

Army of Hope Committee

BY SANDY HELLY, STATE CHAIRSPERSON

The NJ State Elks Army of Hope 20th Annual Arthur "RT" Mayer Jr. Golf Outing was held on October 6th at Stanton Ridge Country Club. It was a great day and a fine time was had by all! A special thanks goes out to PDD and Past State AOH Chairperson Brian Murphy for once again doing his usual terrific job organizing the outing.

On Sunday, September 14, 2025, the Army of Hope Committee held its 21st Annual Army of Hope Picnic, "A Day of Remembrance and Patriotism" at Lacey Lodge No. 2518. Over 1,500 members and guests attended, which included 150 Gold Star and severely wounded families and guests, it is hard to put into words the emotions of this day. With the generosity of our lodges, districts and membership, the donations at the end of the day were \$190,000. This is a preliminary accounting report as more donations continue to come in.

Our Sponsor, Past Grand Exalted Ruler Malcolm J. McPherson, Jr. thanked the Army of Hope Committee for all they do. He presented the Army of Hope Committee with a check for \$25,000 from the ENF Special Grant to the New Jersey State Elks Charities Inc.

State President William Dow thanked the Army of Hope Committee for all they have done and continue to do for our Gold Star Families and our severely wounded troops and their families.

The Army of Hope Committee would like to thank all those who came out to volunteer on Saturday morning for the set-up and Sunday for the picnic. A special thank you to the Antlers for your great job of serving our families and their guests. Your respect and courtesy made a lasting impression on them.

Without the fundraisers and donations from our lodges, districts, membership, and ENF, the Army of Hope Committee would not be able to make a difference in so many people's lives. In August we sent out the back-to-school disbursement checks to our Gold Star and severely wounded families in the amount of \$750 per child. In December we will send another \$750 to each child for use during the holidays. Also in December we will send a gift to each of our Gold Star families to help bring some peace to their holidays and remind them that they are always in our thoughts. These three disbursements total \$125,000.

Army Of Hope Medal Of Honor Recipients

Each year our State Sponsor, Malcolm J. McPherson, Jr., PGER presents Medals of Honor to our Gold Star Families on behalf of the Army of Hope Committee.



Mark & Doris Anne Falzone parents of Navy Firefighter Michael Falzone who paid the ultimate sacrifice in 2008.



Mona & Ford Shaw, Jr., parents of Captain Stanford Shaw, III, who paid the ultimate sacrifice in 2015.



Helen Giglio, mother of Captain Nicholas Giglio, who paid the ultimate sacrifice in 2009.



Gold Star Family Then And Now

Through the Army Of Hope Committee, our Gold Star families become our extended family. SPC Simeon Hunte was killed in Iraq in 2003 leaving his wife and young sons. When they attended their first Army of Hope picnic in 2015, we took a picture of them standing near his flag. This year we recreated the photo.

NJ Elks Compassionate, Touching Lives and Changing Tomorrows

BY WILLIAM W. DOW, JR., STATE PRESIDENT

I hope this message finds you all in great spirits! I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for the incredible compassion you exhibit every day. Your efforts are not just touching lives; they're truly changing tomorrows for countless individuals across our state. It's each one of you who helps our state association shine brighter than ever!

What an exhilarating year it has been so far for Ann and me! From the joyous moments at our Annual Reunion in Wildwood to representing New Jersey at the Grand Lodge Convention — where I proudly held our state flag high — it's been a remarkable journey filled with unforgettable experiences.

Over these past few months, I've had the privilege of witnessing the brilliance of our chairpersons, lodges, and members as they rise to every challenge. One of the standout moments has been seeing over 50 lodges initiate two classes prior to Grand Lodge! These new members are the lifeblood of our order, and I'm eager to see every lodge keep this momentum going by boosting membership and tackling delinquency head-on. Let's aim for a thrilling goal during our GER months of September and October by initiating 1,000 new members in honor of our esteemed GER Bryan Klatt!

This year, we've also increased the National Foundation per capita to \$6, and I encourage each member to consider joining the Fidelity Club. With auto donations starting as low as \$5, you can play a vital role in helping your



lodge and state secure grant dollars that enable us to continue making a meaningful impact in our communities.

Witnessing the Special Children's Committee and Miracle Run Committee shine while kids at Elks Camp Moore experience that miraculous "Miracle on the Mountain" is always heartwarming. Our commitment to veterans is second to none. I urge any member who hasn't participated in the Army of Hope or delivered furniture and supplies to formerly homeless veterans to join us. It's truly inspiring to see how we can care for those who have served our freedom.

Our youth sports programs are fantastic at fostering competition while inspiring teamwork and resilience. Moreover, our initiatives in Drug Awareness are making significant strides in changing tomorrows for our youth—an effort so crucial given how many lives have been impacted by addiction.

I cannot let this moment pass without acknowledging our State Sponsor Malcolm J. McPherson, Jr., PGER and Pat for their unwavering support throughout this journey. A huge shoutout goes to the Advisory Board, Vice Presidents, and Committee Chairpersons—your dedication has been nothing short of amazing! Thank you all for everything you have accomplished thus far and for your continued commitment to doing outstanding work.

Let's keep this excitement rolling as we move forward together!

Bryan R. Klatt, Grand Exalted Ruler and Susan L. Klatt, First Lady Visit New Jersey on Their Be The Difference Tour

Bryan R. Klatt was born in DeKalb, IL on December 5th. He graduated from Northern Illinois University in 1982. In 1983 he married Susan and they have three sons: Gregory, Andrew, and Lucas.

When his boys attended and played sports at DeKalb High School, Bryan volunteered to be the public address announcer and served in that role for twenty-five years. Bryan's voice could be heard at football games, boys' and girls' basketball games, wrestling meets, baseball and softball games, and other events.

Bryan was initiated into DeKalb Lodge No. 765 on November 12, 1985 serving as Exalted Ruler in 1989-1990 and as Secretary from 1998-2009. He is an Honorary Life Member of his lodge. In the Illinois Elks Association, Bryan served in various capacities. He was State President in 1997-1998. Bryan served the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks with distinction as DDGER, 1994-1995; member and ultimately Chairman of the Membership Committee from 2001-2008; and Grand Secretary from July 2008 to July 2025.

Bryan and Susan are humbled, thankful, and honored to be chosen as the ambassadors to represent our great Order as the Grand Exalted Ruler and First Lady of Elkdome. They are excited to travel to and visit elks communities throughout America promoting their theme: Be The Difference.



Grand Lodge Message

BY MALCOLM J. MCPHERSON, JR., PGER, STATE SPONSOR

Our Grand Exalted Ruler Bryan R. Klatt and his wife Susan from Dekalb Elks Lodge No. 765 will be joining us at our Fall Conference in November in Long Branch, New Jersey. Our Grand Exalted Ruler and First Lady will be arriving Thursday and we will be able to take them to several sites highlighting the New Jersey Elks. They are looking forward to meeting and seeing each of you in Long Branch.

I would like to congratulate our State President Bill Dow and his committee chairpersons, our District Deputies and Vice Presidents for all of their hard work this year. All of our committees have been working very hard and at the Fall Conference we will hear their accomplishments to date. Remember we have been emphasizing for each committee when an event is being held to invite the public relations and membership/retention committees to the event. We want everyone to know the great work we are doing for our Veterans, Homeless Veterans, Special Children, Youth, Drug Awareness, and Scholarship programs and at the same time attracting new members.

I would like to congratulate the officers of Middletown Lodge No. 2179 in representing New Jersey in the National Ritual Contest. All of the Officers of Middletown Lodge No. 2179 made New Jersey Proud with the third highest score in the Order. I would also like to congratulate Martin Bradley, Brick Lodge No. 2151, who represented New Jersey in the National Flag Charge Contest and John Leo, South Amboy Lodge No. 784 who represented the state in the National Eleven O' Clock Toast Contest. Marty and John did a tremendous performance.

Through the Elks National Foundation, the Beacon Grants, Promise Grants, Impact Grants, Lodge Assistance Grants, Gratitude Grants, Freedom Grants and Spotlight Grants are available to each Lodge. I urge each lodge to apply for



and take advantage of each grant. We want to make our communities fully aware of the great work we are doing.

As the result of your donations to the Elks National Foundation, New Jersey just received the sum of \$241,000 from a special projects grant to be utilized for our charitable purposes.

The Miracle Run held on July 27th at Old Bridge Lodge No. 2229 was again a tremendous success. The money raised through the Miracle Run Committee clearly puts a smile of the faces of our special children and their families. I urge everyone to visit our State Major Project "Elks Camp Moore" to see the renovations and improvements made to our camp and the work we are doing for our special children.

The National Veterans Services Committee held a successful picnic on June 21st at Brick Lodge No. 2151 and the money raised at the picnic assists with our efforts for our homeless veterans. Our Batters Up competition was held on August 16th in Howell and we had a great turn out.

I would like to congratulate Meghan McPherson, PDD on her appointment to be on the Grand Lodge

Auditing and Business Practices Committee.

Finally, the State Association is extremely proud of the 5 Star Award given by the Grand Lodge for our New Jersey Elk Publication, our State Website and the Special Children's Booth.

As of August 15, 2025, 17 Lodges in New Jersey have failed to file its 990 with Grand Lodge by the due date of August 1, 2025. Failure to file the 990 on time will result in the imposition of penalties starting at \$100 per month. The Area 2 Chairperson and your District Deputies have been in contact with those lodges to file the 990.

Pat and I are looking to seeing each of you at our Fall Conference in Long Branch.

The New Jersey Elk Submission Deadline

Submission Deadline:
FEBRUARY 15, 2026

Send e-mail articles and photos to:
njelkpublication@gmail.com

Photograph Policy

Photographs are to be sent electronically and must be in JPG, TIF or EPS format ONLY and a minimum of 300 dpi at 100%, (no photocopies or reproductions). Please make sure to identify who is in the pictures.

In Loving Memory Jane L. Helsel Past Grand First Lady

Jane L. Helsel, 83, of Newark, Delaware was reunited with her husband in Heaven on June 5, 2025. Jane was the beloved wife of the late Paul D. Helsel, PGER and former State Sponsor of the New Jersey State Elks Association. Her active involvement in the Maryland, Delaware, and District of Columbia Elks Association, Newark Elks Lodge No. 2281, New Jersey Elks Association, Pennsylvania Elks Association, and the Grand Lodge formed lifelong friendships and contributed to numerous charitable endeavors through Elksdom.

The heart of Jane's life was her family. She was the beloved wife of the late Paul D. Helsel, with whom she shared fifty-nine years of marriage filled with love, laughter, and adventure until his passing on October 13, 2024. Together, they raised two daughters, Diane L. Coleman (Joe) of Melbourne, FL, and Janet M. Caruccio (John) of Newark, DE, who remember her as a guiding light and a source of unwavering support. Jane's pride and joy was multiplied by her three grandchildren, Paul Joseph "PJ" Coleman, Benjamin Caruccio, and Amanda Caruccio, whose activities and accomplishments filled her with immense pride. She loved them fiercely and never missed an opportunity to brag about them. Mom-mom and Pop-pop were always by their side and their biggest cheerleaders!



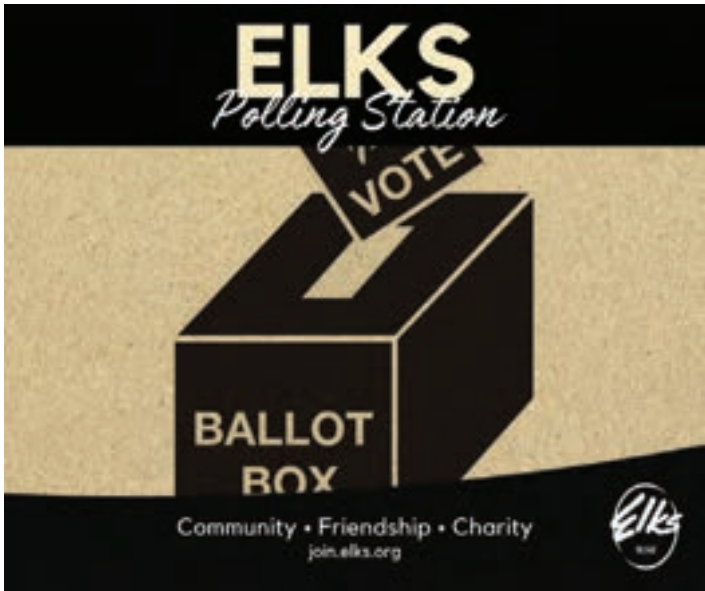
Requirements for Seeking Elective Office in This Association

BY FRANCIS J. DECIBUS, PSDGER, ELECTION COORDINATOR

Article VI Section 3D – Elections (District Vice President & Trustee)

Section 3: Any Member of this Association may seek an elective office in the Association provided:

- (A) They are a Member in good standing in their Lodge and a Past Exalted Ruler.
- (B) Their Lodge is a Member Lodge in good standing in this Association and is located in a District in the electing Region or the District is eligible for the office sought.
- (C) For the position of Vice-President and Trustee, they shall have filed by **certified mail, return receipt requested or by email**, with the President, their District's Vice President and the Secretary of this Association, not before December 1 and no later than January 5, a Resolution of endorsement adopted by their Lodge, at a regular Lodge session. Said resolution must be signed by the Lodge Exalted Ruler and **certified** by the Lodge Secretary. If they elect to file by sending an email, it shall only be effective upon receipt of a return email from the President, Secretary and/or Vice President, acknowledging receipt of the Resolution. A local Lodge may only endorse one candidate for the position of Vice President or Trustee.



The Districts which will have Trustee Elections in 2026 are: East, Northeast, South, West Central.

In Loving Memory

Eleanor Vesely
Past First Lady

Eleanor Vesely passed away on Sunday, September 7, 2025. She was the wife of Frank Vesely, Past State President. Elenor accompanied her husband during his term as State President in 2008-2009 and faithfully supported him during his continued service as a Past State President. The sympathies of the New Jersey State Elks Association are extended to Past State President Frank Vesely and his family.

The Official Publication of the New Jersey State Elks Association



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Top Recruiter Recognized

At our Wildwood Reunion, State Chairperson for Membership Chuck Crerand and Grand Lodge Area 2 Committeewoman for Public Relations & Membership presented the Grand Lodge Area 2 Top Recruiter Plaque to Gloria Mako, Membership Chairperson for Lacey Lodge No. 2518. Gloria has a membership committee of over 20 volunteers at Lacey and has a recipe for success. Her orientation program was one of the featured programs at the Grand Lodge Orientation Seminar in Kansas City. Sadly, Gloria Mako passed away on September 19th. Her passion and dedication to Lacey Lodge's Membership Committee will truly be missed.

Public Relations

BY PAUL BURKE, STATE CHAIRPERSON

Celebrate. Share. Inspire. Make an Impact — Starting Today!
It's been a few months since our energetic and inspiring Grand Lodge Convention in Kansas City—and for many of us, the excitement from July still burns bright. The question now is: What are we doing with that passion?
Now is the time to harness the power of Public Relations and Marketing to tell our story, grow our membership, and inspire our communities. Every member is part of the Public Relations & Marketing team—we are all ambassadors of the NJ Elks brand. Be proud of who we are, what we do, and the difference we make every day. Let's channel that energy to "Be the Difference" in our communities while championing State President Bill Dow's theme:

"New Jersey Elks — Compassionate, Touching Lives and Changing Tomorrows."

Sharing our successes starts with getting our stories out to the right audiences. Submit your lodge news and photos to publicrelations@njelks.org for posting on the NJ Elks Facebook Page (NJEIksDo), and to magnews@elks.org for possible inclusion in The Elks Magazine. These simple steps ensure your Lodge's work is recognized locally, statewide, and nationally.

The Grand Lodge offers a library of FREE shareable content designed to boost membership, build trust, and showcase your impact. Use these resources to strengthen your outreach and tell your story with professional, ready-to-use materials. Scan the QR code for instant access to Grand Lodge Shareables.

When deciding what to highlight, focus on the programs and services that make the greatest impact. These might include youth programs, veterans service projects, ENF fundraisers, community giving, state major projects, drug awareness initiatives, or assistance to people in distress. Each of these stories reflects the compassion and dedication at the heart of our Order.

Finally, remember that presentation matters. Whenever representing your Lodge, District, or Committee at public events, dress in NJ State Elks attire or business casual, stand proud and project the professional image that shows the NJ Elks as the premier charitable organization in our communities and across the state.

Let's use the fire from Grand Lodge, our pride as ambassadors, and the power of Public Relations & Marketing to create impact, build connections, and inspire pride all year long.



Membership Committee

BY CHUCK CRERAND,
STATE CHAIRPERSON

New Jersey has been having success in membership for years. This year is no different. I was honored to stand with Past State President Michael Penchenski and accept two awards on behalf of our great state at the Grand Lodge Session in Kansas City. While we were there, a friendly yet competitive rivalry with California has spawned. There were a lot of fun pictures taken at the photo booth in the spirit of competition. I am asking for all of New Jersey to jump in and support our membership challenge.

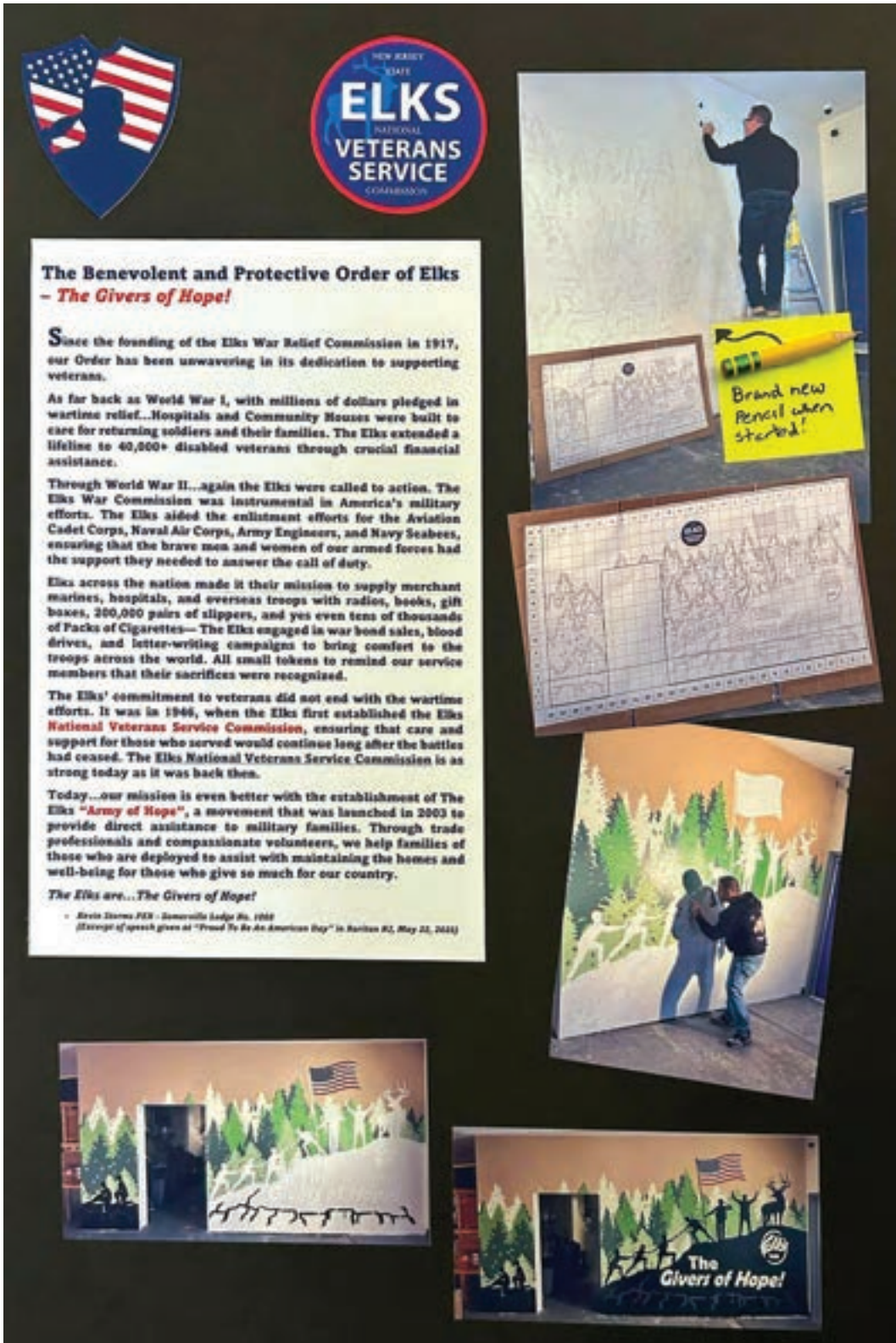
We have set a goal for the year 2025-2026 for a net gain of 3,000. This is not going to be easy and it's not going to happen on its own. Membership needs to be out in the community in order to reach the people. Elks lodges that are actively out and visible in the community are the most successful lodges.

In June we had two amazing seminars. The attendance was great, and the energy was amazing. We talked about how membership is tied directly to a lodge's financial situation. We touched on what a successful membership committee looks like and how it operates.

During the months of September and October, we dedicate all our new members in honor of our Grand Exalted Ruler Bryan Klatt. We have set a challenge for 1,000 new members. Awards will be presented in the seven membership categories to the lodges with the most initiations.

We as Elks need to stay connected with our new members. Reach out to them with a phone call, email, or personalized letter asking them to come to events. There are lodges that have gone as far as having new member events to show them what we do and how they can become regulars in our Elks family. If you are seeing an influx of members with children, then you need to adapt and have family friendly events. Make sure there are activities to entertain the children. This is huge in being a successful lodge.

We are one of the best in nation and are a staple in the communities that we serve. With that said, go out and show them what the Elks truly are and new members will come. We are growing our herd in NJ.



Givers Of Hope

The National Veterans Service Committee held an open house at the Stirling Annex Building. The wall mural designed and painted by West Central District Vice President Kevin Storms was officially unveiled. Attendees to the open house were able to tour the building and see where all the items for welcome home kits are stored.



National Veterans Services

BY ED LEIB, STATE CHAIRPERSON

Your National Veterans Service Committee has shown remarkable dedication this year by making a significant impact on the lives of veterans. Our members have been instrumental in helping veterans with bills, food, and shelter, ensuring their essential needs are met. Members have participated in Stand Down events by distributing backpacks filled with personal hygiene items, socks, and underwear to veterans living on the streets.

When new facilities open, the committee steps in to provide furniture, creating a comfortable environment for veterans. For those transitioning into housing, we offer Welcome Home kits and furniture, covering everything they need.

There was an open house at NJ State Elk's Veteran's Annex on Sunday, June 1, 2025. It gave Elk members an opportunity to see and hear what we do as a committee. During this special event, we unveiled WCD Vice President, Kevin Storm's mural, Givers of Hope, a tribute to the enduring spirit of generosity and support.

Since January 2025, the committee provided 75 veterans with welcome home kits and deliveries.

Other things we have helped with are:

- Provided hotel stays which totaled \$3,000 to needy veterans.
- 4 air conditioners for a total of \$450.
- 1 cell phone bill for \$310.
- 2 food deliveries for a total of \$300.

The cost of items for welcome home kits and furniture continually goes up. The continuous support from our members has been crucial in enabling these initiatives. Lodges are encouraged to apply for grants to further support veterans with welcome home kits and furniture.

Your dedication to improving veterans' lives is commendable. Thank you for your ongoing support!



Needed Veteran Housing Provided

On September 4th, members of Wayne and West Milford Lodges along with State President Bill Dow and First Lady Ann, attended the ribbon cutting for the new disabled veterans housing in Wayne. The New Jersey Veterans Committee provided the welcome home kits for six new units. Lodges from the North District including West Milford, Wayne, Passaic Valley, Oakland, and Park Ridge helped unpack and set up the welcome home kits for each of the units.



The East Central District Veterans Committee hosted 35 veterans from Lyons VA for a picnic at Mountainside Lodge No. 1585 on Saturday, May 31st. The veterans were treated to hamburgers, hot dogs, sausage and pepper sandwiches, salads and watermelon. They all had a great time and mother nature cooperated so some veterans could be outside.



The Hero Tree

Cranford Lodge No. 2006 is sponsoring The Hero Tree. Attached to cards is a zip lock bag. Members and guests are encouraged to take a card/ bag and fill it with new, unused travel-size toiletries. They are also encouraged to include a handwritten note to a soldier. The filled bags will be shipped to deployed troops for the holidays. All bags must be returned to the lodge by November 15th.



Veterans Enjoy a Day at the Ballpark

On a sunny 70-degree day, 50 veterans from the NJ Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, and the American Legion were treated to an unforgettable afternoon at a Jersey Shore BlueClaws baseball game. The outing was generously hosted by Manahawkin Lodge No. 2340, and funded with an Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant. Veterans enjoyed lunch and refreshments in the BlueClaws exclusive Champions Club, which offered both indoor and outdoor seating with prime view behind home plate. The atmosphere was filled with camaraderie, cheers, and the crack of the bat — highlighted by the excitement of two veterans catching foul balls during the game! The Manahawkin Elks' hospitality and support made for a memorable day of baseball, friendship, and appreciation for those who served.

Northeast District Supports Army Of Hope Committee

On July 26, 2025, the Northeast District held an Army of Hope BBQ Fundraiser. Bergenfield Lodge No. 1477 hosted the event and lodges donated all the food. Past Grand Trustee Chairman and Advisor to the State Army of Hope Committee Richard Tabachuk gave a speech explaining the impact this program has made in New Jersey for our wounded service personnel and Gold Star Families. Recently the state Army of Hope Committee has sent \$57,000 in back-to-school supplies for these families. Two service dogs were also obtained for two of our wounded soldiers. The training alone was at a cost of \$15,000 for each dog. It was a proud moment for all of us there to know what a difference our volunteerism really makes. Organized by our Artie Andreano, PVP and Northeast District Army Of Hope Chairman. Over \$2,000 was raised by our district to help with the important work the Army of Hope does in our state.



Convention Committee N.J. Welcomes GER Klatt

BY THOMAS ZISA, PSP,
CHIEF JUSTICE GRAND FORUM

The NJSEA Fall Conference will be held November 14-16, 2025. We will again be staying at the beautiful beach front Ocean Place Resort and Spa in Long Branch, New Jersey. Our Grand Exalted Ruler Bryan R. Klatt, of DeKalb, Illinois Lodge No. 765, together with his lovely wife Susan will be joining us. Let's be sure to show Bryan and Susan just how loud and proud NJ Elks are.

Your Convention Committee has made all arrangements for a fantastic conference. We will begin the weekend Friday evening with the annual Memorial Service to honor those Past Exalted Rulers we lost during the previous year. After the Memorial Service it will be time to relax, enjoy each other's company, and have some fun at our Picnic Party, complete with food, music & dancing. Dress for the party is casual.

On Saturday morning starting at 7 AM there will be a continental breakfast for all attendees. Registration of members will open at 8 AM and the Business Session will begin at 8:30 AM sharp. The State Association Luncheon will be held immediately following the Business Session. The State President has arranged for a very informative afternoon breakout session. The State Flag Charge and 11th Hour Toast Contest will also be held Saturday afternoon. Be sure to attend to support your district's contestants. Saturday evening, we will hold our State Association banquet honoring our Grand Exalted Ruler and his wife to close out the conference. Without question this year's Fall Conference will be a great weekend filled with fun, food, friendship and a whole lot of New Jersey Elks charity.

At the Fall Conference, many of our state committees will have exhibits set up in the lobby adjacent to the hotel ballrooms. The Convention Committee will have shirts, pins, ties, badges and other apparel available for purchase. Please be sure to visit all the committee exhibits.

For those of you who want to plan ahead, the 2026 Grand Lodge Convention will be held July 5-8 in Chicago, IL. During the Chicago convention, our Order will be celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the National Veterans Memorial Building. Festivities and tours of the building are being planned.

As always, your Convention Committee is working hard for you, the members. It is and has always been our main goal to make each Convention, Conference or Reunion better than the one before.



Our 2025-2026 District Deputies

Their Grand Lodge training sessions complete, the District Deputies anxiously awaited their installation by Grand Exalted Ruler Bryan R. Klatt. Congratulations District Deputies we know you will do a great job this year!



State President William Dow and First Lady Ann prior to the Opening Ceremonies of the Grand Lodge Convention in Kansas City.



State President William Dow was greeted by Grand Exalted Ruler Bryan R. Klatt at the Grand Lodge Session in Kansas City.



Congratulations to newly installed Grand Esteemed Lecturing Knight Robert C. Ricker, Lake Hopatcong Lodge No. 782.



2025-2026 State Officers

NJSEA State Officers left to right: Thomas Sparacio, Organist; George Osborne, Inner Guard; Allison Fistori, Chaplain; Raeann Hempel, Inner Guard; Melanie Pasquarelli, Administrative Assistant; William W. Dow, Jr., State President; Sue Dupas, Secretary; Nick Figaro, Sergeant-At-Arms; and Kenneth Low, Treasurer.



2025-2026 District Vice Presidents from left – right: Central District, Dan Pencak; Southwest District, Charles Stecher; South Central District, Robert Mitchell; West Central District, Kevin Storms; South District, Mary Sotnychuk; Southeast District, Evelyn D'Antoni; State President, William Dow, Jr.; North Central District, William Dow, III; North District, Richard Cintron; Northeast District, Jose Correa; East District, Eddie McKeon; Northwest District, Richard Periu; and Steven Grote, East Central District.



State Trustees installed in Wildwood for the 2025-2028 cycle left to right: Southwest District, George Tencza; South Central District, Mary McPaul; State President William Dow, Jr.; Northwest District, Paul Burke; and North District James DePalma.

Parades Committee

BY DINA ZACEK, CHAIRPERSON

History was made at the 2025 New Jersey State Elks Parade, as we were the first parade to march down the Boardwalk. The theme was “Pride-Passion-Patriotism”, which exactly sums up the parade. It was a learning curve for all of us. We see now what needs to be adjusted. The Committee is already working on next year’s parade and praying that mother nature does her part. I truly want to thank every lodge for participating in and making the parade a success.

I would like to congratulate Bordentown Lodge No. 2085 for once again winning the Governor’s Trophy and all the lodges that won Parade awards. To me, every lodge that walks that route are winners. Your dedication to the Parade is what makes it one of the best parades in the country.

I would like to thank the Parades Committee for all their hard work, the countless hours, and their dedication that go unnoticed. You are truly amazing. At this time, I would like to give a special thanks to our Advisors, Diego “Dick” Tabbachino, PGLC and Vicki Watson, PSP for their guidance and support.

The 2026 Theme will be announced at the Fall Conference. We look forward to an even better Parade next year.



Our State Sponsor, PGER Malcolm J. McPherson, Jr., presided over the Installation of Officers for the New Jersey State Elks Association.



New Jersey State Elks made history at our Wildwood Reunion. This year is the first time that we had a father & son duo: State President William Dow, Jr., and North Central District Vice President William Dow, III.

Elks National Foundation

BY WILLIAM HARTMAN, STATE CHAIRPERSON

It's an honor and a privilege to serve as your Elks National Foundation Chairperson for the New Jersey State Elks Association. Thanks to the incredible generosity of our Lodges across the state, at our recent Wildwood Reunion in June we received an astounding \$43,700 in ENF donations.

This remarkable achievement was the perfect close to State President Michael Penchenski's term and a powerful beginning for our State President William Dow Jr. President Dow has worn many hats during his years as an Elk, but his greatest passion has always been the Elks National Foundation. He has set clear and attainable goals for this year — and together, we will achieve them.

The first goal is to grow Fidelity Club membership. For as little as \$5 per month, you can make a lasting difference through automatic monthly giving via direct debit, credit card, or payroll deduction. These contributions fuel scholarships, veteran services, youth programs, and community grants. By taking the "Chair Challenge," you help your Lodge qualify for more ENF grant funding while earning recognition for your commitment.

The second goal is for each Lodge to apply for at least two ENF grants this year. Grants transform communities — from helping veterans to funding youth projects. If you need help navigating the process, please contact me. Region One Chairperson Christine Sauer, Region Two Chairperson Jody Szczomak, or your District Chairperson for guidance.

Finally, President Dow has set a \$6 per-capita giving goal. This can be achieved through pledges, fundraisers, or by joining the Fidelity Club. Every contribution, large or small, strengthens our ability to make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

Let us unite behind these goals and make the Elks National Foundation in New Jersey shine brighter than ever. Together, through compassion, service, and generosity, we will continue touching lives and changing tomorrows.

Let's continue to show why NJ Elks do great things — take the challenge and join the Fidelity Club today! Scan the QR code to join now.



Angling a Beacon Grant

Lacey Lodge No. 2518 was awarded a \$4,000 Beacon Grant. This grant will assist the Fish Hawks Saltwater Anglers Club which hosted its Annual Youth Fishing Seminar in July. Forty children ages 9-16 from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst enjoyed a full day of hands-on fishing education and conversation. The day includes breakfast, lunch, eight rotating learning stations, and expert presentations on marine life. Each child was presented with their own rod, reel, and tackle box. The second part of the grant will support Operation Hook-It. Lacy Lodge will join Fish Hawks Saltwater Anglers Club, MA-22, and the Gold Star Mothers Department of NJ in supporting this year's program. The event raises awareness of the veteran suicide epidemic, highlighting the tragic statistic of 22 veteran suicides per day. Through community outreach and support, Operation Hook-It aims to honor and assist those who have served.



Gratitude Grant Helps Therapy Horses

Millstone Lodge No. 2613 used funds from the Gratitude Grant to purchase mats for therapy horses at Special Strides, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of special needs individuals.



Heroes And Cool Kids

Rutherford Lodge No. 547 recently presented a check for \$2,000 to the Rutherford High School Heroes and Cool Kids club. This club is a mentoring project administered by Rutherford High School students for Pierrepont School students (5th and 6th Grade). It is focused on teaching important life skills, including sportsmanship, conflict resolution, and positive lifestyles highlighting drug, alcohol and tobacco prevention. The Lodge used a portion of their Beacon Grant to fund this program.

Freedom Grant for Homeless Veterans

Great things are being done by Deptford Lodge No. 2708. Exalted Ruler Felicia Repolio presented a check to Southwest District Veterans Chairman Hank Elmer for \$1,000 from their Freedom Grant. This will be used to help homeless Veterans. The Southwest District is actively involved in relocating veterans all over New Jersey. These funds will go a long way towards buying furniture, welcome home kits and more.





Gratitude Grant Sent The Lodge Packing

Susan Reinhardt, Greater Essex Lodge No. 21 Special Children's Committee Chairperson, along with lodge members, family, friends, visiting Elks, and Greater Essex Antlers No. 2 had an awesome day packing backpacks.

With help from the Gratitude Grant and lodge funds, the lodge was able to supply Bloomfield and Orange middle schools, Nassan's Place of Special Children in East Orange and Newark backpacks filled with back-to-school supplies. They spent the morning filling 500 backpacks with supplies such as folders, note pads, pens, pencils, sharpeners, glue sticks, highlighters, dry erase markers and sharpies, scissors, tissue packs, wipes, crayons and hand sanitizer.



Building a Greenhouse with Gratitude Grant

Red Bank Lodge No. 233 used their Gratitude Grant to build a greenhouse for Oasis TLC. Oasis TLC, a special needs adult live-in property. Their mission is to promote the inclusion and acceptance of adults with autism in their local communities by establishing environmentally exemplary farm centers that provide meaningful work, healthy and peaceful residences, and community interaction.

Filling The Food Pantry

Passaic Valley Lodge No. 2111 used their Beacon Grant to fill the food pantry. Past Grand Lecturing Knight Roy R. DeRitter made their first delivery to the St. Agnes food pantry!



**Malcolm's 70th
BIRTHDAY BASH**

Honoring Malcolm J. McPherson, Jr. PGER

SATURDAY

**6
DEC**

7:00 PM to 11:00 PM
At Tom's River Elks Lodge #1875

Donation: \$70.00 includes Dinner, Dancing, Open Bar,
and Music by J Soul
Dress Business Casual (No Jeans)

For Tickets contact Jody at (201) 939-0011
or at NJElkSP99@aol.com

All Proceeds to Benefit Elks National Foundation
Please, no gifts. Consider a donation instead to ENF.



Freedom Grant for Paramus Veterans Home

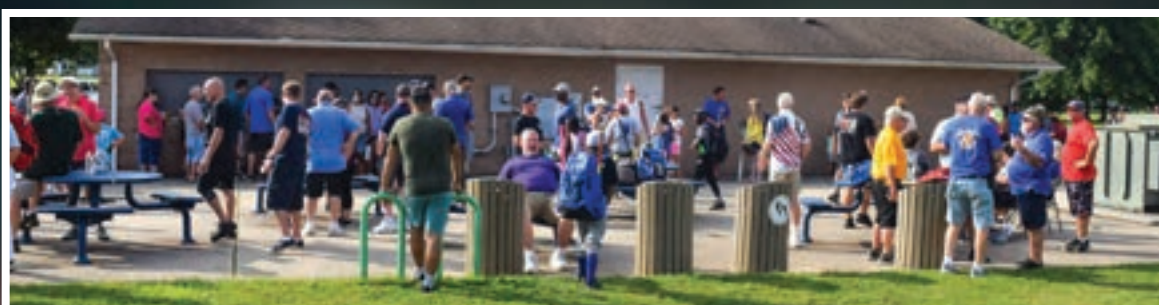
Paramus Lodge No. 2001 presented their \$1,000 Freedom Grant to the Paramus Veterans Home. They also got to spend time with Lou Tucci, a former member of Paramus Lodge and current member of Hasbrouck Heights Lodge.

Pictured left to right: Pat Phillips, Judy Picart, Lou Tucci, member of Paramus Home Staff, and Tom Waspey.

Batters-Up

BY MARK NIRO, STATE COORDINATOR

This year Batters-Up had a slight change in that anyone could participate in the state finals. The State finals were held on August 16th at Deerwood Park in Howell. Howell Lodge No. 2515 hosted the awards ceremony that followed. The contest winners were presented with trophies and tickets to the Elks Day at the Somerset Patriots on September 6th. Our Batters-Up winners were able to go on the field prior to the game for a huge photo op!



Elks Day At Somerset Patriots

Saturday September 6th was Elks Day at Somerset Patriots. The winners of the NJSEA Batters-Up were invited along with their families to attend the game and get on the field prior to first pitch. In addition, our Special Children's Committee invited our ambassadors to participate in Elks Day and they also were able to come on the field. Some of our lodges sponsored veterans who were seated in a special area. New Jersey Elks Charities, Inc. was the recipient of the proceeds of the evening's 50/50. The evening concluded with a fabulous fireworks display.

State President Bill Dow threw out the first pitch and even posed for a picture with the Patriots mascot Sparky. Somehow during the game another mascot was seen trying to become a member of the East District.





Youth Sports Tournament

BY DON TONACHIO, STATE CHAIRPERSON

The Annual Youth Tournament was held in June. Boys and girls ages 13 through 18 participated in golf, bowling and tennis. They competed against each other for trophies and scholarships.

The day of the event was extremely hot, but the golfers were not deterred. Our committee kept everyone hydrated and having fun. Bowling was well attended and impressive. Tennis, although not as well attended, had some young future pros. It is truly amazing to see how good some of these youths are in their perspective sports.

To the lodges who donated money to help make this event happen and those who actively recruited participants thank you! Without you it wouldn't have happened. To the committee and those who volunteered to help, you are all the best. Manasquan Lodge, thank you for the donation of your hall and lunch it really helps a lot!

Our Children are the future of our order and our country. Teaching them sportsmanship and competition prepared them for the future. Thank you all!



Eagle Scout Court Of Honor

Hackettstown Lodge No. 2331 recently honored Milana Bankin at her Eagle Court of Honor. She received a Grand Lodge Certificate, pin and Grand Exalted Ruler letter. Hackettstown Lodge presented her with a certificate, American Flag, and \$50.

For her Eagle project, Milana ran a soccer clinic for children in her community. She recruited high school players to coach the children using games and drills to enhance their soccer skills as sportsmanship.

Pictured L to R: Esquire Robert Furda, Milana Bankin



Youth Activities Committee

BY ANTHONY PERRONE,
STATE CHAIRPERSON

The Tee It Up program continues to make forward progress. This year we are trying a new format, holding just the State Finals. Local contests are still encouraged but not required to qualify for the championship event. Finals will be held at Cedar Creek Golf Course in October. We are hoping this will draw a larger crowd this year. We look forward to seeing some new faces competing along with some previous years' contestants.

The committee had another successful Batters-Up program as well. The state finals were on August 16th at Deerwood Park in Howell followed by the awards ceremony at Howell Lodge No. 2515. Contest winners were awarded trophies and tickets to the Elks Day at the Somerset Patriots. State President Bill Dow threw out the first pitch and our contest winners were honored on the field in a ceremony before the game.

With the end of summer, the Youth Activities committee starts its school-based activities. Every fall, lodges should be working with the schools in their jurisdiction to re-establish their Student of the Month programs — or start an additional program. Lodges can run multiple programs — for instance, one in the high school, one in the middle school, and one for each elementary school. Winners can be given a certificate or a small gift as recognition of their achievement.

The Karen Minutella Reading Initiative is still being promoted by the Youth Activities committee. If your lodge didn't participate last school year, now is the time to start working with the schools to get approval to read Freckle Juice to the 3rd grade classes in your area. District Youth Activities chairpersons can provide your lodge with all the information needed.

The Youth Activities committee is in the process of scheduling fundraisers for the up-coming year. Your support will help us raise money to supplement the Youth Activities Committee programs. Be on the lookout for event dates.



On April 26th, members of Long Branch Antlers Lodge No. 21 presented a bullet proof vest to canine trainer, Officer Chris Remedios and canine Officer Ozzie. Pictured front: Officer Chris Remedios, Canine Officer Ozzie. Back Row Left to Right: Elk Member/Antlers advisor Kira Worth, PER Michael Veth/Antlers advisor, Antlers Flynn Worth and Allison Plumlee.



Welcome to Bordentown Antlers Lodge No. 43

Fifteen Antlers were initiated and part of the Institution of Bordentown Antlers Lodge No. 43.



Bayville Antlers Lodge No. 44

Adding to our active Antlers Lodges was Bayville Lodge No. 44 pictured with the newly initiated Antlers is Advisor Shawn Judson.

Food Pantry Donations

Members of Greater Essex Lodge No. 21 and Antlers Lodge No. 2 recently donated over 30 bags of non-perishable food to the Manna Food Depot in Bloomfield.

Front Row Antlers L to R: Inner Guard, Chaplin, Member (1st year - Past Pres.) Back Row L to R: Lead Advisor Mimi Gomez, Advisor Abisola Oshuntolu, ER/PER David Armstrong, Advisor Pedro (Jun) Lopez, Members Melissa Cumberbakh & Ann Hardy.



Antlers Committee

BY TOM BOYCE,
STATE CHAIRPERSON

“Antlers Today, Elks Tomorrow” isn’t just a slogan; it’s a vision, a promise, and a call to action.

The New Jersey Antlers are proud to lead the nation in both membership and the number of active lodges. Together, they are shaping the future of Elksdom, one Antler at a time.

Antlers across our state were recognized during Elks National Youth Week, honored our flag by participating in Flag Day ceremonies and came together at our Wildwood Reunion. Our Antlers participated in the 2nd Annual Antlers Party at the Wildwood Convention Center on Friday night and also proudly marched down the Wildwood boardwalk with their respective Elks Lodges.

The Antlers Committee is very proud of the outstanding work of our young leaders. What we’re seeing across the state is nothing short of incredible. These young leaders are shaping their communities today, not someday in the future.

The momentum in 2024-2025 reflected the renewed energy and commitment of State Antlers Committee and members statewide who believe in the mission of Antlers Today, Elks Tomorrow.

Building a Brighter Future, One Antler at a Time in 2025-2026 is the goal of this year’s Antlers Committee. The Committee is here to continue to strengthen and support the current Antlers Lodges and is excited to introduce new lodges and re-introduce inactive lodges to the Antlers Family.

Help us continue the growth of the next generation of Elks. Learn how to start an Antlers lodge or revive an inactive Antlers lodge by contacting:

- Chairperson Tom Boyce at njantlers@gmail.com
- Region I Co-Chairperson Mike Veth at vethmvp@verizon.net
- Region II Co-Chairperson Lisa Rovito at lisarovito0525@optonline.net



Welcome Back Sussex Antlers Lodge No. 5

The New Jersey State Antlers Committee welcomed back Antlers Lodge No. 5 on Sunday, September 7th. Boonton Antlers President Angela presided over the Installation.

Hoop Shoot Committee

BY BOB SORENSON, STATE CHAIRPERSON

The Hoop Shoot program is one of the key youth activities sponsored by the Elks. It is a basketball free throw contest for boys and girls from the ages 8 to 13. The program has been in existence for over 50 years and over 2 million kids participate annually. Competing in the program encourages kids to set goals, develop effective work habits, learn sportsmanship and have fun.

Competition starts at the local lodge level. Each contest will have 6 winners, a boy and girl in each of the 3 age groups: 8 to 9, 10 to 11 and 12 to 13; they will advance to the District, State, Regional and National competitions. The state competition will be held in February 2026 at South Plainfield High School; the regional competition will be held in March 2026 in Wilkes Barre, PA; and the national finals will be in Chicago, IL, in April 2026. Exact dates will follow. Note that New Jersey has been represented at the national level in each of the last 3 years.

Local lodges and district directors should have received Hoop Shoot packets in the mail in August. This material, along with the Age Calculator, can also be found on the Hoop Shoot dashboard on elks.org.

I encourage directors to educate their volunteers on all rules prior to the contest – parents often know these rules very well. Lodge secretaries need to appoint the lodge Hoop Shoot director in CLMS while local and district contest dates, times, locations and competition winners will be input by the Hoop Shoot directors at those levels.

A few important deadlines: Local shoots must be completed by December 15, 2025, and district competitions should be completed by January 19, 2026.

Please also note that Hoop Shoot is a required program for all lodges per Grand Lodge.

Thank you to all local directors, district directors and state advisors for your support.

State Soccer Shoot Committee

BY MICHAEL WALSH, STATE CHAIRPERSON

It is the season for the State Soccer Shoot program to take place. The Soccer Shoot is a competition for youth soccer players to test their skills at scoring goals. The contest is broken down by groups of Boys and Girls by age (January 1st, 2025, is the qualifying date). The youngest group are the U8 (7 and under age group) they will shoot at the small goals for score. The next groups U10 (8 and 9 year olds), U12 (10 and 11 year olds), U14 (12 and 13 year olds), U16 (14 and 15 year olds) will shoot at a regulation size goal with a grid attached to score points.

The competition starts at lodge level during September and October. Then the winners move on to the district contest in November and December. Those winners will move on to the State contest to be held in Manasquan on January 10th, 2026. The State winners will move on to the Mid Atlantic National Regional in York, PA on March 7th, 2026. Good Luck to all contestants!



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Drug Awareness Committee

BY MARY ELLEN LAWRENCE, STATE CHAIRPERSON

The NJ State Drug Awareness Program (DAP) is continuing to work toward raising awareness through community involvement and event planning.

Our Wildwood State Reunion brought new interest to our program from our Elk Family. Many attending stopped at our DAP booth where visitors were able to view the work of our DAP Poster, Essay and Video contest winners. Awards were presented to Lodge Chairperson of the Year, Jan Bernardino of Bayville Lodge No. 2394 and District Chairperson of the Year, Jeanine Sieber of South Amboy Lodge No. 784. The Enrique Camarena Award was presented to Officer Jayme Higgins of the Howell Twp Police Department.

On August 5, many lodges participated in community events throughout the state for National Night Out on Crime. DAP coloring books, crayons and informational literature were handed out to members of the community, bringing recognition to our Elks Drug Awareness Program.

Now that fall is here, our DAP program enters our school systems with this year's Drug Awareness contests. The theme this year is "Drugs are a Grave Mistake." The contests begin in September and run through January 31, 2026. Our Districts are also busy planning events for the Annual Walk Out on Drugs. With times changing, so are the Walk Outs. Many districts have chosen different and original events to raise money for Path and Peer Leadership. Keep your eye out for some great fundraisers in your district and support our events! Your support saves lives!

Our 12th Annual Path to Leadership and our 37th Annual Peer Leadership Conferences will be held on February 5th for Path and February 6th thru 8th for Peer. Conferences once again will be held at the Ocean Place Spa & Resort in Long Branch. With funds available from the Opioid Settlement, ENF Grants and Walk Out proceeds, we look forward to another great year of educating our youth and providing them with the tools to choose the right path in life.



Enrique Camarena Award Winner, Officer Jayme Higgins, Howell Township Police Department.

Poster Contest Winner Recognized

Bayonne Lodge No. 434 held a special Awards Dinner for the New Jersey State Winner for Drug Awareness Poster Contest, from Bayonne's Horace Mann School. The East District Drug Awareness Committee presented a \$50 gift card.

Pictured are: Back Row, Chaplain-Miguel Torres, PER-Shawn Fenlon, DAP Co-Chair Ashley Crawford, Loyal Knight -Jim Reilly, 2nd Row: Father-Ashokan Avyasamy, Mother-Ramadevi Ramasamy, Exalted Ruler-Margaret Fenlon, DAP Chair Donna Trimblett; Inner Guard-Ruth Borkowski, District Deputy Martin Hickey lower: Arinjai Giuhan (little brother) and WINNER: Aadhuik Giuhan.



Americanism Committee

BY ELLEN QUINLAN, STATE CHAIRPERSON

Every year the Americanism Committee sponsors an essay contest for 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade students. The contest encourages students to reflect on American values and consider the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship.

This year's essay theme is "What Does Service to Your Country Mean to You?" New Jersey students will submit hundreds of essays to be judged at the lodge, district and state level. The state's winning essays in each category are then forwarded to the Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee. For the fifth consecutive year, New Jersey had a National Award recipient. Greater Palisades Lodge No. 2475 sponsored Kayleigh Kim who placed second in the 7th grade division.

Nationally, first-place, second-place and third-place authors will receive monetary awards of \$1,000, \$500, and \$250 respectively. Awards are presented to the top three essayists in each division at the state level. Many lodges and districts also provide various forms of recognition to their winners.

We held our first state committee meeting at Jamesburg Lodge No. 2180 on August 5th. Under the guidance of Advisor John Szczomak PGLC/PSP, the team of Region and District chairpersons made progress planning events and fundraisers for the year. Check with your District Chairperson to get tickets for the Super 50/50 and look out for a new fundraiser: car magnets!

Thank you to all our Elk Brothers and Sisters for your patriotism and devotion to our nation's flag and the American spirit.

Essay Contest Winner: What Patriotism Means To Me

BY KAYLEIGH KIM

When you hear the word "patriotism", what comes to mind? Many may vision dozens, even hundreds of people banded together, waving the American Flag. Others may imagine fireworks being set off in honor of the day our nation became independent. While these actions show patriotism toward our country, I believe there are many more things that can be done.

Patriotism is defined to be a person's love and devotion to their country. We can do many things that represent our devotion towards our country, whether it be through our support, respect, and honor to those who fought for the independence and freedom which we enjoy today. Every country has strengths and weaknesses, but patriotism encourages us to focus on its opportunities and work toward improving its flaws. Even when our country faces challenges, we must stay hopeful and support it as it works through tough times.

Another important aspect of patriotism is respecting the diversity of our people and cultures. It's about recognizing that our country is made up of different voices and experiences, and supporting efforts to create a more just, safe, and equitable society for all. Being different should not stop us from uniting and working together to uphold the values and principles that make our nation so great. It's not just about our loyalty to our country, but about taking action to make it the best place it can be for everyone. Every person has their own way of contributing to our country.

In conclusion, patriotism is more than just love for one's country. It's about being actively engaged, supporting others, and working to uphold the values our nation was built on. By doing so, we can help make our country a better place for all.



On July 13 the Greater Palisades Lodge presented the 7th Grade 2nd Place National Americanism Essay Award to Kayleigh Kim of Christ the King School in Fort Lee. Pictured are Diane Sinclair East District Americanism Chairperson, PSP Robert Binetti, Patricia Stuart East District Deputy, Kayleigh Kim, Ed McKeon East District Vice President and PSP Diego Tabbachino.

Historical Committee

BY JEFF BRYANT,
STATE CHAIRPERSON

A quick reminder that the NJSEA State Museum was re-opened last August and is happily located at Lacey Lodge No. 2518, after relocating from its previous home at New Brunswick Lodge No. 324. Our continued thanks to Lacey for their support and assistance to have the State Museum at their lodge.

In Elks history, mostly at the turn of the 20th century, many lodges sought to remember their absent members by the creation of Elks Rests within local cemeteries, especially for those members whose families could not afford to bury them. Such places are nationally listed at <https://www.elks.org/history/cemetery.cfm>. It was thought there were only three Rests in our state. The Historical Committee has excitedly found at least four more Rests to date and are working to photograph the plots, to identify those Elks interred, and honor these resting places. Our search for other Rests, if they exist, will continue. Presentation boards of each Rest are being prepared for display in the museum.

The Committee proudly notes that our Past State Presidents video is now on permanent display at the museum. The display chronologically shows our State Presidents, their years of service, their slogans, and their home lodges, as shown in the example picture below. Along with an existing exhibit of NJSEA State Books per year, which also includes pins of the Past Presidents, the Committee is pleased to feature our PSPs within the museum.

The committee pages of NJElks.org were recently updated to reflect the current location of the museum, to show the reopening 2024 event, and to cite the committee's goals. We also retained the earlier pages that featured the New Brunswick museum. All online information and our physical museum exhibits are meant to share the rich history of the NJ State Elks and its charitable projects, programs, and activities throughout the state. In that direction, the Committee is preparing new displays about our State Major Project of Camp Moore with its history and our NJSEA National Veterans Services activities. We always want to encourage members and visitors to the museum and its exhibits, and for those who have already seen the museum, we hope that the refreshing of existing content plus the creating new displays will entice another visit.

If there are questions for the Committee, or for additional information, please contact the NJSEA Historical Committee — njseahc@gmail.com





Scholarship Committee

BY JENNIFER APPALUCCIO, STATE CHAIRPERSON

With students returning to classes, that means that our Scholarship Committee gets busy. Below are the various scholarships available: **The 2025 NJ Elks Family Scholarship** application deadline has passed. The Judging Committee has completed its review of the applications and the winners has been contacted.

2025 ENF Scholarship Season

The 2025 Scholarship season is upon us and there are three types of Scholarships offered by Elks National Foundation:

1. The Most Valuable Student Scholarship

Is open to any high school senior who is a citizen of the United States. Ranging from \$1,000 per year to \$12,500 per year, Most Valuable Student scholarships are for students pursuing a four-year degree, on a full-time basis (minimum of 12 semester hours), in a U.S. college or university. Applications will be available online after August 1, 2025 at ELKS.org.

2. The National Legacy Awards Scholarship

Legacy Awards are \$4,000 (\$1,000/yr) scholarships for children and grandchildren of Elks members. The Foundation will offer a total of up to 350 awards in the 2026 contest. New Jersey will receive 10.

The 2026 ENF Legacy Awards contest will kick off on September 1, 2025. Applications for the 2026 contest will be available ONLINE ONLY starting September 1, 2025 at Elks.org. Deadline is February 6, 2026.

Who is Eligible?

For the 2026 contest, any child or grandchild (or stepchild, step-grandchild, or legal ward) of a living Elk who joined the order on or before April 1, 2020, or a charter member of a Lodge that was instituted on or after April 1, 2023, is eligible to apply. The Elk must also be a paid-up member through March 31, 2026. Great-grandchildren are not eligible. The applicant must be a high school senior. The applicant must apply online only. The 2026 Legacy Awards application deadline is February 6, 2026. If the applicant's parent and grandparent are both Elk members, the applicant must apply through the parent's Elks Lodge. They have waived the standardized test requirement for the 2026 Legacy contest. You do not need to submit ACT and/or SAT scores. Students may apply for more than one ENF scholarship; however, they may win only one. In cases where the student wins more than one, we will award the scholarship with the greater value. Students can accept local and state scholarships, which are separate from the awards at the national level. Legacy Awards may only be applied to accredited US American schools, colleges or universities. If you are selected as a 2026 Legacy Awards recipient, you will be required to perform service once a year with an Elks Lodge during the four years you are receiving the scholarship. New Jersey will offer 10 Legacy Scholarships this year.



Proud To Be An American Scholarship

Long Branch Lodge No. 742 recently awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to Abigail Penny. Pictured Front Row L-R: Abigail Penny, Karolyn Wray Hought, Co-Chairperson Scholarship Committee.

Pictured Second Row L-R: Susan Hammer-Gallo, Co-Chairperson Scholarship, Exalted Ruler Thomas Flannigan, IV.

Perseverance & Dedication Recognized

Elmwood Park-Paterson Lodge No. 60 Scholarship Chairperson Robert Blum, PER presented the Tom Clarke Memorial Scholarship to Elmwood Park High school senior Eleni Cruz who will be attending Scranton University this coming fall. This scholarship recognizes Eleni who has shown significant improvement throughout her high school years, embodying the spirit of perseverance and dedication that Tom Clarke valued.



Elks Care Elks Share Across The Country

After the California wildfires devastated the homes of 50 members of the Pasadena (CA) No. 672 Lodge, the Somerville Lodge No. 1068 organized a fundraiser to support the Pasadena Fire Relief fund. Koozies to hold bottles were created to reflect a partnership between Pasadena and Somerville. A total of \$1,340 was sent to Pasadena from Somerville Lodge, which included sales of the koozies, personal donations, and a \$500 donation from the Bingo committee.

Pictured Left to Right: Pasadena Lodge No. 672 officers with koozies: Esquire Joe Gonzalez, Exalted Ruler Wayne Hammack, Asst. Inner Guard Rudy Reyes, Secretary/PER Sonia Solis, Treasurer Ray Vasquez, Loyal Knight Nicole Hammack, Chaplain/PER Teresa Skobba, Inner Guard Natalie Petrillo and Organist Eric Ekstrand.



Lacey Lodge No. 2518 Says Thank You

A devastating fire engulfed the area surrounding Lacey Lodge. Firefighters from all over New Jersey came to aide in putting the fire out. This is where Lacey lodge members go to work to recognize and thank those volunteers.

It all started with a conversation between a couple of Lacey Elk Members. They created a flyer asking for volunteers, and at each meeting, the room filled with more volunteers! Three short weeks after the devastating fire, over 100 caring and amazing Elks worked together to create an amazing event! The businesses in our communities gladly donated to the event! This event was open to our community, and an estimated 3,000 people for served. They all thanked our first responders and donated to our water tower donation “bucket!” Great things can be accomplished when you focus on the good and surround yourself with positive, caring, like-minded folk!

Through the efforts of the lodge, a donation of \$10,000 was proudly given to the New Jersey Firemen’s Home. Established in 1898, this is the only licensed healthcare facility in New Jersey whose primary mission is dedicated to the men and women of the New Jersey Fire service. Located on the historic Lathrop Estates in Boonton, NJ, The Firemen’s Home provides both long term care and residential health care services. Providing outstanding service – delivered by a loyal and caring staff- has made the Fireman’s Home a trusted and respected choice for many of New Jersey’s bravest.

Ritual

BY JACK FISTORI, STATE CHAIRPERSON

The Ritual Committee is on track for another great year. The clinics and meetings have been very well attended showing that our love for the ritual is alive and well in our state.

The District Flag Charge and 11 O’clock Toast contests will get underway soon. The district ritual chairpersons will provide all necessary materials and information. The winners from each district will be competing at the State Competition held at 4:00pm Saturday afternoon during Fall Conference in Long Branch. Everyone is encouraged to come out and show their support.

A shout out is in order for Middletown Lodge who, for the second year in a row, represented our State at the National Competition held during the Grand Lodge Convention in Kansas City. Their dedication to the ritual, and our Order, cannot be overstated. Our thanks also go to John Leo from South Amboy Lodge and Marty Bradley from Brick Lodge who did a tremendous job in the 11 O’clock Toast and Flag Charge competitions in Kanas City.

The ritual is quite literally our heritage and our identity. As new members we all heard, “What made you an Elk?” We also all know the answer, but too many of us forget the full meaning of it. The Ritual made us Elks! I encourage all new and future Exalted Rulers to embrace their heritage and show their dedication to their officers, their members and their Order by practicing the Ritual. Show that you are truly a leader of your lodge and worthy of its highest position!

Training Committee

BY MARK DUNNDER, STATE CHAIRPERSON

The Training Committee will be holding two training sessions to be held in each region in October 2025 and March 2026. Once the dates are finalized they will be distributed to everyone.

We want to invite any members, not just officers to attend these sessions. If any Vice President or District Deputy needs any specific trainings for their district, please reach out so we can do our best to assist.



Lodge Activities Committee

BY JAYNE MCLAUGHLIN, STATE CHAIRPERSON

In 2025 the Lodge Committee had a lot of lodge participants for the All-American Lodge Contest. The committee would like to thank all that took the time to enter their lodge for consideration. We appreciate all the dedication and time it took to prepare these entries.

We are excited to announce 2025 All American Lodge Contest winners which were announced at Grand Lodge in Austin, Texas. Awards will be handed out at Fall Conference in November.

The Following New Jersey Lodges made Top 10 in their Respective Divisions:

Division II- Cedar Grove No. 2237, Elmwood Park-Paterson No. 60
Kearney-Belleville No. 1050
Division IV- Park Ridge No. 2234, Rutherford No. 547,
Springfield-Hillside No. 2004

The Committee is proud to announce the following winners of the All-American Lodge Contest are:

Second Place in Division II-Cedar Grove No. 2237
First Place in Division IV - Park Ridge No. 2234
Congratulations to both Lodges.

NJSEA Lodge Activities 2025-2026
CONTEST DUE DATES

CONTEST	DUE TO DISTRICT	DUE TO STATE
LODGE BULLETIN	TUESDAY 2/3/26	TUESDAY 2/10/26
MEMORIAL SERVICE	TUESDAY 2/3/26	TUESDAY 2/10/26
COMMUNITY SERVICE & IMAGE CONTEST	TUESDAY 3/3/26	TUESDAY 3/10/26

TUESDAY 9/30/25 — ZOOM MEETING
REVIEW CONTESTS & JUDGING REQUIREMENTS

TUESDAY 2/10/26 — UNION LODGE 1583
JUDGING LODGE BULLETIN & MEMORIAL SERVICE CONTESTS
7PM RE-PAST 7:30 MEETING

TUESDAY 3/10/26 — UNION LODGE 1583
JUDGING COMMUNITY SERVICE & IMAGE CONTESTS
7PM RE-PAST 7:30 MEETING



Ridgefield Park Lodge No. 1506 celebrated their 100th Anniversary with a gala in September. The Past Exalted Rulers rendered a touching 11 O’Clock Toast with each PER holding a candle in tribute to their absent members.

Central District	East Central District			Millville #580	Manasquan #2534
Carteret #2235	Cranford #2006			South Central District	Point Pleasant #1698
Colonia #2282	Rahway #1075	Kearny-Belleville #1050	Northwest District	Eatontown #2402	Toms River #1875
East Brunswick #2370	Springfield-Hillside #2004	Lyndhurst #1505	East Hanover #815	Freehold #1454	Southwest District
Edison #2487	Stirling #2392	Greater Essex #21	Hackettstown #2331	Jamesburg #2180	Bordentown #2085
Metuchen #1914	Union #1583	North Arlington #1992	Lake Hopatcong #782	Keyport-Matawan #2030	Deptford #2708
New Brunswick #324		Nutley #1290	Livingston #1855	Long Branch #742	Hamilton #2262
Piscataway #2414	North District	South Orange #1154	Madison #1465	Middletown #2179	Marlton #2514
South Amboy #784	Mahwah #1941	West Orange #1590	Parsippany-Troy Hills #2078	Millstone #2613	Mount Holly #848
South Plainfield #2298	Oakland #2167		Sussex #2288	Old Bridge #2229	New Egypt #2457
Watchung Hills #885	Passaic Valley #2111	Northeast District	Sparta #2356	Red Bank #233	Trenton #105
Woodbridge #2116	Park Ridge #2234	Bergenfield #1477		Southeast District	Hightstown #1955
	Pompton Lakes #1895	Clifton-Garfield #1569	South District	Asbury Park-Wall #128	West Central District
	Westwood #1562	Dumont #2593	Brigantine #2428	Bayville #2394	Bound Brook #1388
East District	Wayne #2181	Elmwood Park-Paterson #60	Deerfield #733	Brick #2151	Flemington #1928
	West Milford #2236	Hackensack #658	Galloway #2845	Howell #2515	Lambertville #1070
Hoboken #74		Hasbrouck Heights #1962	Egg Harbor #2563	Jackson #2744	Manville-Hillsborough #2119
Ridgefield Park #1506	North Central District	New Milford-Teaneck #2290	Greater Cape May #2839	Lacey #2518	Middlesex #1488
Weehawken #1456	Cedar Grove #2237	Paramus #2001	Greater Wildwood #1896	Lakewood #1432	Somerville #1068
	Harrison East Newark #2326	Rutherford #547	Vineland #1422	Manahawkin #2340	
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!					



TAM

BY MARC-ALLYN GLORIANDE,
STATE CHAIRPERSON

As of August 1st, we have trained over 400 Elks and Elk employees in the proper techniques and standards of alcohol management.

The final class for 2025 is:
October 19 at Tenaflly — East District —
originally scheduled for Ridgefield Park

The 2026 TAM training dates and districts are finalized, the committee is working on the locations. The first four training sessions are listed below. Please check on the TAM page on njelks.org for more information.

January 11 - Southwest District
January 25 - Northwest District
February 8 - West Central District
February 22 - Northeast District

Tuition is \$25 and is payable ONLY by check made payable NJSEA with TAM in the memo section.

For the training sessions, please inform the District Vice President and/or host Lodge how many will be attending so there will be sufficient tables and chairs.

The TAM committee arrives for setup between 7:45 and 8:00 a.m. Please note that registration begins at 8:30 a.m. with class commencing as soon as everyone is registered.



North Jersey Elks Developmental Disabilities Agency

The North Jersey Elks Developmental Disabilities Agency (NJEDDA) is a private non-profit organization operated by a volunteer Board of Trustees comprised of representatives from several local Elks lodges (Elmwood Park/Paterson, Rutherford, Pompton Lakes, Clifton, Passaic Valley, and Wayne) along with other concerned citizens. NJEDDA was established in 1947 as an elementary school. The agency continued to grow to meet the ever-growing needs of the students and to expand its offering of services to include high school, adult day programming, and a toddler program. The agency specifically serves children and adults with disabilities. NJEDDA is approved through the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities (NJ DDD) to provide educational and therapeutic services to individuals from the ages of three through adulthood.

The mission of NJEDDA is to advance the independence of the students and clients by enriching their quality of life.

This mission is accomplished through providing opportunities to challenge themselves to learn and grow emotionally and functionally in educational, therapeutic, and vocational environments within an atmosphere of acceptance. The students and clients receive a variety of services which include speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, nursing services, and transition services. NJEDDA provides clinics throughout the year to further address the students' and clients' medical, and equipment needs. The collaboration with Children's Specialized Hospital affords the students, along with their families, the opportunity to attend Physiatry clinics. Community plays an important role in the agency. The students and clients are exposed to experiences in the community such as, visiting local libraries, grocery stores, and the post office, which allows them to enhance their skills in communication and mobility.

NJEDDA receives funding through local school districts and the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities. This funding does not cover the full costs of the desperately needed services of the students and clients served. NJEDDA relies on donations from various outside organizations and individuals such as the Elks National Foundation, Elks State Association, and local Elks lodges. The New Jersey Elks have a long history of service to the community. Through their philanthropic work, they support our agency. We are proud to have the men and women of the Elks supporting our staff to help our students and clients reach their fullest potential and be a part of their communities.

To learn more about NJEDDA or to make donations, please visit our website www.njedda.org.



Special Children's Committee

BY ELYSE RUSSO, STATE CHAIRPERSON

Thank you to all lodges and districts that donated to Camp Moore and the Miracle on the Mountain Fund at Wildwood Convention. Thank you also to those that provided meals for our campers or work detail. We would like to recognize and thank the John Sentner Memorial Plunge Committee for their generous \$141,000 donation.

Camping season has come to an end. Thank you, Todd and staff, for another great season. The 2026 applications will be available soon and will be filed electronically. Please file promptly, due to limited availability.

Each year one male and one female special needs scholar are chosen to receive a \$10,000 scholarship (\$2,500 over 4 years) The 2025 Scholarship Winners are: Simon Mizrachy sponsored by Mansville-Hillsborough Lodge No. 2119 and Sabrina Correa sponsored by South Plainfield Lodge No. 2298. The runners-up will receive \$1,000 a year for 4 years. Winners are Landon Taylor sponsored by Rutherford Lodge No. 547 and Leah Semanchick sponsored by Toms River Lodge No. 1875. Congratulations to all!

In July, the 26th Annual Miracle Run event was held. Thank you to those that attended this outstanding event. The 2025-26 Area Ambassadors were introduced, and the Committee presented each with gifts.

Area 1 Ambassador Alyssa Playford sponsored by Greater Cape May Lodge No. 2839
Alternate Aubrey Ibrahim sponsored by Old Bridge Lodge No. 2229

Area 2 Ambassador Mariella Scarpa sponsored by Lake Hopatcong Lodge No. 547
Alternate Jaymeson Hayward sponsored by West Milford Lodge No. 2236

Area 3 Ambassador David Shikman sponsored by South Orange Lodge No. 782
Alternate Luke Bowman sponsored by West Orange Lodge No. 1590

Area 4 Ambassador Nicolas Tempich sponsored by East Brunswick Lodge No. 2370
Alternate Lonnie Mattox sponsored by Union Lodge No. 1583

Thank you for always supporting the Calendar Raffle Fundraiser and Clothing Drives which benefit our Special Children.

As always, thank you for keeping smiles on the faces of our Special Children!



Congratulations to our 2025-2026 Ambassadors

Thank You For Your Service

At the Miracle Run, the band requested all veterans to come up and be recognized. They rendered a military salute during the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner.



Because PGER Malcolm Said We Could

At the direction of our State Sponsor, PGER Malcolm J. McPherson, Jr., seven Past State Presidents and current President represented him in the Annual Tug Of War contest at this year's Miracle Run.

Pictured Left to Right: State President Bill Dow, Michael Penchenski, PSP; Vicki Watson, PSP; Joe Pedone, PSP; Joyce Powell, GLC/PSP; Dick Tabbachino, PGLC/PSP; Francis J. Decibus, PSDGER; and John Szczomak, PGLC/PSP.



John Sentner Plunge Donation

During the Wildwood Business Session, the John Sentner Memorial Plunge Committee presented a check for \$141,000. Pictured left to right: Jessica Schoener, Elyse Russo, Connie Cantwell, Peggy Berry, GLC/PSP, Rich Bard, PGLC/PSP, and Robert Mauro, PGLC/PSP



Thank You Smile Makers!

Let's give a massive THANK YOU to the 2025 Elks Camp Moore's Smile Squad for all their hard work this summer. You may have arrived as strangers but quickly became family and will always remember your campers and time on our Miracle on the Mountain. You should be proud of all the hours and hard work you put in while being a Smile Maker!

We wish you all the best and hope to see you next summer!

Todd Thompson ECM Camp Director and Jenna Bado, Assistant ECM Camp Director



On September 6th, members of the East Central District SCC along with other lodge members and Rahway Antlers Lodge No. 39 held a Carnival for special children and adults at Stirling Lodge. There were lots of carnival type games and food. It's hard to tell from the pictures who had more fun the committee or the carnival guests.

SCC By-Laws Amendments To Be Voted On

The Board has approved amendments to the 2022 Approved Bylaws. The amendments were the result of changes relating to the Committee and Camp Moore since 2022. These amendments were approved by the Special Children's Committee and will be up for final approval by the membership at Fall Conference. A copy of the Bylaws and amendments is posted on the NJSEA website or click the QR code to view the proposed amendments.



Magical Music Garden...Where Music Makers Create Smiles

On May 10 at the Camp Moore Open House visitors had the honor and pleasure of attending the unveiling of the new magical musical play park at Elks Camp Moore. What began as a simple brainstorming idea, led by the vision and dedication of Diane Alfonso, was brought to life through the generous funding of Freehold Lodge No. 1454.

This beautiful musical park will provide endless hours of fun, joy, and creativity for the many children who attend camp — now and for years to come. Freehold Lodge is proud to have played a key role in making this project a reality.



Camp Moore Trustee Report

BY VINCE DITTA, TRUSTEE CHAIRPERSON

Elks Camp Moore completed its second year of no charge to the lodges for sending campers to camp. The camp staff, as usual, did a great job putting smiles on the faces of our children. Social media postings of this year's activities have been plentiful and were great to see. The excitement and smiles on the camper's faces put smiles on our faces as well. A new addition to the camp is the music park containing various types of musical chimes. It allows all campers, including those in wheelchairs, to have access and enjoy the chimes. We are always honored and excited to be able to showcase our State's Major Project to our Grand Exalted Ruler Bryan Klatt and First Lady Susan when they visit in November.

The online camper registration process continues to be invaluable in registering campers. This process helped to eliminate incomplete applications, misplaced applications and records the applications in the order that they are received. This software easily follows the previous paper application process and still requires local lodge sponsorship. If your lodge should need assistance, please reach out to your District Chairperson for guidance. The camp's new website, njelkscampmoore.org, acts as an introduction and serves as a tool for members, perspective campers' families and counselors to view the camp. It contains a search by zip code to find the closest lodge along with pictures and videos showing the revitalization of our state-of-the-art facility. The site also serves as a reference tool for district and lodge chairpersons and contains a link to the state's website to NJElks.org and vice versa.

The revitalization to our State's Major Project continues with the remodeling of Cantoli Hall. This iconic structure will be receiving a second floor and include an elevator to assist those in need. The work is expected to be completed in time for the 2026 camping season. The revitalization has impressed the campers, their families, counselors and visitors. The camp is always in need of repairs along with projects to be completed during the off season. You can contact Anthony Alfonso Jr., our Property Maintenance Supervisor, to offer your assistance.

At the conclusion of every camping season the Board of Trustees start reviewing the health policy and all insurance policies for the camp to ensure they are always up to date especially as a result of the ever-expanding camp. The Trustees are continually focused to assure the camp and attendees are well protected and secure.

The Special Children's calendar raffle continues to be a major fundraiser supporting Elks Camp Moore. Thanks to those participants and congratulations to all the winners! The real winners of this program continue to be our special children.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you for all that you do in support of Elk's Camp Moore, Miracle On the Mountain, and our Special Children. Please continue your fundraising so we can keep putting smiles on the faces of our Special Children.

These are just some of the amazing pictures taken during this past camping season at Elks Camp Moore. Camp Director Todd, Assistant Director Jenna, our Smile Makers and staff create memories for our campers that will last a lifetime.

To see more of the Elks Camp Moore adventures visit their facebook page: www.facebook.com/njelksmoore



Christmas In July At Elks Camp Moore!

Thanks to Camp Director Todd and ECM Smile Makers for creating a winter wonderland for Christmas in July. This is just one of the many activities that the amazing staff at Elks Camp Moore have for our campers. Once again our staff is creating miracles on the mountain!



Cooling Off In The Spray Park

One of the favorite parts of Elks Camp Moore is the interactive Spray Park. There were a lot of really hot days this past summer and the spray park was a favorite place to cool off!



Manasquan Day At The Beach

Each year Manasquan Lodge No. 2534 sponsors a "day at the beach" for our Elks Camp Moore campers and counselors. Pictured here is Jeffrey with 2 of ECM's counselors. His mom and dad are members of Rutherford Lodge No. 547. After overcoming a life-threatening illness this past year, our Superman "Jeffrey" joined forces with our Superhero Smile Makers for an epic adventure at the Manasquan Elks 2534 Day at the beach!



Congratulations Carlie Evans!

Graduating from Elks Camp Moore is both a happy and sad day. This year marked Carlie's last year of camp eligibility. She will be able to attend respite weekends going forward. We love to share thank yous from our parents.

Forever grateful to have the Elks organization care so much for our extra special children! We have been blessed to have had Carlie sponsored to attend Elks Camp Moore by our local Manahawkin Lodge No. 2340 for so many years! From being so scared many years ago to send Carlie to an away camp to now her "graduating" from the camp, Charlie and I thank Director Todd, the nurses, the one on one counselors and our lodge from the bottom of our hearts for giving Carlie (and the other children) the opportunity to experience away camp! Years of special and exciting memories are imbedded in her brain that she will never forget! Smiles, laughs, fun and friends all crammed into an amazing week! I made a little video when we got home to show how wonderful the experience has been. Mind you she is exhausted and we will continue to hear about camp for quite a while! Camp Moore is truly a "Miracle on the Mountain" which is full of love and smiles!