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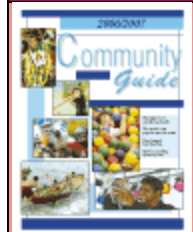
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Letters October 11, 2000



Middletown Elks appreciative of newspaper coverage

The Middletown Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks Lodge No. 2179 in Belford was founded in 1960 and recently celebrated its 40th anniversary. Over the years, the lodge members have donated over \$5.2 million dollars in cash and volunteer time spent on charitable events in the community. Their fund-raising activities have provided money for causes too numerous to list, but have benefited handicapped children, veterans and community youth.

Although the lodge membership currently stands at almost 800 members who represent all walks of life in the Bayshore area, their efforts alone are not sufficient to support their charitable causes. The Elks know, and very much appreciate, that they are supported in their efforts by the good will of the community at large, and publications such as the Independent that provide precious newspaper space to the Elks to promote their charitable activities.

The Middletown Elks are committed to providing some relief, when possible, to people in need. Of all their causes, that of handicapped children is the dearest to them. At regular lodge meetings, the chairman of the Handicapped Children's Committee reports on the needs of local handicapped children and their families. The Elks typically will donate cash to purchase a hearing aid, build a wheelchair ramp or sponsor a handicapped child for summer camp, as the case may be. The men and women of the lodge raise the money for those donations through their own volunteer efforts by sponsoring dinners, dances and raffles throughout the year. The Elks receive no funds from the government.

The public exposure provided by The Independent has been a valuable asset this year and the Middletown Elks are thankful for your support.

Paul Dutton

Public Relations Chairman