Inner Guard will open the wicket and to him/her you will give, in a whisper, your name and the name and number of your Lodge. The Inner Guard will report to the Exalted Ruler, at whose direction you will be admitted. You will then advance before the Altar, face the Exalted Ruler and salute him/her with the hailing sign. It will be answered by the Exalted Ruler by a wave of the hand. You will then be seated.

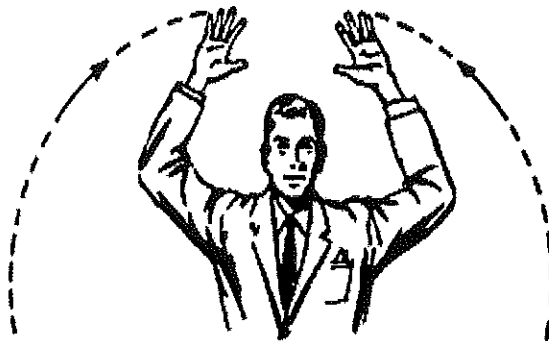
Esquire (2 of 2)

You shall not cross the floor after the Lodge has been opened without permission of the Exalted Ruler, and in no case shall you pass between the Altar and the station of the Exalted Ruler except as Ritual requires during the Initiation, or when so ordered by the Exalted Ruler.

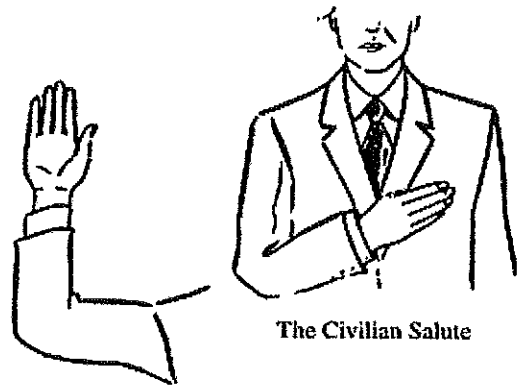
Should you wish to retire while the Lodge is in session, you will advance before the Altar and salute the Exalted Ruler with the hailing sign. When answered by him/her, you will be at liberty to retire.

In visiting another lodge, in addition to exhibiting your membership card, it will be necessary for you to undergo such examination as may be required by the Esquire.

For your further instruction you will pay strict attention to the dialogue between the Exalted Ruler and myself.

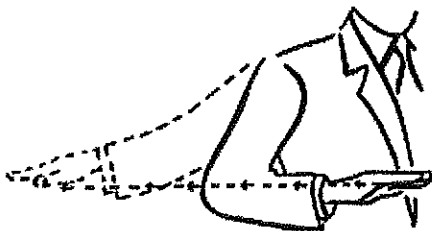


The Hailing Sign



The Voting Sign

The Civilian Salute



Wave of the Hand