

November 2009
N.M.E.A. Government Relations Report

Members,

I recently attended a Government Relations Seminar in Oklahoma City and wish to share a few items that are important to all of our Lodges, and important as we are all non-profit organizations.

Recently, with the current economic climate, more Private "Clubs" throughout the Country are being audited by the Internal Revenue Service. All are Lodges should keep clear and accurate records of all charitable activities and document all sources of income. Secretaries, that charity report is so important to maintain accurate times and figures. Don't just fill it out because the DD requires it, We Need It. We do them on-line now and it is so easy, even I can do it. Please maintain these figures.

There are a lot of rules and regulations that apply, and I am asking the Lodges that wish to, to obtain two IRS publications available, "Tax on Unrelated Business Income of Exempt Organizations" (Publication No. 598) and "Gaming Publication for Tax-Exempt Organizations (Publication No. 3079). Copies of the documents can be downloaded from the IRS website, www.irs.gov. You can also call 1-800-TAXFORM for free copies.

A reminder also that we are again reminding Lodges that we are NOT open to the public and all guests MUST be signed in. Enough said for now on that issue.

With the Legislative session around the corner, now is a good time to meet you local representatives. There may be issues that we need their help in. Issues always arise on Gaming, Bingo, Raffle's and the like. We are part of the VFNP, (Veteran and Fraternal Non-Profit Inc.) They assist all of the non-profits in the State in issues involving our Lodges, Clubs, Post's etc. As members, I would like to remind the Lodges that their annual dues are due next month. It is \$50.00 per year per Lodge. Please mail the checks to VFNP Inc. 12720 Tomlinson Dr. SE, Albuquerque, NM 87123-3716. There is also a problem with the some of the Lodge Newsletter's being delivered via e-mail to the members on unprotected websites. Those newsletters should not be available to the public due to some of the confidential matters that are discussed, which include but is not limited to; new members with their personal information, initiation, names and addresses of members, financial matters of the Lodge, subordinate forms etc. If the newsletter is on your website, we recommend that you have it password protected. If sent to individual e-mail addresses, those are fine.

Also on some of the Lodge newsletters, advertisements pay for some of the printing and mailing. Just a reminder that they cannot have contact information, and Travel, Insurance and Credit Card companies are not permitted. I know this may put a burden, but I am just the messenger. Please read this report (or at least highlight it) at you next meeting and post this report on your bulletin board for the membership to read.

Thank you.

Robert A. Guillen PER/PDDGER/PSP

NMEA Government Relations Committee