2006 “Year in review”
The National Veterans Service Committee (NVSC)

- The committee assisted in the deer hide project that would get animal hides processed for gloves and other products for the Veterans.

- Along with all the other committees we had our turns cooking for Friday Night Dinners.

- We announced the annual Jim Goddard Essay contest. High school students who are relatives of Elks in good standing were invited to enter an essay on the subject ”WHAT A VETERAN MEANS TO ME”

- We attend the South East District (SED) meetings the first Monday of each month to discuss and plan many of the projects and programs provide to our Veterans throughout the year.

- Members of our committee were invited to attend a ‘Valentines Dinner/Date Dance’ at the Burnt Tavern Rehabilitation Center. At this dinner we had a ‘date’ with one of the residents at the center, had dinner and fun. It was a pleasure to volunteer the time to hopefully bring happiness to someone.

- A testimonial dinner was held for Mr. John Kaufman and Mr. Gus Adamo, two esteemed members of our Veterans Committee to be so honored by their brothers and sisters of our Lodge. We are
privileged to know them and most importantly have them on our committee. Thank You, John and Gus!

- Lou LaStella was named Lodge Veteran Committee Volunteer of the Year 2005. He was presented with a plaque and his wife Carol was presented with flowers. Thank You Lou!

- SED announced they would like to run a Golf Tournament, Mike Donahue volunteered to coordinate it. Mike will attend the SED meetings to report progress.

- A very sad note, Jerry McIntire suffered a severe stroke and could not survive the damage and eventually succumbed. Jerry was a good leader, it was a great loss. Our Lodge donated towards a fundraiser on his behalf.

- April 23rd was Elks day at the Battleship New Jersey. We attempted to coordinate a trip to the ship but unfortunately no one volunteered to attend, hopefully we can gather a group for the upcoming year.

- The Veterans committee was asked to run a fund raiser 50-50 at the Fluke Tournament. Plans to run the raffle were immediately started. Every one had very good ideas and was shared among the committee. We requested a chance to sell the raffle tickets at the Point Pleasant Boardwalk. Mr. Dan DiCorsia made arrangements with the boardwalk ownership and the plans fell into place. It took a great deal of work and coordination by this great committee to pull off such a successful
raffle. (the results were EXTREMELY SUCCESSFUL)      Thank You Committee!!

- Sunday May 23rd was Elks day at the Blue Claws baseball game. We had a good turnout, the Burnt Tavern Rehab Center attended and every one enjoyed themselves and the game.

- Mr. Ralph Sansone was submitted as our Lodge representative for the New Jersey State Veterans Volunteer of the Year. Unfortunately Ralph was not selected as our Volunteer of the year. I personally did not know Ralph but if John Kaufman, Gus Adamo and other Veteran Committee members said he was worthy of the award, then I too believe his worthiness.

- We received another invitation to the Burnt Tavern Rehab Center to attend a ‘Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon’ held in our honor. To be recognized and appreciated for your efforts in helping people is the essence of what the Veterans committee and other committees strive for.

- Our Lodge was invited to march in the Memorial Day Parade Celebration in Point Pleasant Borough, however very few members of our Lodge marched. Hopefully we will have many more Lodge members marching this coming year to show our appreciation to our Nations Veterans.

- A great deal of work has been done at the Veterans Memorial Park. It will be an ongoing, continuous effort to make and keep the Park looking neat and clean. Some of the work that was done was obtaining additional, and better benches. There are plans in the works to build a small retaining wall around the flag pole and monument area to hold back the stones off the sidewalk.
  As a fund raiser, we are contemplating the idea of selling engraved bricks
to be placed on top of the present walkway.

During our first work detail in the park Boy Scouts from Elks Troop#3 were very helpful, and we thank them for that. (we will be asking for help in the future as well.)

- The Committee again scheduled three fishing trips for the months of June, July and August. Each of the Veteran rehabilitation Centers, Burnt Tavern Rehab, Veterans Haven and Navesink Harbor Rehab attended. After each fishing trip the Veterans were treated to a specially prepared and cooked fish dinner. They also receive prizes for the first and the biggest fish caught, they loved it!

- The annual American Flag retirement ceremony was held at Lacey Lodge. After collecting old, worn and torn flags, each Elks Lodge attends the ceremony and retires the flags by burning them.

- It is with great deal of pleasure to announce that the NVSC, Point Pleasant Lodge #1698 was presented a plaque for placing first in the entire Nation for their Remembrance Report for Lodges with a membership of 701-1100. In addition, and in recognition of this achievement, the Mayor and Council of Point Pleasant Beach, during a city council meeting, presented the NVSC Committee with a proclamation. The Remembrance Report demonstrates the effort and the amount of hours volunteered by our Veterans committee helping America’s Veterans.

- The Veterans Committee attended a Sunset fishing cruise held by the Point Pleasant Fishing Club.
- The annual MASH Picnic was held in September at the National Training Center in Sea Girt. Our Lodge had a good turnout and everyone enjoyed the day.

- Veterans from the Rehab Centers were invited by the Veterans Committee to our Lodge for a picnic in September and a Spaghetti dinner in November in their honor. All that attended enjoyed themselves, the food was great!

- Veterans Day Ceremony was held in November at the Toms River Lodge. Many Veterans attended from various Veteran Homes, hospitals and Rehabilitation Centers. The Ceremony was very moving, the Boy Scouts from Elks Troop #3, Point Pleasant assisted as well as the ROTC out of Lakewood.

- In December, we participated in a Children’s Christmas party at McGuire AFB. We brought many gifts with us that were donated for the children by the Burnt Tavern Rehab Center. Nancy clowned for the children and they loved it!
Plans for the ‘Ted Holmgren Bowling Tournament’ had begun. Details of the Tournament were in the Antler every month and letters were addressed to each Lodge in New Jersey inviting all members to bowl. The tournament was a fund raiser for the Army of Hope hosted by our Lodge.

We visited the Burnt Tavern Rehab Center in December and presented the Veterans with a hooded sweatshirt as a Christmas gift from us.

That is our year in review. We were very active in 2006, we intend to be much busier this coming year. We intend to achieve our main goal and that is to make all the Veterans we meet who gave so much for us, a little happier, more comfortable and put some fun in their lives.

*I cannot emphasize enough the appreciation I have for the Veterans committee who stepped up to the plate when called upon and continued to do a great job throughout the year! The valiant effort they all displayed in preparing for and pulling off such a successful 50-50 raffle for the Fluke Tournament and the 60th Anniversary/Octoberfest was greatly appreciated. ‘When I had doubt they pulled it out’*

*I would like to also thank members of the House committee and other committees who chipped in and helped us many times.*

Thank You,
Mike Travisano
Chairman, National Veterans Service Committee Lodge #1698