

NEWSLETTER

5113 63RD STREET COLUMBUS, NE 68601 402.564.1451 THEELKSCC.COM ELKSCC@THEELKSCC.COM



Justin Lorenz
Exalted Ruler
Elks Lodge #1195

Sponsor a new Elks' member this spring

As I finish up my year as Exalted Ruler for the Elks Board, I think back on why I am here in the first place. It started with an invitation of sorts.

Two years after we joined as a family and I was golfing on a regular basis, Jerod Spiegel and Marty Divis asked if I would get involved with the board. Fast forward to today, and I have learned it wasn't a difficult job, and the more involved you get, the more people you meet.

A good invitation goes a long way!

As the summer approaches and you talk with others about how they will spend their time, I encourage you to invite them to join the Elks.

Give them a tour. Educate them on what the Elks do in the Columbus community. Invite them out for dinner and enjoy a complimentary appetizer for your table or two cocktails for your guests. They'll receive a 20% discount the first of a two-year commitment and you'll get \$200 in shop credit.

Remember, a good invitation goes a long way!

It takes some green to keep a course the same color

Bice digs into equipment and costs of maintaining the course

What did you pay the last time you scheduled your car for an oil change? Now, imagine you had 30 vehicles to maintain. Yet, you can't drive your car forever without servicing them. Right?

That's one of many tasks associated with maintaining the equipment, property, and horticultural needs of the Elks golf course. It isn't a cheap date.

Here's a summary of what is spent each year to give Elks members the best experience and most pride in their course:

- **Sod, Seed, Trees**\$5,000
- **Gas, Oil, Grease**\$30,000
- **Property, Ground Repair**\$45,000
(building, sprinklers, sand, etc.)
- **Equipment** \$45,000
(equipment maintenance and repair)
- **Chemicals and Fertilizer**\$55,000
- **Labor**\$250,000

Expectations are that equipment will run a long time, but the wear and tear on equipment in the golf season is great.

The life of a piece of equipment is determined using a USGA formula that calculates the number of hours used and the equivalent of those hours in miles.

For instance, the Elks' Toro Groundskeeper 4000D Rough Mower was purchased new in 2009 but has accumulated nearly 695,000 miles, in part because it is used every day of the season. *(See the entire fleet list on p.3)*

"Last year, we increased the number of times we mowed the rough during the week," said Eric. "And survey feedback indicates the rough is still an issue for many members, yet cutting the rough can cause some burn around the edges. It becomes a balance between benefit, cost, and course management."

Members who value a good golfing experience and understand what the course needs have generously donated money beyond their dues to purchase such things as the rake groomer for the sand traps and a new greens roller.

"We are extremely grateful for the financial assistance," Eric said.

Other necessary projects, like the bridge, which was in dire need of repair, were paid through an assessment in 2023.

Story continues on p. 2



It's time to return the pin flags to the greens. Here, Superintendent Eric Bice listens to one of his favorite podcasts about turf, wrestling, Iowa sports, or history, while selecting a new cup placement for hole #1.

It takes some green to keep a course the same color, cont.

continued from page 1

“Our goal is to prepare and present a beautiful course for the members to enjoy,” said Bice. “We are listening to the feedback from the membership survey and are making certain improvements as we can (e.g., updating the driving range, increasing rough mowing, etc.), and are planning to address the burn pile, while acknowledging such improvements come with a cost or tradeoff.”

For instance, Eric plans to replace two, 23-year-old Toro Reelmaster fairway mowers and one, 22-year-old Jacobsen tee/collar mower with a 2024 greens mower and a 2024 fairways mower. While he will sell the old mowers for the best price he can, the cost of the new mowers is \$110,000.

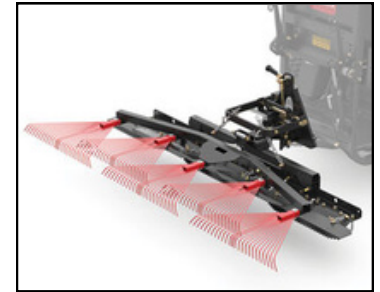
“When we held our membership meeting in October 2023, we showed an ECC

membership was a lot less than other country clubs. And it still is,” said GM Trista Engel. “We explained the need to increase 2024 dues at least \$300 to ‘catch up’ on budget shortfalls and that another \$300 increase would be needed in 2025. Unfortunately, it was decided to only increase dues \$100 this year, which means we cannot make many of the improvements we had planned to for members. We hope that in sharing what it costs to operate this club, members will understand why the club seeks financial support from members through fundraisers, donations, and increased dues in the future.”

Fortunately, **85% of members surveyed agreed or strongly agreed the Elks is a good value for what we pay in dues and fees, and 62% agreed**

or strongly agreed they would be willing to pay more to improve the club’s operations and thereby their member experience.

This support is greatly appreciated by the club’s management team.



This rake groomer attachment was donated by a member at a cost of \$2,200. It is attached to the Toro Sand Pro which was bought used in 2019 at a cost of \$14,000.

Elks' Maintenance Fleet & Year Purchased

1989 - 3-Wheel Cushman Vicon Utility Cart

1989 - 3-Wheel Cushman Vicon for Fertilizer Applications

1993 - Toro Sand Pro Rake Trap

2001 - Toro Workman Utility Cart

2001 - Toro Reelmaaster 5100 D Fairway Mower

2001 - Toro Reelmaaster 5100 D Fairway Mower

2002 - Toro ProCore 660 Aerifier

2002 - Jacobsen GKIV Plus Tee Collar Mower

2006 - Toro Greenmaster 3100 Greens Mower

2008 - EZ-Go MPT 1200 Utility Cart

2009 - Toro Groundsmaster 4000 D Rough Mower

2010 - EZ-Go ST 400 Utility Cart

2011 - Toro Sidewinder Rough Mower

2011 - Toro Reelmaster 5410 Fairways Mower?

2012 - True Roll 48" Greens Roller

2013 - Toro Reelmaster 3150 Greens Mower

2013 - Toro Pro Force Blower

2014 - Massey Ferguson Tractor

2015 - Toro Workman Utility Cart

2017 - Toro Sidewinder Rough Mower

2017 - Toro Workman Utility Cart

2018 - Toro Grounds Master Rough Mower

2018 - Jacobsen GK Plus Tee/Collar Mower

2018 - True Roll Greens Roller

2019 - Toro Sand Pro Rakes Groomer

2019 - GPS Sprayer

2020 - Ryan Slicer Aerifier

2020 - Sweep Fill Greens Broom

2022 - Redexim Seeder

2023 - Bobcat Tractor

2023 - Wediman Shock Wave Aerifier

Bolded equipment used daily

Women's

Golf Leagues



Women's league overview:

Ladies' Tuesday "A" League will be 2-person teams in match play, just like last year. Participants will mostly play "best ball" (play your own ball) during the season with a few scramble dates thrown in.

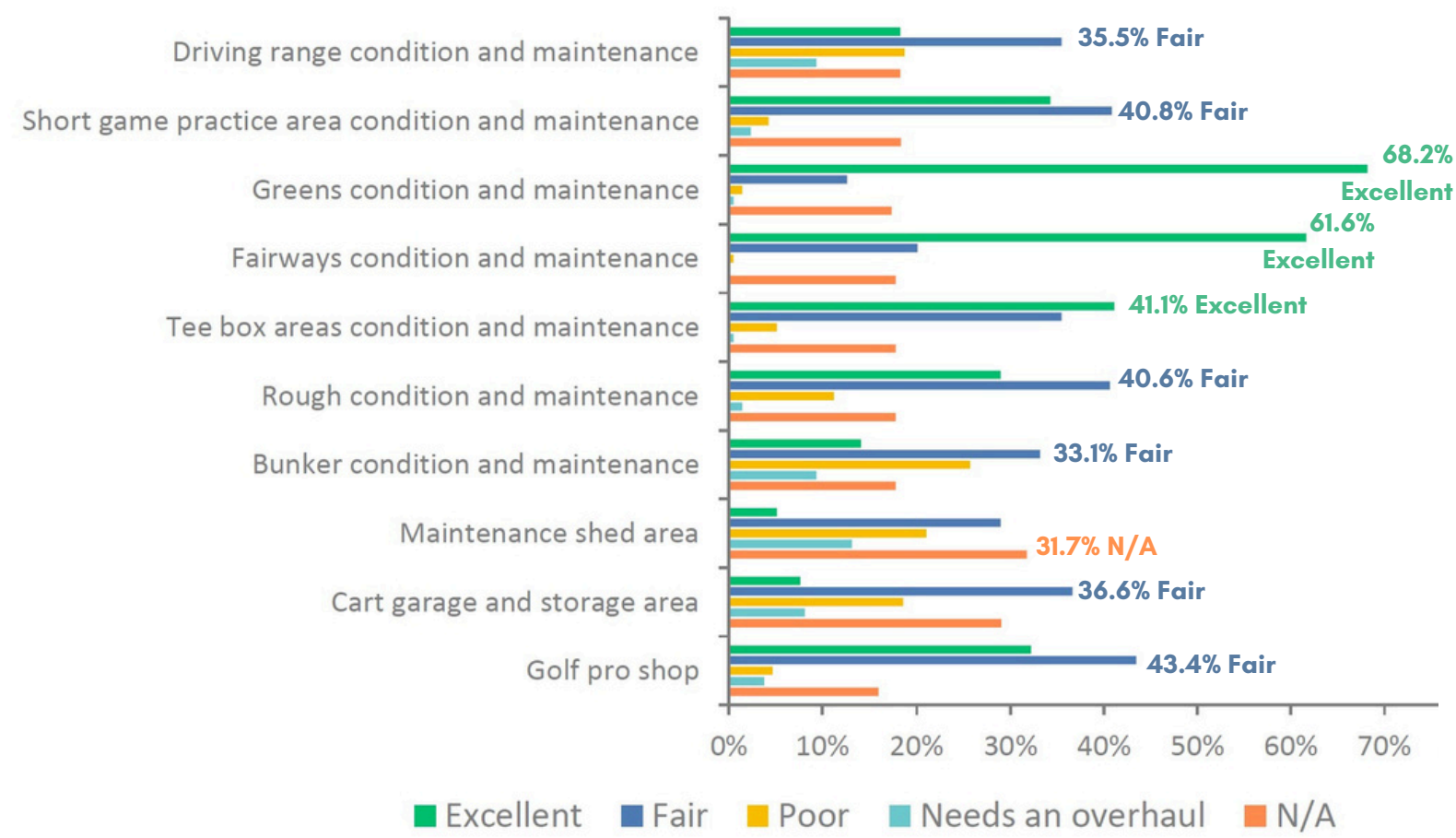
Ladies' Wednesday League will be "blind draw" with a different game each week.

Participants will sign up as an individual and make your own tee times with other players of your choice.

Derrick will email instructions to all members for how to sign up online within the next couple of weeks.

Tee-off at 5:45 p.m. May 6

Membership feedback regarding satisfaction with golf course conditions



Survey comments from members:

- Course always looks in good shape grounds are well maintained.
- Definitely improve the Driving Range*. Remove the ugly burn pile, fund raise for a new and improved irrigation system
- The quality of the course is outstanding. For the most part the course is kept in great shape especially the greens.
- Shorten the rough**, especially near greens and ball sinks and can't get out.
- The burn pile is a distraction***. Maintenance area needs something to make more attractive instead of distraction. Front Entrance needs some repairs and updating.
- Driving range complete overhaul*. Chipping, putting, bunker practice area overhaul.
- Get actual sand in the course bunkers***
- Bunker sand could definitely use improvement, but overall, I've seen a lot of improvement with tree removal and other general course maintenance.**
- The course is not near well maintained as it should be. Too many issues get little or no attention. Speed of greens are like a yoyo. Very inconsistent. These used to be some of the best greens anywhere. It seems they only are up to par for a few events. Maybe there should be a greens community to address certain things that need to be taken care of. When you have almost everyone commenting on things that should be done but aren't that's not good. Over watering to the point of causing damage by maintenance equipment even foot traffic. Quail Run had a catastrophic flood and their greens are better and more consistent than ours. Way too many people are unhappy but have no voice. If there was a voice things would get better. If they are going to have events try to allow members shotgun starts so we don't get shut out from playing our own course.
- Replace or repair cart path concrete, additional cart path concrete, complete #3 new tee box.

Status:
*Completed **In-progress *** Planned for this year

MESSAGE FROM OUR SUPER

Hello Members.

A majority of you may not know that my commitment to the Elks Country Club began in 1997. I took on the assistant superintendent position in 2004 and stayed in that role until 2014. I took over as superintendent in 2015 and remain in that position today. The Elks has been a great place to work, and I have stayed because of the family-friendly culture and how good the boards have been to work with over the years.

I get credit a lot for the way the Elks golf course looks, but I don't do it alone. I have good help, both year-round and during the season.

Justin Miller is my assistant, and he is great. He's been with me for three years. Originally from Norfolk, Neb., Justin worked three years at Quail before coming to the Elks. He has been primarily responsible for hauling, moving, and shaping the driving range since last fall.

The assistant superintendent position is full-time, and you may find it interesting that Justin and I are the only full-time employees on the maintenance staff from December to March. During this time, we do a lot of tree work, equipment maintenance, repair, and upkeep on 14 pieces of large equipment and 20 small units.

In the golf season, the Elks employs anywhere from five to 12 part-time employees for course maintenance. Most of these individuals are high school and college students interested in working while school is out for the summer. They are only needed during the summer months due to the season's busyness, the wear and tear on tees and fairways, and the weather which impacts the growth and conditions of the course.

Having a dual, full- and part-time maintenance crew has been a successful strategy for us, not only in keeping the course looking nice and playing well, but for tournament preparations and course projects.

As you return to the course this spring, I think you will enjoy the new driving range and some of the changes we will be making to the mowing schedule to keep the rough more manageable. As other articles in this issue explain, there are trade-offs with the manicuring we do, but our ultimate goal is to make playing the Elks an experience to enjoy and brag about.

-Eric



Left: Justin Miller uses a blower to clear the women's #3 tee.



Right: Miller has been the Elks' assistant superintendent for three years. He is the only other full-time maintenance staff member besides Elks' Superintendent Eric Bice.

A 115-Year Old Piece of Our Elk History

On the wall between the fireplace and the bar on the main floor, hangs this framed certificate. It reads:

"To whom it may concern, Know ye that I, J. U. Sammis, Grand Exalted Ruler of the Grand Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, by virtue of the power conferred upon me by the Constitution and Laws of the Order, and upon the application of Brothers W. R. Neumarker, George J. O'Brien, Lane Williams, H. B. Robinson, and four others have, upon this 29th day of March, 1910, granted a Dispensation for a Lodge to be known as Columbus Lodge No. 1195 and to hold its sessions in the city of Columbus, Neb."

It is signed by Grand Secretary Fred Robinson and J. U. Sammis, Grand Exalted Ruler.



MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

DEAR MEMBERS,

Can you believe here we are in March?! I am loving the warmer weather and know everyone is itching to get out on the course! However, I hope we will all trust our superintendent's expertise as to when the ground has thawed and is ready for players. Thank you in advance for your patience.

A big topic on my mind lately are the FACs (Friday Afternoon Club) socials. A lot of members have asked about them, and I look forward to getting them going again!

The Wild Elks Group is sponsoring the first FAC on March 21, so mark your calendars.

What does it mean to be an FAC sponsor?

A group or any number of couples typically sponsor the evening with appetizers, drink specials, and some form of entertainment. While the cost of entertainment varies, of course, the appetizers normally cost around \$150.

FACs normally run from 5-7 p.m. but a few have run longer. We can also start them earlier, if your group prefers. The diversity of what you, as members, plan is what makes them fun! I only ask that you run your plans by me to ensure we

are on the same page of expectations.

The following dates are available to sponsor:

April 18	May 16	June 13	July 18
Aug. 22	Sept. 19	Oct. 17	Nov. 21

Please call the office (402-564-1451) if you or a group would like to reserve a date to sponsor!

On a final note, I sincerely appreciate all the wonderful feedback on the possible renovation of the west Elks room and office space! Many members are truly getting excited about the idea and how that would enhance the club! The ideas are still germinating, so stay tuned!

I have also seen a shift in member dining lately. Thank you for your support! We still have a long way to go to achieve strong financial return on our restaurant services, but your commitment to using the club makes a difference to our bottom line.

- Trista

We are much more than a country club...

Elks support local, PVLA citizenship classes, Sammy's Superheroes

The Columbus Elks organization donated 20 books and a financial grant of \$2,000 for supplies to the Platte Valley Literacy Association in February. The check and books were presented to Jessica Wiig, executive director of the Platte Valley Literacy Association, by Exalted Ruler Justin Lorenz on Feb. 5, 2025 at the Elk's Lodge #1195 Board meeting.

"Patriotism and literacy in our community are two important banners championed by the Elks organization," said Exalted Ruler Justin Lorenz. "The Citizenship Class offered by the PVLA is critical to supporting the efforts of those who seek to be American citizens and demonstrate their patriotism."

The book donated by the Elks of Columbus is titled Our Country's Presidents: A Complete Encyclopedia of the U.S. Presidency, 2024 Edition.

continued on page 3



Patriotism and literacy are two of several ways the Elks' organization seeks to support the Columbus community. Above, ER Justin Lorenz and the Elks Board of Directors present a Gratitude Grant of \$2,000 to Jessica Wigg, Executive Director of PVLA's Citizenship Classes.

Citizenship Classes, *continued from page 2*

The books will be handed out to students once they have obtained their U.S. citizenship. They are meant to be a congratulatory gift that recognizes the students' hard work and dedication to becoming new Americans.

"This donation from the Elks is incredibly exciting," said Yesenia Coria, the Saturday citizenship instructor in Schuyler. "Your gift today will plant the seeds of hope for tomorrow, empowering individuals to reach their full potential."



The Elks donated 20 copies of a book about US presidents to the PVLA's citizenship classes, one of which is held here by the first program graduates of 2025.

The "Gratitude Grant" of \$2,000 will be used to purchase supplies for the classroom, including vocabulary and civics flash cards, pocket study guides, and quick civics lesson books to help students prepare for the naturalization test.

"I am thrilled to have these additional study resources," say Melanie McKinney, Monday night citizenship instructor in Columbus. "They will help our PVLA students prepare to pass their Citizenship test and become fellow Americans. Thank you so much!"

The Columbus Elks Lodge is a place where neighbors come together, families share meals, and children grow up. Elks invest in their communities. Many of the programs they support are in place to help children grow up healthy and drug-free. Elks also do what they can to meet the needs of veterans and improve the quality of life for everyone in the community.

The PVLA has proudly served the Columbus area for several decades as a United Way Agency. Its goal is to meet the educational needs of individuals in the community. The organization partners with the Central Community College Adult Education program to further increase educational opportunities in the area and help students gain the necessary skills to be successful in life.

Sponsor A New Member!

New members receive a **20% rate discount** the first year of a two-year membership. **That's a \$640 value** on top of some of the lowest rates charged by a semi-private course with pool, social events, fine dining, and one of the prettiest courses around.

But what's in it for you as a sponsor?

Sponsoring Elk Incentive



Sponsor a new member and enjoy **\$200** in **shop credit**.

Dining Incentive

Introduce the ECC to potential new members by treating them to dinner. In turn, we'll treat you with two, complementary guest cocktails **OR** one complementary appetizer for your table.



We are much more than a country club, cont....

Elks' donate \$4,000 to Sammy's Superheroes

Ask any Elk member from Lodge #1195 if they have heard of the Sammy's Superheroes Foundation (SSF) and you will likely get an emphatic and supportive "Yes."

Established in 2012 by residents, friends, and family members of the Chris and Erin Nahorny family, SSF has become one of the most notable philanthropic causes in the Columbus area. In fact, the Elks has become home to three of SSF's six fundraising events that take place annually.

A new bourbon auction last year drew approximately 80 people, 85% of whom were Elks members. The Drive for a Cure corporate golf event in June attracts 75-100 people, 40% of which are Elks members; and the Sunday Funday Golf Outing in September attracts at least 45 players and 50 additional event guests, all of which are Elks members.

Yet, despite this strong Elk support, Lodge #1195 had never sought any kind of grant through the National Elks organization.

That changed this year when the Lodge applied for and was awarded a Beacon Grant of \$4,000. A check was presented to Sammy's Superheroes Foundation Board President Luke Saez on Feb. 19. The money will be used to research a cure for cancers affecting children and bring hope to millions of children dealing with such deadly diagnoses as leukemia, lymphoma, brain tumors, and neuroblastoma - the type of cancer that impacts

Sammy Nahorny, the organization's namesake and Erin and Chris' son who continues to fight the disease.

Initially raising close to \$30k by selling t-shirts in 2012, SSF has raised \$1,950,000 to date and awarded it to researchers seeking a cure for childhood cancers. The organization also sends care packages to newly diagnosed children throughout the country affected by one of 16 types or 100 subtypes of childhood cancers.

"The Elks are proud to support the Sammy's Superheroes Foundation not only because of the good

The Elks are proud to support the Sammy's Superheroes Foundation not only because of the good work it does to help children throughout America, but because Elk members are the Nahorny's extended family, too."

-Justin Lorenz, Exalted Ruler

work it does to help children throughout America," said Lodge #1195 Exalted Ruler Justin Lorenz, "but because Elk members are the Nahorny's extended family, too. We know the challenges they have faced as a family and how much they care about others in our community and in the community of families contending with this devastating disease. Being an organization of benevolence and protection, it is an honor to contribute to such a noteworthy cause."



Dedicated to finding a cure for childhood cancers, Sammy Superheroes is made up of super-caring, super-passionate, and super-family-oriented individuals. Accepting the \$4,000 Beacon Grant from Exalted Ruler Justin Lorenz is President Luke Saenz. He is joined by (from left to right) Vice President Rory Bowen; Founder and Emeritus Board Member Chris Nahorny; Elks Secretary Jeanne Schieffer; Founder and Board Member Amy Williams; Founder and Board Member Erin Nahorny; Elks Esquire Sam Hogeland; Jacob Nahorny; Board Member Megan Cimpl; Jean Nahorny; Mike Nahorny; and Jason Nahorny.

MESSAGE FROM OUR GOLF PRO

Greetings from the golf shop!

I might be getting a little ahead of myself, but who cares?! March means it's spring and that means golf season is here.!

One thing that signals the start of golf season is when our state association officially starts its score-posting season. For us in Nebraska, March 15 is the first day scores can be posted to your USGA/GHIN app. And while some golfers are aware of the nuances of Active Score Posting Season, many have questions about handicapping and the score posting process. To help answer these frequently asked questions, here are a few helpful tips:

- Active season in Nebraska runs from March 15- November 15.
- Know your maximum hole score. Net double bogey is the max on any given hole. If you get a pop from your buddies on a par 5, the max you can post for that hole is an 8 (8-your pop = 7 or double bogey).
- Always post your score on the same day you played your round. Your handicap index will be updated overnight, and it will take into account what is called the PCC (playing conditions calculator).

In other words, if you played on a bad weather day that adversely affects your score, that will be taken into account. If you don't post on the same day, the PCC will not be calculated.

- You don't have to play all 18 holes to post a score. Obviously, 9-hole scores can be posted, but if you finished anywhere between 10-17 holes, you can post that score. An "expected score" will be applied to your unfinished holes to create a proper differential for that round! The World Handicapping System is aware that we don't always have time for a full round and they want to ensure an accurate handicap for all rounds played.
- To take the above bullet point one step further, you can only post an "incomplete round" in a hole-by-hole manner. **It is ALWAYS better to post ALL scores in a hole-by-hole fashion.** The app will automatically adjust any maximum scores.

There are a lot more little nuggets about the USGA World Handicapping System you might find interesting, so just ask if you have any questions! You can also Google "player reference guide on the rules of handicapping" to read up on all of the nuances from USGA GHIN.

Lastly, don't forget to spend your credit! Any remaining credit on your account will need to be spent by March 31.

Hope to see you on the course soon!

Cheers!

-Derrick

Congratulations!



2024 PRIVATE
MERCHANDISER
Of the Year

NEBRASKA
SECTION



DERRICK CEDER, PGA
ELKS COUNTRY CLUB



Being recognized by your peers is gratifying because they know how much work it takes to do the job of a Head Golf Professional. You're not just a merchandiser. You wear so many hats but it feels good to be recognized in the area that's my biggest passion within the industry. I'm just lucky enough to be in a position where I can blend a passion of mine with my profession.

~ DERRICK CEDER, PGA

Elks'

MEN'S League



**5:45 p.m.
tee off:**

APRIL 15 & 17

Online sign up goes live March 15!

Go for the gold

WITH AN ENHANCED MEMBERSHIP

Over the past several years, The Enhanced Membership Program has provided exemplary membership benefits while generating additional revenue for club improvements.

This income has helped support specific projects such as:

- new landscaping.
- completed cement projects (parking lot and pool gate entrance).
- completion of improvement to hole 16.
- current facelift to the practice range.

These projects were not necessarily budgeted items, but items that have the sole intention of making the Columbus Elks Country Club a facility of which you can be proud.

Enrollment in the Enhanced Membership Program runs from April 1 – March 31 and costs \$2,500 excluding golf dues.

You will receive complimentary:

- **3 Rounds of Golf with up to 3 Guests per round. Green Fees and Cart included.**

**Member must accompany guests*

- **No Food Minimum for the Year**
- **Family Cart Usage for the Year**
- **Club Storage for the Year**
- **Locker Rental for the Year**

Your participation and financial support of the club are greatly appreciated. Contact Trista to get signed up today 402-564-1451.

							1
 2	3	4	 Elks' Mtg. 8 p.m. PASTA NIGHT	5	6	 Seafood Special Private Event	8
9	10	11		12	Women's Bridge	13	14
						Women's Bridge	 Seafood Special Formal Dance Club
16	17	Women's Bridge OFC	18	 Elks' Mtg. 8 p.m. PASTA NIGHT	19	20	21
							 FAC  Seafood Special 5 – 7 p.m. Two Private Events
23	24	25	 Cactus	26	27	28	29
					Private Event	 Seafood Special	
Sunday Buffet 	30	31				 Seafood Special Every Friday Night of Lent	

