



## STATE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**To all my fellow Elks across the State of Florida:**

As I indicated in my first article for July, this brief message each and every month is part of my program to increase the level of communication between you as lodge members and the State Leadership. I thank those overwhelming number of lodges which have chosen to include the message in their monthly bulletins.

You will undoubtedly keep hearing frequently this year that increasing our membership is a prominent and necessary goal. It is crucial because we have been consistently losing members the last several years. There are numerous reasons for this decline and therefore it calls for numerous solutions. There is no one “magic bullet” that will reverse the decline but I am convinced that whatever actions are taken must be initiated at the local lodge level. Support and encouragement from your State Association is important, but we cannot and should not dictate any one solution. The circumstances are too varied in each community to allow us to implement any one all encompassing plan. However, many lodges are experiencing net membership gains and we can learn from them and perhaps readily incorporate their ideas and strategies in our own communities.

Part of the solution may be to reinforce the knowledge within our lodge areas through **Publicity and Public Relations** the tremendous amount of charitable activities individual lodges are promoting. This approach is stressed in my program and motto this year, “**You Can Count on Us.**” Again, this Elk does not have all the answers, but I trust many of you do have ideas, suggestions, or at least thoughts on the matter. I invite you to communicate with me, the State **Membership** Chairman, Don Moon, or your respective District **Membership** Chairman, should you feel so inclined.

In conclusion, Julia and I would be pleased for you to attend any of our scheduled State President's Visitations to the 14 districts whenever possible. We consider the opportunity to meet and greet so many of you one of the many privileges and honors we are experiencing this lodge year.

Sincerely and Fraternaly,

*James E. Hurst*

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FSEA State President