

# VIRGINIA ELKS ASSOCIATION



## VIRGINIA RITUALISTIC COMMITTEE



Donald E. Kidd, Jr., GENERAL CHAIRMAN

DISTRICT CHAIRMAN

**NORTH – Timothy E. Knotts    CENTRAL – Daniel Toft    SW – John Owen    SE -Paul Dacyszyn**

To: Exalted Rulers Virginia Elks Association

Dear Exalted Ruler:

The Virginia Ritualistic Committee requests your participation in the "L. Glenn Morris Toast Contest" at the Spring Convention in Harrisonburg on June 13, 2026. The contest will be held in the afternoon and contestants will appear in the order that I receive each reply. Please reply as soon as possible as I have paperwork to prepare before the contest.

The winner of this contest will be eligible to represent the Virginia Elks Association at the Grand Lodge Eleven O'clock Toast Contest. Please note that this will take place at 1:00pm on SUNDAY July 5, 2026. We will be using the Grand Lodge Rules which state that the Contestant must be an Elk in good standing. Once an individual wins the Grand Lodge 11 O'clock Toast Contest they are unable to compete in any future Grand Lodge 11 O'clock Toast Contest. Until we have a Grand Lodge Contest winner, we will allow past State winners to compete.

All Elks and their families are invited to witness this contest. The enclosed toast is the one you must use and you will be judged on word accuracy, pronunciation and impressiveness by a panel of ritual judges. This write-up also contains instructions on how to train yourself for the competition and how you will be judged. If you need some help in preparing, please contact your nearest Ritualistic committee member or me for assistance. I wish each of you the best of luck.

Harrisonburg Lodge #450

You can e-mail the below information to [kiddjrd@aol.com](mailto:kiddjrd@aol.com) (Please reference Toast Contest in the subject of your e-mail and indicate your office in the e-mail.)

**PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE AND RETURN IMMEDIATELY**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge Name \_\_\_\_\_

Lodge Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Lodge Officer (circle one)** Exalted Ruler Past Exalted Ruler will compete in the contest.

## Guide for the L Glenn Morris Toast Contest

The toast contest is judged on the 3 areas listed below. All areas count equally for this contest.

**PRONUNCIATION** – Use the Grand Lodge Ritualistic Manual pronunciation guide. Each word mispronounced is one demerit.

**WORD ACCURACY** – A word omitted is one demerit, a substituted word is two demerits. It is best, if you miss a phrase, not to go back as it will double the errors.

**IMPRESSIVENESS** – Per the Grand Lodge Ritualistic manual “Complete thought units” are the basis for impressiveness. If you chop a complete thought unit you get 1 demerit for each incomplete phrase within the thought unit. The other thing that most people have trouble with, which effects both pronunciation and impressiveness, is speed. The normal speed for speaking in public is 125 words a minute. At this pace the toast should take a minute to complete. Time yourself and you will probably find that you are done in 30 to 40 seconds, which is way too fast. When you are too fast you run words together which become pronunciation errors and you mispronounce a lot more words. You also get a demerit for each complete thought unit that is delivered too fast. For your help I have marked the toast to show the proper complete thought units with double vertical lines ||.

I hope that all lodges will compete and I wish all of you the best of luck. **But remember your luck will be greatly enhanced by lots of practice!**

**CONTESTANT:** || You have heard the tolling of eleven strokes. ||

This is to remind us that with Elks, 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.”