



Michael Vecchio, father of Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael Vecchio, spent time walking amongst the field of flags. He paused to take a moment to read the names of our heroes. Each year Mike takes his son's flag and places it on his grave. He also takes the flags of those who do not attend the picnic that are buried near Michael and places them on their graves as well.



Over 60 Antlers from several lodges attended this year's Army Of Hope picnic. As our families exited Lacey Lodge with their escorts to head to the pavilion to be introduced, they were greeted by our Antlers who formed an honor guard. Our Antlers also served our families all afternoon.



This was the first picnic that Andrea Grez, mother of Army LCpl Jourdan Grez, was able to attend. She was also presented with a Medal of Freedom from PGER Malcolm J. McPherson, Jr. Each year, Past First Lady Janet DeRitter selects a special personalized gift for each family. Andrea is holding up the Lantern Light.



Our Antlers assisted our special guests throughout the afternoon with whatever they needed.



Maria and Luigi Marciante, parents of Army CPL Luigi Marciante, were presented a Medal of Freedom by PGER Malcolm J. McPherson, Jr. Also pictured is PGLC/PSP John Szczomak who escorts the Marciante family each year.

# Army of Hope Committee

BY SANDY HELLY, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**O**n August 2nd, the committee held their 19th Annual Arthur "RT" Mayer, Jr., Golf Outing at Fox Hollow Golf Club in Branchburg. What a day we had...extremely hot and humid with bouts of thunder and lightning, all in all, a great day for golf! Even though I don't play the game, I could not be prouder to not only be an Elk, but to also see the fun and camaraderie had by the 102 golfers. Through everyone's generosity, the annual golf outing raised over \$12,000.

On September 8th we hosted our 20th Annual "Day of Remembrance" at Lacey Lodge No. 2518. This is the day we honor both our severely wounded servicemen and women along with our many Gold Star families and friends. This year, through the efforts of Past First Lady Janet DeRitter, 39 families attended the picnic. The day starts off with our families being greeted by members of the committee. Each family is presented with a gift from the Army of Hope Committee personalized with their loved one's picture. This year, it was a lantern.

Lacey Lodge provides coffee and bagels for the families. After a prayer and Flag Salute, the families were welcomed by PGER Malcolm J. McPherson, Jr., State Sponsor. Each year the Army of Hope Committee presents Medals of

Freedom from the War on Terror to family members. PGER Malcolm presented 7 medals that day. Our families were then escorted by our Past State Presidents and committee members to Lacey's Pavilion walking between an honor guard of Antler members and our MC Committee members.

Our picnic would not be possible without the combined efforts of our committee and advisors setting up the day before, members of Lacey Lodge and the North District cooking all day, as well as the generous donations of food, soda, and water by our Lodges. It truly takes a village.

Through the generosity of our members, lodges, and NJ Elks Charities Inc. our picnic raised over \$244,000. These funds combined with our golf outing enable the Army of Hope Committee to send \$44,000 (\$500 checks) to the children of our families for back-to-school expenses, \$44,000 (\$500 checks) to the children of our families during the holidays in December, and gift cards to our Gold Star families for the December holidays. None of this would be possible without the year-round support from the New Jersey Elks!

God bless our men and women that serve this great country and all our elks who care and share. We salute you.

# It has been an awesome beginning to our State year!

BY MICHAEL PENCHENSKI III, NJSEA PRESIDENT

**B**rothers and Sisters of the New Jersey State Elks Association, our journey began with the State Convention in Wildwood, which will always be in my heart and among my fondest memories. Clare and I thank everyone from the State Advisory Board, and State Convention and Parade Committee and to each one of our members for the support and love you have shown us.

Thank you, State Sponsor, PGER, Malcolm J. McPherson Jr, and the NJ State Advisory Board for your experience, guidance and wisdom are truly incomparable.

We have the Advisory Board to guide us, and we have our amazing committees doing a spectacular job in our State and local communities. New Jersey is a national leader in every measure.

As I attend various State committee meetings, I am extremely impressed with the work they do and the dedication they have. We are one big team with support for each other as well as for our communities.

What greater accomplishment could one aspire to, than to make a positive difference in the lives of others? We help establish formerly "Homeless Veterans" with a well-stocked and furnished home. We enrich the lives of so many children with the truly magical experience of Camp Moore. Our scholarship program helps students and families with furthering their education. All of our sport programs not only provide a fun experience, but they also teach valuable life lessons of sportsmanship and facing challenges. The Drug Awareness Committee along with Path/Peer Leadership are literally saving lives among our children. Our Auditing, CLMS, Credentials, TAM, Safety, Training, Government Relations, Public Relations, and others are the support and the backbone of our success. Every one of our committees make a significant difference in so many lives.

The fall is when we initiate new members in honor of our Grand Exalted Ruler. It is time to give membership recruitment and delinquency a big push. On average, new members bring new friends, helping hands, revenue, and attendance for lodge events and programs.

In closing, Clare and I are looking forward to seeing everyone at district and lodge events and at the Fall Conference. You are our inspiration and the wind in our sails. God bless you all and keep you safe and healthy.



# New Jersey Welcomes GER Douglas Schiefer and First Lady Julia

**D**ouglas Allen Schiefer was born in Bucyrus, Ohio on February 14th. He graduated high school in 1976 as a three-sport athlete (football, basketball, and track). In June of 1975 Doug met his future wife Julia and he married his high school sweetheart on September 11, 1976. They value their faith, family and community and have been blessed with three children and four grandchildren. Doug attended Baldwin-Wallace College and received his Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice in 1981.

GER Doug was initiated into Bucyrus Elks Lodge No. 156 in 1984. He is a third generation Elk who progressed through the chairs and was installed as Exalted Ruler in April 1988 and again in 1990. He was Elk of The Year in 1992, served on the Board of Trustees and was elected an Honorary Life Member of his Lodge in 2015.

Doug served the Ohio Elks Association in various capacities and was State President in 2008-2009. He served the Grand Lodge with distinction as District Deputy in 1998-1999, Area 4 Fraternal Committee 2013-2018, and Area 4 Lodge Activities Committee 2018-2021. In 2021 he was elected as the Area 4 member of the Board of Grand Trustees.

Doug and Julia are thankful and humbled to represent our great Order of Elks as Grand Exalted Ruler and First Lady. They are excited for the adventures ahead and visiting the State Associations through American and promoting their theme....Elkdom's Heart For America.



# Grand Lodge Message

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

**O**ur Grand Exalted Ruler Douglas A. Schiefer and his wife Julia from Bucyrus Lodge No. 156 will be joining us at our Fall Conference. Our Grand Exalted Ruler and First Lady will be arriving Thursday. 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 Michael Penschski and his committee people, 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 things we are doing and the activities we are sponsoring for our Veterans, the Homeless Veterans, our Special Children, our Youth programs, our Drug Awareness programs and our Scholarship programs and at the same time attracting new members.

I would like to congratulate Don Anderson, Past Exalted Ruler and his Officers of Middletown Lodge No. 2179 in representing the State of the New Jersey in the National Ritual Contest. All of the Officers of Middletown Lodge No. 2179 made New Jersey proud. I would also like to congratulate John Kretchmer, Springfield/Hillside Lodge No. 2004 who represented New Jersey in the National Flag Charge Contest and the National Eleven O'Clock Toast Contest. 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. I urge each lodge to apply for and take advantage of each grant. We want to make our communities aware of the great work we are doing. From your generosity we are able to make substantial donations to our Scholarship programs, our State Major Project "Elks Camp Moore", Miracle on the Mountain, NJEDDA, Somerset Children Center, CTC Academy, our Veterans and Army of Hope. Thank you for your generosity to ENF and keep it up.

I need to re-emphasize that each of our committees should be truly proud of everything they have done and will be doing this year, including the Special Children's Committee, Miracle Run, Peer Leadership, Walk Out on Drugs, National Veterans Services, Army of Hope, Hoop Shoot, Sports & Youth



Tournament, Scholarship, Internet, Parades, Publication, Public Relations/Marketing, Ritual, Lodge Development and Antlers. All of our committees deserve congratulations for their hard work.

This year we had a very successful Miracle Run held on July 28th at Old Bridge Lodge No. 2229. The Miracle Run had a tremendous turnout and the money raised will definitely help support our Special Children's Committee. Thank you for all of your hard work and support.

The Army of Hope held its annual picnic on September 8th at Lacey Lodge No. 2518 for the families that lost a family member or was severely wounded. It was a tremendous event and everyone should be extremely proud of the manner in which the New Jersey Elks take care of the families of our Veterans.

I also would like to congratulate the Historical Committee for their hard work in relocating our Museum from New Brunswick Lodge No. 324 to Lacey Lodge No. 2518. The ribbon cutting ceremony was held on August 24th and our Museum is very impressive. Please see the history of our Association when

you visit Lacey.

I would like to congratulate Robert Ricker, PGLC from Lake Hopatcong Lodge No. 782 on his appointment to be the Grand Lodge Esteemed Lecturing Knight. Bob will be installed at the Grand Lodge Convention in Kansas City in 2025.

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



## The New Jersey Elk Submission Deadline

Submission Deadline: **MARCH 1, 2025**

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.

## Lodge Anniversaries

### 125 Years

Rutherford Lodge No. 547

Millville Lodge No. 580

### 100 Years

Middlesex Lodge No. 1488

Lyndhurst Lodge No. 1505

Ridgefield Park Lodge No. 1506

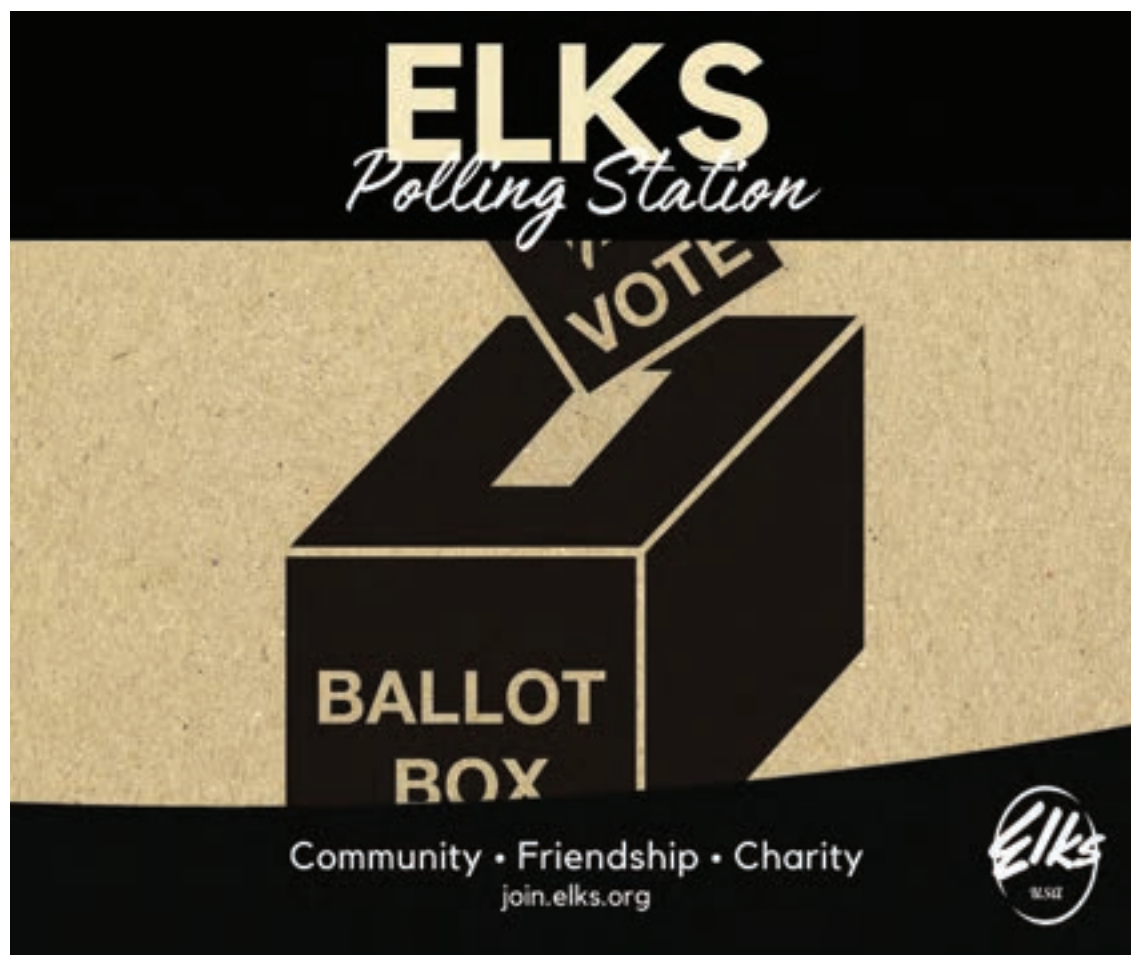
## Requirements for Seeking Elective Office in This Association

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:

- (1) They are a Member in good standing in their Lodge and a Past Exalted Ruler
- (2) 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.
- (3) 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 2025 are: North, Northwest, South Central and Southwest. Elections will be held on Sunday, March 2, 2025.

## Ritual Committee

BY JACK FISTORI, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**T**he 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 Grand Lodge Ritualistic Committee made some changes to the Flag Charge and 11 O'clock Toast last year. These changes have now been used by all subordinate lodges in their district competitions. The winners from each district will be competing at the state competition held at 4:00 PM Saturday afternoon during Fall Conference at Long Branch. Everyone is encouraged to come out and show their support.

A shout out is in order for Middletown Lodge No. 2179 who represented our state at the national competition held during the Grand Lodge Convention in Austin. Their dedication to the ritual, and our Order, cannot be overstated. Our thanks also go to John Kretchmer from Springfield/Hillside Lodge No. 2004 who did a tremendous job in the 11 O'clock Toast and Flag Charge competition in Austin.

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!



## Elk Shucking In The Rain

Cedar Grove Lodge No. 2237 held their annual Lobster Fest in September. Despite a torrential downpour, PDD Michael Corbosiero stayed out in the storm to continue shucking clams to bring inside for the many attendees to enjoy while they stayed dry. Cedar Grove Lodge uses the funds raised from Lobster Fest to support their charitable work in their community.



## Jim Hall Homeless Veterans Picnic

Lacey Lodge No. 2518 gave a \$1,000 check to the Jim Hall Homeless Veterans Committee. Mark Niro SED VP from Lacey Lodge No. 2518 presented the \$1,000 check to Chris Russo, Co-Chairperson of Homeless Veterans. We are thankful to the members of the Jim Hall Picnic Committee for such an outstanding day! Over 87 large raffle gifts including baskets, raffles, great food, music, and all of the members and guests who came out to help our Veterans made this day one to remember!!! Special thanks to Chris and Elyse Russo, Frank Scotto, Dan, Phyllis, Charlie, Phil, Peggy, Ryland, Vinny, and everyone else who helped. You truly make a difference in Veterans' lives!! Our preliminary numbers show that the Elks Homeless Veterans Committee collected in excess of \$180,000. Just amazing!



## Veterans Fishing Trip

Manahawkin Lodge No. 2340 held its Annual Veterans Fishing Trip on June 4th. It took place on the Miss Barnegat Light running from Viking Village. This was made possible through an Elks National Foundation Beacon Grant and lodge charity funds. Our guests were from Veterans Haven South, Joint Base McGuire-Dix Lakehurst, Mystic Island American Legion and MA22 Operation Hook IT. Lunch was provided on board while our 33 guests enjoyed the beautiful day on the water. Many of the veterans were lucky in catching a variety of fish and some took their catch home. Some Veterans took their caught fish home. All guests returned to the Lodge for a BBQ, hospitality and friendship.

Pictured L-R: Tim Murphy, his son Kevin, and friend Tony on a 4-hour fluke trip. Despite a slow start, they ended up releasing 30 shorts and keeping 5 flukes up to 24 inches.

## National Veterans Service Committee

BY ED LEIB, CHAIRPERSON

Your National Veterans Service Committee has shown remarkable dedication this year, making a significant impact in the lives of our veterans. You have been instrumental in helping veterans with bills, food, and shelter and ensuring their essential needs are met. Members have participated in the Stand Down events, distributing backpacks filled with personal hygiene items, socks, and underwear to veterans living on the streets. When new facilities open, your 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. The continuous support from NJ Elks' members has been crucial in enabling these initiatives. Local lodges are encouraged to apply for grants to further support veterans with Welcome Home Kits and furniture. Fundraising efforts have also been a significant part of your activities. Members are actively participating in the USS NJ fundraiser in mid-September, with the anticipated donation benefiting the Veterans Committee. Your dedication to improving veterans' lives is commendable. Thank you for your ongoing support!



## District Delivers

Members of the North Central District Veterans Committee teamed up with the Northwest District Veterans Committee and delivered furniture and Welcome Home Kits to four formerly homeless Veterans in Mountain Lakes.

Pictured: (l-r) Rich Reinhardt NCD Veterans Committee Chairperson, James Walsh VAVS rep and Jeff Bryant South Orange Exalted Ruler.

## Manahawkin Citizen of the Year

Manahawkin Lodge No. 2340 awarded our Citizen of the Year to Assistant Manager, Helen Williamson, of the Manahawkin Dollar Tree #01666. The entire team at Store #01666, under the management of Denise Castellazzo, assisted the Elks Veterans Programs by supporting Operation Homefront (a national nonprofit that provides support and resources to US Military families in need). The two campaigns are the Back-to-School Brigade where 1,446 school supplies were donated in July and a Holiday Toy Drive where 1,734 toys were collected in November. Helen's assistance has enabled our group of Veterans to be able to collect and donate to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst and Audrey's Toy Chest. Helen and the entire staff go above and beyond. We salute and appreciate all that Helen does and we are truly honored to award her with Elkdom's Citizen of the Year.

Pictured Left to Right: Past Veterans Chair Sharon McGovern, Helen Williamson, Past Exalted Ruler of the Manahawkin Lodge Deborah England.



## N.J. Welcomes GER Schiefer

BY THOMAS ZISA,  
SENIOR JUSTICE GRAND FORUM

The NJSEA Fall Conference will be held November 8-10, 2024. We will, again, be staying at the beautiful Ocean Place Resort & Spa in Long Branch, New Jersey. Our Grand Exalted Ruler, Douglas A. Schiefer of Bucyrus Elks Lodge No. 156, together with his lovely wife Julia, will be joining us.

Your Convention Committee has made all the arrangements for a fantastic conference. We will begin the weekend on Friday evening with the annual Memorial Service to honor those Past Exalted Rulers we have 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 and dancing. The dress for the party is casual.

On Saturday morning starting at 7:00 AM there will be a continental breakfast for all attendees. Registration of members will open at 8:00 AM and the Business Session will begin at 8:30 AM sharp. The State Association Luncheon will be held immediately following the Business Session. State President Michael Penchenski has arranged for a very informative afternoon breakout session. Our State Flag Charge and 11 O'Clock Toast Contest will also be held Saturday afternoon. Be sure to attend to support your district's contestants. Saturday evening, we will hold our annual 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 Grand Hall 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 2025 Grand Lodge Convention will be held June 29 - July 2 in Kansas City, MO. Kansas City is the home of amazing jazz music, world-famous barbecue, and is known as the "City of Fountains" because it has more outdoor water features than any other city, except Rome, Italy.

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.



## District Deputies Installed At Grand Lodge Session

The District Deputies for 2024-2025 were installed by Grand Exalted Ruler Douglas Schiefer at the Grand Lodge sessions in Austin, Texas this past July. In addition to the morning sessions, our District Deputies also attended training sessions in the afternoon.

Pictured Left To Right: Rose Romaine, Southwest; Cathy Lodge, North Central; Hank Bedlivy, East Central; Brian Hamilton, North; Martin Hickey, East; Lisa Nazzaretto, Northeast; Lisa Rovito, Northwest; Joseph DeBonis, South Central; Jerry Krause, South; Liz Sorenson, West Central, Connie Cantwell, Southeast, and Christine Sauer, Central.



## Representing The Garden State

State President Mike Penchenski, III proudly waved our State Flag during the opening ceremonies for the Grand Lodge Session held in July in Austin, Texas.



## New Jersey Receives 2 Membership Awards

Past State President Joe Pedone received two membership awards on behalf of our State Association at the Grand Lodge Wednesday Business Session. The first award was for 4th Place in percentage gain for membership. The second award was for 2nd Place for highest membership gain.

Pictured left to right: Area 2 Grand Lodge Committee Woman Designate Joyce Powell, PSP, Joe Pedone, PSP, and outgoing Area 2 Grand Lodge Committee Woman Mary Cardinal-Vogt, ME-DE-DC Association.

## Banquet Fun

Pictured Left to Right First Lady Clare, Past First Lady Patty Zisa, State President Michael Penchenski, Passaic Valley Lodge Exalted Ruler Arsenio Sanchez and First Lady Witty, Marge Theobald, Maureen Whalen, Past First Lady Jody and PGLC John Szczomak. Having fun photo bombing the picture are Past First Ladies, Pat McPherson and Suzanne Pickering. Also in the background is Senior Justice Grand Forum Thomas Zisa.





PGLC/PSP Robert Mauro, Red Bank Lodge No. 233 presented the jewel of office to State President Michael Penchenski, III, Jamesburg Lodge No. 2180.



PVP Michael Veth, Long Branch Lodge No. 742, Administrative Assistant for State President Michael Penchenski, III.



Trustees installed for three-year terms in Wildwood pictured left to right: Betty Bellanca, Central District, Carteret Lodge No. 2235; Richard Reinhardt, North Central District, Greater Essex Lodge No. 21; State President Michael Penchenski, III, Barbara Brennan, East Central District, Springfield-Hillside Lodge No. 2004; James Dugan, Southeast District, Manasquan Lodge No. 2534.



The 2024-2025 State Officers left to right: State Sergeant-At-Arms Matthew Winnans, Lake Hopatcong Lodge No. 782; Kevin Carney, Tiler, Cranford Lodge No. 2006; Thomas Sparacio, Organist, Freehold Lodge No. 1454; Mike Veth, Administrative Assistant, Long Branch No. 742; Michael Penchenski, III, State President, Jamesburg 2180; Sue Dupas, Secretary, Cedar Grove No. 2237; James "Buddy" Miller, Chaplain, Mount Holly No. 848; Ken Low, Treasurer, Elmwood Park-Paterson Lodge No. 60; and Kevin Storms, Inner Guard, Somerville Lodge No. 1068.



The 2024-2025 District Vice Presidents were installed during our Wildwood Reunion in June. Pictured left to right: Michael Finney, Central District, Colonia Lodge No. 2282; Sean Boots, South District, Egg Harbor Lodge No. 2563; Joe Reese, South Central District, Freehold Lodge No. 1454; Mark Niro, Southeast District, Lacey Lodge No. 2518; Heather Pagano, Southwest District, Deptford Lodge No. 2708; Rich Turner, West Central District, Manville-Hillsborough Lodge No. 2119; State President Michael Penchenski, III; Wayne McDonnel, Northwest District, Lake Hopatcong Lodge No. 782; Tom Boyce, Northeast District, Bergenfield Lodge No. 1477; Dan Pieraccini, North Central District, South Orange Lodge No. 1154; George Osborne, North District; Passaic Valley Lodge No. 2111; Jonathan Joshua, East Central District, Rahway Lodge No. 1075; Keith "Bear" O'Dwyer, East District, Hoboken Lodge No. 74.

## Parade Committee

BY STEVE HOLLER, STATE CHAIRPERSON

The 2024 New Jersey State Elks Parade Theme was, "New Jersey Elks United-Strong-Amazing". This was probably one of our best parades and the Parade Committee did an amazing job this past year. Also, all our Lodges that participated in the parade were great. Congratulations to the Lodges that won awards during the 2024 Parade. I would like to congratulate Bordentown Lodge No. 2085 for winning the Governor's Trophy. Also, congratulations to Lake Hopatcong Lodge No. 782 for winning the Wildwood Cup. Congratulations to Clayton Lodge No. 2132 for First Place Float. Here is the top 6 Lodges for the Governor Awards:

- Best Overall 6 th Place – Millville Lodge No. 580
- Best Overall 5 th Place – Brigantine Lodge No. 2428
- Best Overall 4 th Place – Greater Wildwood No. 1896
- Best Overall 3 rd Place – Clayton Lodge No. 2132
- Best Overall 2 nd Place (Wildwood Cup) – Lake Hopatcong Lodge No. 782
- Best Overall 1 st Place (Governor's Cup) – Bordentown Lodge No. 2085

This year we had 24 Bands, 11 Floats, over 1,100 Units, and well over 10,000 people watching the Parade. The 2024 Parade Video can be seen on our You Tube, "NJ State Elks Association Reunion Parade 2024." The State Parade Committee was United-Strong-Amazing for the 2024 Parade! Our 2025 Parade Theme will be announced at our Fall Conference.



## Thank You To One Of Our Hardest Working Committees

Everyone that attends a Fall Conference, Wildwood Reunion, or Grand Lodge Convention owes a great big thank you to our NJSEA Convention Committee. This committee works year-round to make sure these big events happen! Here's a rare photograph of some of the committee at Wildwood.

Pictured Left To Right: Harry Schutte, II; Paul Haropolous, Pete D'Antoni, Vice Chairperson; Maureen Whalen, Chairperson; Bill Rose, Dawn Doherty-Haropolous, Karen Imperatrice, Ken Low, Lisa Nazzaretto, Howie Proctor.



## Membership Committee

BY CHUCK CRERAND, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**I**n 2024-2025, we are striving for 55,000 members in our great state. That doesn't come easy. Anything can happen though, especially with the right people and a solid game plan.

I can honestly say we have the right people, and over the past few years, we have put together the right program and process for all lodges to be able to have gains every year.

As we start the second half of the year, we have to kick it into high gear, work on our delinquency, and push hard to get our candidates through to initiations.

Lowering our delinquency is key to having gains. New members are a must but even more so keeping our existing members is very important.

Our State Association is on the verge of becoming the 2nd largest state association in the country. This means more members to help with committees, and officers to help run and lead our lodges.

The committee will be visiting every district to speak directly with the Exalted Rulers, Vice Presidents and District Deputies. We also love speaking directly to lodge Membership Chairpersons and Secretaries to answer any questions they have, as well as explain why the goals we set are so important.

I'd like to thank everyone for their hard work and dedication in helping our state become the gold standard in Elkdom.



## Daughter Following In Dad's Footsteps

Our State President, Micheal Penchenski, had the privilege of assisting with the Jamesburg Lodge No. 2180 in initiating three new members, including his youngest daughter, Melody.



## 3,000+ Members and Still Growing

Please welcome our 41 new Brothers and Sisters, initiated July 11th to our Lacey Lodge No. 2518! We hope they explore all that Lacey Lodge has to offer: charity, fellowship, and fun! Our Exalted Ruler, Lyle Smith, presided over the event, along with Lacey Lodge's officers and committee chairs.

Our successful membership drives are spearheaded by our Membership Committee and their tireless efforts continue to bring in large numbers of new Elks who look forward to infusing new ideas and also supporting current activities in the Lacey Lodge.

The ceremony was followed by a wonderful reception as the new members became acquainted with other members as well as the many terrific programs and activities that take place in one of the largest Elks lodges in New Jersey.

Lacey Lodge members is now 3,035...wElkome brothers and sisters! We Care & We Share while Promoting the Good & Unity.

## Public Relations and Marketing

BY MARYANN APPLGATE, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**A**s previous State Membership Chairman, now State President, Mike Penchenski, started what would become a three year consecutive gain in membership for our State Association. It is only fitting that under Mike's leadership our Association continues the trend and brings more new members into our fold. "Let's Soar For 4 in 2024"

When the Membership and Public Relations Committees work together, good things happen. I'd like to thank our Regional and District Chairpersons for their dedication to our Order. Please remember to use only Grand Lodge authorized memes in your posts on social media. I hope you've noticed our weekly Famous Elks Posts. We have asked the Grand Lodge to recognize famous NJ Elks. If you have a famous Elk from your Lodge, please contact myself or any Regional Chair so that we can submit their name for consideration.

We will also continue to remind our Lodges to post memes for Red Shirt Fridays, Famous Elks and Federal Holidays. The Grand Lodge has created memes for most Lodge events. Again, if you need a meme created for your event, I'll contact the Grand Lodge to ask them to create one.







## Memorial Committee

BY MICHAEL VETH, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**T**he Memorial Committee is preparing for the 2024 Fall Conference Memorial Service, which will take place at Ocean Place in Long Branch, on Friday, November 8th at 7:30 PM. The committee is currently working with the District Vice Presidents to get the names of those PERs, PVPs, and PDDs that have passed away this past year. They will be remembered at the Memorial Service.

I would like to thank the committee for their help in preparing the service. I would also like to thank State Secretary, Sue Dupas, for preparing all the names for the program.

## Flag Day Ritual

West Orange Lodge No. 1590 held the annual Flag Day Ritual, which includes "The Evolution of the American Flag." Boy Scout Troop No. 2 served as Color Guards, presenting all of the flags of the United States - from the original Pine Tree Flag adopted for all colonial vessels and the Snake Flag ("Don't Tread on Me") used by Southern colonies, to our current day flag of 50 stars and 13 stripes.

After the observance, pizza was served to all in attendance!

Many thanks to Taylor and Spencer Brown for serving as Color Guard and Troopmaster, Jack Dean, for attending the observance. Troop No. 2 operates out of the Kelly School. Taylor Brown is a WOHS alum who is home for summer break. He is studying Cybersecurity at the New England Institute of Technology in Rhode Island. Spencer Brown is currently a Junior at WOHS.



## Americanism

BY ELLEN QUINLAN,  
STATE CHAIRPERSON

**W**hat does patriotism mean to you? As Elk volunteers, we each have many ways of demonstrating our patriotism. NJ Elks' dedication to US active military, Veterans, and first responders is reflected in many lodge, district and state programs. We express our patriotism in every meeting by pledging allegiance to the flag.

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 Patriotism Mean To Me?"

New Jersey students will submit hundreds of essays to be judged at the lodge, district, and state level before being forwarded to the Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee. For the fourth consecutive year, New Jersey had a National Award recipient. Park Ridge Lodge No. 2234, sponsored Samantha Wainhouse who placed second in the 8th grade division.

Awards are presented to the top three essayists in each division at the state level.

Nationally, first-place, second-place and third-place authors in each division will receive monetary awards of \$1,000, \$500, and \$250 respectfully. Many lodges and districts also provide various forms of recognition to their winners.

The year's first state committee meeting was held at Jamesburg Lodge No. 2180 on August 7th. Our State President, Michael Penchenski, Advisors John Szczomak PGLC/PSP and Joe Pedone PSP were there to guide the committee's progress in planning events and fundraisers for the year. Our next meeting is November 18, 2024. I look forward to Patriotism Week Ceremonies, Flag Retirement Ceremonies, the Fly the Flag Program, the NJSEA Americanism Challenge and a Super 50/50 fundraiser. Check with your District Chair for details.

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



## 172 Years of Elkdom

July 14th was the Jewel Ceremony for Northeast District Deputy Lisa Nazzaretto and Past Grand Inner Guard John V. Galletta, Sr., Elmwood Park Paterson Lodge No. 60, Past District Deputy Arnold Simone, Clifton-Garfield Lodge No. 1569, and Past District Deputy George Picart, Sr. Paramus Lodge No. 2001 posed for a picture. These gentlemen have combined years of service to their lodges and Elkdom of 172 years! Sadly PDD George passed away on August 29th six days before his 97th birthday.

## Elks National Foundation

BY MELISSA COLVIN,  
STATE CHAIRPERSON

**T**he Elks National Foundation plays a large role in the success of the New Jersey Elks.

We are the beneficiaries of special grants, community grants, Freedom grants, and other supportive funds into programs such as Hoop Shoot, Drug Awareness, and Youth programs.

New Jersey, in turn, plays a large role in ENF's success. We donated just shy of \$1,200,000 last year. They returned to us \$1.86 for every dollar we donated.

ENF's main purpose is to assist and improve Elk communities. Elks everywhere are asked to donate at least \$10 per year. Why might you ask? Here is why:

- New Jersey received \$942,600 in Community Investment Grants.
- 25 New Jersey students were awarded the Most Valuable Student (MVS) Scholarship.
- 10 New Jersey students were awarded the Legacy Scholarship.
- New Jersey was awarded 3 Impact Grants out of a total of 61 grants.
- New Jersey received \$956,560 in special grants and funding.

The Elks National Foundation enables New Jersey Lodges to achieve their goals and meet the needs of their communities. Through the excellent work of the district and lodge ENF chairpersons, New Jersey is eligible for grant bonuses totaling \$82,000 during this Elk year. With that in mind, lodges should be applying for every grant. If you have ideas, time, and see a need to be filled, get involved and help your lodge complete worthwhile community programs. The feeling and pride you will experience is worth it.



### Spotlight Grant In Action

Eatontown Lodge No. 2402 utilized the Spotlight Grant to donate \$2,000 of food. PDD Joe Miller, PER Darlene Miller, ER Mark Regan, member Amie Miller, and Jaidyn Mills delivered these much needed items to St. Dorothea's Church and the Eatontown Food Pantry.



Exalted Ruler Gina Hector with a family from the Bound Brook community.



Left to Right: Exalted Ruler, Gina Hector, and Trustee, Jennifer Slotterback.

### ENF Baby Shower

Bound Brook Lodge No. 1388 hosted a community baby shower on March 16th. The venue was donated by the Bound Brook Recreation Department. This event was funded with a combination of the Spotlight Grant and Beacon Grant for a total of \$6,000. We were able to serve over 75 families in need in our community with diapers, wipes, clothing, infant and toddler essentials.

### Freedom Grant

Freehold Lodge No. 1454 applied for and received a \$1,000 Freedom Grant. We purchased items requested by a Marine Corps Reserve Unit out of Picatinny Arsenal for their upcoming deployment. They are a Rifle Unit from the 2nd Battalion, G Company of the 25th Marines. Their 1st Sgt came to pick up the items at our lodge.

Pictured Left to Right and on hand for the presentation, PDD Richard Hamilton, Grant Coordinator Patricia Hamilton, 1st Sgt. Marine, South Central District Veterans Chairperson Mary McPaul and Freehold Lodge Chairperson Michael Barnick.



### Beacon Grant Serves Food Insecurities

Hackettstown Lodge No. 2331 used part of the Beacon Grant to donate fifteen bags of food to the Trinity United Methodist Church's Summer Backpack Program. Each bag has enough food for one child to have breakfast, lunch, fruit, and snacks for seven days. The children are dealing with food insecurity because they do not receive meals at school due to them being closed during the summer.





### Spotlight Grant For Food Pantries

Bergenfield Lodge No. 1477 used a \$2,000 Spotlight Grant to support local food pantries. Exalted Ruler, Mary Ann Pindulic, presents a \$1,000 donation to the Rev. Sean Mason, pastor of St. John the Evangelist R.C. Church, for the church's food program. The lodge also donated \$1,000 to the Bergenfield Social Services Department for its food pantry.



### Bushels of Blessings

Penns Grove Lodge No. 1358 used our Spotlight Grant and made a donation to this worthy cause Bushels of Blessings for \$2,000. Bushels of Blessings is a gleaning ministry that exists to provide fresh produce to organizations that feed hungry and needy people. We partner with local farms and local distribution partners so that we can all work together to make it so that no one will go to bed hungry.



### Hackettstown Lodge Making An Impact With Grant

Hackettstown Lodge No. 2331 used funds from their Impact Grant to donate 24 backpacks and 12 drawstring bags filled with school supplies, plus dozens of packs of diapers and wipes to Casa Hispana. Casa Hispana is a non-profit organization with a mission to advocate for and empower the Hispanic/Latinx community by advancing awareness, education, and celebrating diverse cultures. This is the second year the Lodge has used an Impact Grant to serve this outreach program.

Another portion of their Impact Grant was used to provide a Mother's Day celebration for 35 parents and 25 children that included food, books for the children, and a donation of diapers and wipes for the moms. It was held in collaboration with other agencies that provided dental care, HIV testing, lead testing, and other services.

Pictured from Left to Right: ER, Maze Thiele, Manager Casa Hispana Program, Sonia Ron.



### Food Donation Made Possible By Spotlight Grant

West Orange Lodge No. 1590 recently made an Easter donation to Holy Trinity Food Pantry located in Holy Trinity Church on Main Street, West Orange.

Between December and March, West Orange Lodge donated over \$3,000 of food and hygiene items and \$2,000 of purchased goods made possible from an Elks Community Investments Program Spotlight Grant.

Pictured Left to Right: James Cowen, Past Exalted Ruler and grants coordinator at Holy Trinity Food Pantry with donations.



ELKS NATIONAL DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM - THE LARGEST VOLUNTEER DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM IN THE UNITED STATES.

[HTTPS://WWW.ELKS.ORG/DAP/](https://www.elks.org/dap/)

## Drug Awareness Committee

MARYELLEN LAWRENCE, STATE CHAIRPERSON

The National Drug Awareness Program was founded in 1982. For 42 years, the NJ State Elks have been working in our communities to raise awareness of substance abuse. In 1983, out of a realization that more was needed, the NJ State Elks formed the Peer Leadership Conference for High School Students.

The Conference began with 20 students and to date has grown to over 400 students throughout the state. The need for self-awareness, mental health and well-being and suicide prevention now encompass our program to educate the future leaders of our state and possibly our country, of the dangers and pitfalls that they face in today's society. Realizing that our youth are brought into a world facing them with difficult decisions, the Path to Leadership program was born for Middle School Students. This valuable one day program is also attended by over 400 students.

Fundraisers are an integral part of these two conferences. Annually, the districts of NJ hold a Walk Out on Drugs. Sponsors for the Walk Out are asked to make a donation to the walkers. This is our largest and most important fundraiser for Path & Peer Leadership. Your support is important! Path to Leadership will be Thursday, Feb 6, 2025 and Peer Leadership will be Feb 7 thru the 9th, 2025.

Additional funding for Path and Peer is also available through the Opioid Settlement Agreement. New Jersey is set to receive \$1.4 billion over the next 18 years as part of the nationwide Opioid Settlement Agreement. \$700,000 will be distributed among 262 participating eligible county and local governments including municipal alliances in our communities. Both conferences qualify as an approved use of funding. Our DAP committees are encouraged to reach out to their Alliances and secure additional funds for both Path to Leadership and Peer Leadership. To determine if your municipality qualifies for a portion of these funds and to learn more about the allocation process, please visit: <https://www.nj.gov/opioidfunds>.

Many districts have participated in National Night Out on August 6th, distributing our literature, coloring books, crayons, etc., raising awareness in our communities. Community events such as this bring awareness to other organizations involved in fighting this epidemic, that the Elks have the largest all volunteer program in the country and are willing to join with them in the war against drugs.

Saving lives one at a time is our mission. With the help and support of our Elk families and our communities, this becomes possible!

### FREE RESOURCES:

- COMIC BOOKS ARE PROVIDED TO SCHOOLS WITH TEACHER LESSON PLANS
- COLORING BOOKS & BOOKMARKS
- EDUCATIONAL PAMPHLETS

### ELKS KIDS ZONE:

ELKSKIDZONE.ORG  
EXPLORE VIDEOS, TRIVIA, COMICS,  
COLORING BOOKS, AND DIFFERENT TOPICS



### ELKS TEENS ZONE:

ELKSTEENZONE.ORG  
EXPLORE VIDEOS, TRIVIA, LESSONS,  
ACTIVITIES, GAMES, AND DIFFERENT TOPICS



### AWKWARD CONVERSATIONS SERIES:

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/ELKSDAP](https://www.youtube.com/elksdap)  
HOSTED BY JODIE SWEETIN, WE'RE FOCUSED ON GIVING PARENTS THE TOOLS AND INSIGHTS THEY NEED TO RAISE HAPPY, HEALTHY, SUBSTANCE-FREE KIDS. WE COMBINE EXPERT ADVICE WITH REAL STORIES AND INSIGHTS FROM CELEBRITY PARENTS, OFFERING PRACTICAL TIPS, HEARTFELT STORIES, AND CLEAR STRATEGIES.



## 2025 Drug Awareness Contests

This year the Drug Awareness Video, Poster and Essay Contests will begin by Oct 1st and end on Jan 31st. The theme for this year is "Throw Away Drugs, Not Your Future." Contest entries are submitted by students from across NJ. The state winners will be chosen at the Peer Leadership Conference in February.

- Poster Contest Open to students Grades 3 - 5
- Essay Contest Open to students Grades 6 - 8
- Video Contest Open to students Grades 9 - 12

## 2025 Peer Leadership and Path To Leadership Conferences

Peer Leadership Conference Applications Available Online - September 15. Deadline to Apply - December 15.

Path To Leadership Applications Available Online - October 15. Deadline to Apply - January 15.

The online application link will be available on [njelks.org](http://njelks.org) home page.

## Enrique Camarena Awarded to Patrolman Drew Spector

Each year our Drug Awareness Committee requests lodges to submit nominees for the Enrique Camarena Award. This very prestigious award is given to a leader in law enforcement in the field of drug prevention and awareness. Presentation of this award is made to the winner at our Wildwood Business Session. The deadline for submission for next year's award winner is November 30, 2024.

This 2024 Enrique Camarena Award recipient was Patrolman Drew Spector who was nominated by Lieutenant John Craig of the West Deptford Police Department through Deptford Lodge No. 2708.

Lieutenant Craig wrote that Drew is an outstanding member of their police department who has gone above and beyond in the areas of drug enforcement and prevention. Not only is Drew a proactive police officer that consistently leads their agency in narcotics related arrests, he is also a well-rounded officer that excels in every aspect of his profession. Drew consistently puts the needs of the community at the forefront and he prioritizes making a positive impact in any way possible.

What separates Drew from others even further is his thirst for knowledge in the area of narcotics enforcement. Drew is one of only a handful of Drug Recognition Experts (DRE) in Gloucester County. As such, he is frequently called to other jurisdictions to conduct tests on individuals suspected of operating motor vehicles while under the influence of narcotics. This certification requires a great deal of training, and his expertise in this area is a tremendous asset to West Deptford Township and our surrounding communities. This amount of training and his own extensive experience has enabled Drew to be an invaluable asset to their younger officers, who continually seek his guidance in all areas of narcotics enforcement. He was also recently certified as a Field Training Officer (FTO), giving him even further ability to be a positive impact on the next generation of police officers.

While not working at the police department, Drew continues his involvement in the community by serving as a volunteer wrestling coach at West Deptford High School. He has also assisted in numerous community policing events that have been hosted by the West Deptford Police Department, including National Night Out, West Deptford Day, holiday events, etc. All of these actions show that while Drew is highly effective in narcotics enforcement and interdiction, he also understands that community-based policing is an incredible tool in the field of drug prevention.

Joining Drew to receive the Enrique Camarena Award was his wife and new baby, Lieutenant Craig and members of Deptford Lodge.



## Drug Awareness Trailers Available For Events

The Drug Awareness Committee has three trailers located across our state. These trailers are available for either Lodge or District Events. Each trailer has DAP plastic bags, crayons, and coloring books. Also available is the NJ Elks DAP tent and tablecloths. The tent and tablecloths are distributed on a first come first serve basis.

## Supporting Law Enforcement Against Drugs

Closter Lodge No. 2304 made a \$5,000 donation to the Closter L.E.A.D Program (Law Enforcement Against Drugs) which is replacing DARE in a lot of towns. Closter has just started the program and our lodge is currently considered the "premier" sponsor and we plan on continuing our support. It is the beginning of a great relationship between the drug awareness program in town and our lodge.



Pictured Left to Right: Brian Pierro SR-Trustee, George Schlinck-Head Trustee, Sargent Justin Kraples, program leader, Eddie McKeon-Exalted Ruler, and Kenny Brueck-Trustee.



## Northwest District Narcan Training

Hackettstown Lodge No. 2331 hosted a Northwest District Drug Awareness training provided by Parent 2 Parent Addiction Services. Twenty-one Elk members and nine people from the community attended. Each participant received a kit with two doses of Narcan. They also heard a presentation from Hoving Home, a residential treatment facility that supports women suffering from addiction.

Pictured L to R: Northwest DDGER Lisa Rovito, Parent 2 Parent member ED Debi Natale, ER Maze Thiele, Parent 2 Parent Outreach Coordinator/Peer Recovery Specialist Dawn Shafer, Northwest District Drug Awareness Chairperson Todd Christensen



## Brigantine Lodge No. 2428 Participates in Walk Out on Drug

Members of Brigantine Lodge recently participated in the Walk Out On Drugs. This annual event helps support our Peer Leadership Program. They were joined by members of the Brigantine Fire Department.

## Drug Awareness Committee Outreach

Hackettstown Lodge No. 2331 provided Elks Drug Awareness coloring books to 32 children attending Casa Hispana, an outreach program for the Spanish-speaking population in the area. The children learned about drug safety in the home.

Pictured with some of the children is ER Mary Thiele.



## National Night Out

Bound Brook Lodge No. 1388 Drug Awareness Committee set up a tent and table for National Night Out. The committee was able to distribute 100 goodie bags complete with drug awareness educational materials, coloring books, and crayons to families in our community.

Pictured from left to right in the back is Exalted Ruler, Gina Hector and Inner Guard Sofia Banderia. In the front row is Chaplain Sal Perone, Loyal Knight Cindy Perone, and PER Jane DelleCave.



## NJ Elks Celebrates 20 Years of Elks Batters-up

BY THOMAS GARDNER, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**C**an you believe the Batters-Up program was started 20 years ago? It started as a Southeast District Contest and now is statewide with over 10,000 players competing. Our State Finals were held on Saturday, August 17 with over 40 participants from across New Jersey. We want to thank Howell Lodge No. 2515 for securing the fields, setting them up, helping run the contest and hosting the Awards Presentation.

There was much excitement on the fields and in the announcement of the winners back at the lodge. A great thanks to the members of our District Youth Activities Committee for all their help.

We will all be meeting to review the current rules to see what changes are needed to improve the program and to reach out to even more players. We also are purchasing new equipment to supplement our current inventory to make everything more available. What was very helpful at the presentation was having representatives from our other Youth Programs, including GLC Peggy Berry and Diane Sinclair, informing our players about participating in Hoop Shoot, Soccer Shoot, Antlers, and Tee It Up. Cross promotion is a great way to generate interest in all our programs.

## District Batters-Up Programs

District Batters-Up programs were held to advance district winners to the finals.



East Central District



North District



Central District



## Youth Activities

BY ANTHONY PERRONE, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**T**he Tee It Up program continues to make forward progress. We had four qualifying contests this year leading up to the state finals at Cedar Creek Golf Course in October. There were many new faces competing along with some previous years' contestants. They competed in driving, chipping and putting skills events.

The committee had another successful Batters-Up program as well. The state finals were on August 17th at Deerwood Park in Howell followed with 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 Mike Penchenski 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.

Last year was a big push for the Karen Minutella Reading Initiative. This year will be the second year that the Youth Activities Committee will be promoting this program. 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 upcoming year. Your support will help us raise money to supplement the Batters-Up pitching machine and provide prizes to our programs various contest winners.





## Washing Cars To Raise Money

Long Branch Antlers No. 21 took a break from hosting a car wash on June 23rd to pose for a picture. The Antlers collected approximately \$600 which will be presented to the Long Branch Police Department. Their donation will be used towards a vest for one of the police dogs.



Rahway Antlers Lodge No. 39



## Antlers Lodge No. 2 Reinstated

On April 26, Greater Essex Lodge No. 21, Mother Lodge of New Jersey North Central District, had their reinstatement of the Greater Essex Antlers Lodge No. 2, along with the Initiation and Installation of their officers.

Front Row L to R: Jacqueline (Mimi) Gomez (Advisor/Lecturing Knight), Sgt. At Arms, Chaplin, 1st Vice President, Felicia Fuentes (Advisor/Secretary), Treasurer, President, Secretary, 2nd Vice President, Cheryl Mackey (Lead Advisor). Back Row R to L: David Armstrong (Advisor/Exalted Ruler), Pedro (Jun) Lopes (Advisor/Tiler).



Rutherford Antlers Lodge No. 41



Toms River Antlers Lodge No. 40



## Military Care Packages

Hackensack Lodge No. 658, Hackensack Antlers Lodge No. 27, and the Hackensack Police Department recently partnered to collect items for the New Jersey National Guard's 3rd Battalion, 112th Field Artillery Regiment.

The initiative aims to support 75 soldiers currently deployed in the Middle East, including Officer Rodriguez of the Hackensack Police Department. We were able to send 43 care packages to the deployed soldiers.

Pictured: Members of the Hackensack Antlers Lodge No. 27.

## Antlers Committee

BY SHEAN OPIE, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**T**he Antlers Committee has been on the move once again. We have instituted 3 new lodges: Rahway Lodge No. 39, Toms River Lodge No. 40, and Rutherford Lodge No. 41. We also reinstated Greater Essex Lodge No. 2.

The committee has also traveled to various functions like trivia nights, barbecues, meetings, and assisted with other state committees. Once again, we are looking to institute some new lodges as well as welcome back some lodges into the Antler family.

Of course, I could not do this without the help of Region 1 Co-Chairperson Deb England, PER and Region 2 Co-Chairperson Kathleen Caffrey, PDD. The committee also has a great elk that helps with our social media, Gina D'Antoni. We couldn't do any of the work we do without our Advisors Tom Zisa GF/PSP and Ron Mangone GLC/PSP.

If you have an event in your lodge or district reach out to the Antlers advisors. They are more than willing to give a helping hand. You can have the Antlers assist with your hoop shoots, soccer shoots, batters-up, and any other youth activities you may have going on.

If you have any questions the committee is always there to lend a helping hand and make sure if you see any Antlers out there make sure you say hi and thank them for all the hard work they do.

## Hoop Shoot Committee

BY BARBARA MULLER, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**T**he 2024-2025 Elks Hoop Shoot program has hit the court. This free throw contest has enabled boys and girls ages 8-13 to showcase their talents on the basketball court. It encourages them to set goals and develop good work ethics and camaraderie. The Elks refer to this as "Grit" which is defined as "a combination of perseverance and passion for long term goals." Grit makes for a successful competitor.

At the National Contest held in Chicago in April 2024, Dylan Bogdanski from Cedar Grove Lodge No. 2237, who competed in the 8-9 age division, displayed that Grit attitude. He didn't do as well as he had hoped but he persevered. After the competition he immediately made a plan with his father to set his goals for 2025 and come back next year even better!

This competition starts at the Lodge Level. It is important for the Lodge Directors to input their contest dates into the system so that competitors can find their local contests. Secretaries need to appoint their Lodge Hoop Shoot Director as "Coordinator" on CLMS2Web to enable them to input their contest dates in the dashboard and add their winners after the lodge shoot so that the District Directors have the information.

Annual mailing materials are on their way and this year they include both Hoop Shoot AND Most Valuable Student Materials. All the Hoop Shoot material for mailings is also available on the Hoop Shoot dashboard. Lodge and District Directors are encouraged to educate their volunteers on the rules prior to the contest date. Age calculation is made easy with the tool available on [www.elks.org/hoopshoot](http://www.elks.org/hoopshoot). No log-in is necessary and you can access it on your phone!

As New Jersey has always led the way, we are looking for 100% participation. Please promote this program in your lodges, schools and communities. Consider volunteering for the Lodge, District and State shoots.

Lodge competitions should be completed by December 14, 2024, with winners advanced and paperwork submitted to the District Chair.

District competitions should be completed by January 19, 2025, with winners advanced and paperwork submitted to the State Chair.

NJ State competition to be held at South Plainfield High School in February 2025, date TBD.

Regional Competition to be held at Wilkes Barre, PA on March 15, 2025.

National Finals Competition to be held at Chicago, IL on April 26, 2025.

I look forward to a successful hoop shoot year working with the District Directors and Advisors PGLC/PSP Robert Mauro and PGLC/PSP Peter Smith. Thank you to our State President Michael Penchenski and State Sponsor PGER Malcolm J. McPherson for all their support.



### In Loving Memory

Barbara Muller, Hoop Shoot State Chairman, passed away on August 25, 2024 just two weeks after she submitted her article for this edition of the NJ Elk. Barbara's dedication to the New Jersey State Elks and her love for our Hoop Shoot program never wavered even as she battled her medical condition. The Editorial Staff of the New Jersey Elk extends their deepest sympathy to her family and her South Plainfield Elks Lodge family.

## Soccer Formalized in Grand Lodge Statutes

BY PEGGY BERRY, MID-ATLANTIC SOCCER CO-DIRECTOR

**W**e are now in the heart of soccer season with district championships going on and the state championship shoot out on January 11, 2025 in Manasquan.

This year at the Grand Lodge Convention in Austin Texas the membership voted an Amendment to Section 13.021 - To formalize the Soccer Shoot Program within the Laws of the Order. It passed by 2153 for and 298 against. It also voted to amend section 18.020 - To formalize the Soccer Shoot Program within the Laws of the Order. 2141 for and 306 against. This is the beginning of moving towards Grand Lodge supporting the soccer shoot with funding to assist the states with the regional soccer shoots. As you can see it is widely supported by the membership.

You may not know it, but the Mid-Atlantic regional shoot began in New Jersey and is sustained and still pretty much run by the members of the NJ State Elks Association. The majority of the funding for the uniforms and trophies come from the Mid Atlantic Ad journal and without NJ's support, the event would not be that special at all. The champions from all states are made to feel extra special at the event and all leave feeling like one.

YOUR support is essential at this time to help maintain the status of the Mid Atlantic shoot which began in NJ in the 1990's. This year's shoot will return to York, PA on March 7, 2025. Soccer continues to grow and, in some areas, has surpassed the hoop shoot in participation. Please contact your district chairperson and get your lodge involved and help the program grow as Grand Lodge is now on board.

Remember, "Soccer, it's a Kick."

## Soccer Committee

BY ALLEN PINDULIC, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**T**he State Soccer Shoot is looking to build on last year's success! We are hoping to increase the participation with the lodges this year. If your lodge is unable to host a Soccer Shoot please reach out to your District Chair or Vice President and they will be able to direct

you to a lodge that is participating. Just because your lodge is not hosting, does not mean the youth from your community can't participate. They are able to participate at any shoot in your district and your lodge will get credit as long as their paperwork is filled out correctly.



Our committee held our second state meeting on August 26th which was held at Asbury-Wall Lodge No. 128. The State Soccer Shoot date is yet to be confirmed. Our Mid-Atlantic Shoot is scheduled for March 7-9, 2025 in York, PA.

Our State Program looks to continue its great success this coming year. If anyone has interest in assisting with our soccer program they can reach out to me directly. Allen Pindulic - 201-657-4574 - [allenpindulic@gmail.com](mailto:allenpindulic@gmail.com).



## Historical Committee

BY THOMAS GARDNER,  
STATE CHAIRPERSON

After many months of planning, painting, mounting exhibits, moving and transporting everything from our previous location, the museum is finally open!

In 2007 the first home for the NJSEA Museum was opened at New Brunswick Lodge No. 324. In 2019, the committee needed to box up all the items that had been donated because New Brunswick Lodge was planning to relocate. After looking at several options and recommendations, our committee members Cliff Lenox, Bob Sorenson, Kevin Storms, and Jeff Bryant with the support of our Advisors Joyce Powell, GLC/PSP and Victoria Watson, PSP made something remarkable happen. Our new home for the museum would not have been possible without the generous donation of space and support from Lacey Lodge No. 2518 Exalted Ruler Lyle Smith, their officers, Mark Niro, Southeast District Vice President and Rich Bard PGLC/PSP and their trustees and officers for all they have done.

We held a Grand Reopening on Saturday August 24 with over 100 Elks in attendance from throughout New Jersey, including many dignitaries, as well as PGER Arthur Mayer's children. A short ceremony was held with our State Sponsor PGER Malcolm J. McPherson, Jr. and our State President Michael Penchenski, III speaking. PGER Malcolm McPherson cut the ribbon and the museum was officially open. Everyone went inside and was truly impressed by the two rooms filled with memorabilia. They spent time looking at the displays and recalling our rich history.

We are fortunate to have many items, but we are always looking for more to be able to represent all 107 current lodges of our state and those lodges of the past. We will be rotating our displays on a regular basis so if one visits today, it will be a different experience time someone visits.

It is the hope of the Historical Committee, that the history of our Association will continue to be told thereby helping to "Promote Elkdom Through its History". There will also be display themes in coordination with the time of the year. We will always be in search of donations from our lodges so they can be represented at the Museum.



Adorning the wall leading into the Museum is an area dedicated to the Past Grand Exalted Rulers from New Jersey. At the conclusion of the ceremony, PGER Malcolm J. McPherson, Jr. joined by State President Michael Penchenski, cut the ribbon for our grand re-opening.



The new home for our museum became a reality because of the hard-working members of our Historical Committee. Pictured left to right: Jeff Bryant, Exalted Ruler South Orange Lodge No. 1154; Cliff Lenox, PDD Edison Lodge No. 2487; Bob Sorenson, PDD Bound Brook No. 1388; Kevin Storms, PER Somerville No. 1068; and Tom Gardner, PDD Asbury Park-Wall No. 128 State Chairperson.



PGLC/PSP Bob Mauro was able to relate the story of him standing in front of a painted school bus. Apparently it was their mode of travel during the Grand Lodge session when he was State President



On display from Somerville Lodge No. 1068 is their original 11 o'clock chime.



There are several display cases in the two rooms. The cases contain memorabilia from our Past Grand Exalted Rulers, Past State Presidents, Special Children's Committee, and lodges that have celebrated anniversaries.



PSDGER Francis J. Decibus, PGLC/PSP Peter D. Smith, and State President Mike Penchenski surveying the many pieces of our history.

## Scholarship Committee

BY JENNIFER APPALUCCIO, STATE CHAIRPERSON

The New Jersey State Elks Association gives out many Scholarships. Each year, the Elks National Foundation awards more than \$3 million in college scholarships to at least 800 outstanding, service-minded high school seniors. The Elks Most Valuable Student (MVS) is open for applications. The MVS Scholarship is open to all high school seniors whereas the National Legacy Awards are just for seniors who are children, stepchildren, grandchildren and step-grandchildren of Elk members.

Our State Association awards \$700 awards to 96 runners-up of the National MVS Competition. There are also 24 - \$1,000 Vocational Scholarships available from the NJSEA each year for graduating students who enroll in vocational or technical training after high school. The Vocational Scholarship runs from March through May.

The \$900 Family Scholarship Awards are given to 40 children, stepchildren, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Elks members who are a senior in high school or a freshman, sophomore or junior in college. The Family Scholarship runs from April through June. Check on NJElks.org for more information about these scholarships and other scholarship opportunities provided by the Elks.



## Lodge Raises Scholarship Funds

Red Bank Lodge No. 233 Scholarship Committee raised \$2,369.07 for local scholarships. They hosted a comedy show that was sold out and well supported by the South Central District.

Pictured Left to Right: Mark (comedian), Kathy Kapps Scholarship Committee Chairperson and Burke Comedian.



## Summit Awards Scholarship

Summit Lodge No. 1246 presented their Family Scholarship to Desmond Sala along with a certificate and a silver dollar.

Pictured is Desmond and family and Exalted Ruler Fred Honold.



## Long Branch Lodge Awards Scholarships

Long Branch Lodge No. 742 presented two scholarship recipients with a \$1,000 scholarship check.

Pictured from Left to Right, front: Frankie GioCastro received Charity Begins at Home Scholarship, Grace Melthorn-Marshall received the Our Community Heroes Scholarship

Pictured from Left to Right, back: Susan Hammer-Gallo/ Scholarship Chairman, Exalted Ruler James Gallo.

## All American Lodge Winners

It was a proud day to for the NJ Elks North Central District! Michael S. Corbosiero, Exalted Ruler of Cedar Grove Lodge No. 2237 and Melanie Pasquarelli, Exalted Ruler of Kearny-Belleville Lodge No. 1050 were both named 1st place national winners in their respective membership categories of the Grand Lodge's "All American Lodge Contest." They both received their awards at the Austin TX, Grand Lodge Convention.



## Government Relations

BY WILLIAM ROSE, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**A**t the 2024 Grand Lodge, members approved two changes to the Statutes that affect Government Relations and the collection of Charitable activities data.

That first change amended Section 12.050 as follows:  
Section 12.050 The Secretary of the Lodge shall...

(p) Collect all records, materials, other information and personal property of the Lodge as described in Section 12.180.

***(q) Perform or supervise year-round entry of charitable and community service statistics into Pending Charity Report in the Chicago Lodge Membership System.*** (CLMS)

The purpose of this change is to clarify that the Secretary is to make year-round entry of the Lodge Charitable activities and that those entries are a formal duty of the Secretary. While this may seem to be another burden on the Secretary, there is a solution to aid in this task. The Secretary may designate a Government Relations Assistant who may be granted **limited** CLMS access to perform the entry of Charitable Reporting data, without access to other areas of CLMS. The Secretary still retains the sole authority of sending in the year-end Lodge Charitable Report.

The second change to the Statutes is to add a new Section 13.025, Which states: ***The Government Relations Committee, consisting of no fewer than three members, is charged with implementing the Government Relations program of the Lodge, its State Association and the Grand Lodge.*** Simply put, this change to the Statutes now formalizes a Government Relations Committee and Exalted Rulers should be working to establish this committee in their Lodges.

What this means, in real terms, is that this committee will work with all of the Committees of the Lodge to ensure that every conceivable lodge charitable activity gets report and recorded. The Government Relations Committee Chairperson can also therefore assist the Lodge Secretary with charitable activities in CLMS! Everyone benefits from these changes as more complete reporting results in a better understanding to our members, our community and charities of the many contributions and hours our lodges provide. It works to establish the values we provide when assisting our veterans, youth and special needs children and allows us to fully explain our value to government and communities.

Finally, a reminder to District Deputies, Vice Presidents, and District Chairpersons to report their charitable activities to their the Government Relations Region Co-Chairperson or the State Chairperson. If you are behind, we understand, and ask that you quickly catch up, even if you submit a "consolidated" report! I want to also remind any State or Region Chairperson that hosts a statewide event such as the Miracle Run, Jim Hall Picnic or Peer Leadership, that a separate Government Relations Charitable report be filed with the State Government Relations Chair.

If anyone has questions or needs additional information regarding Charitable Reporting or Government Relations please forward your inquiries to NJSEAGovrelations@gmail.com, and we will promptly address your questions.



## Making A Difference

Together, we can make a difference in the lives of our children! Kearny-Belleville Lodge No. 1050 led the way by donating 120 backpacks and 60 combination locks. They were also able to coordinate a free sandwich from Jersey Mike's for each child receiving a backpack.

## Lodge Activities

BY JAYNE MCLAUGHLIN, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**T**his year we had a lot of Lodge participation 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.

The 2024 All American Lodge Contest winners were announced at Grand Lodge in Austin, Tx. Awards will be handed out at the Fall Conference in November. The following New Jersey Lodges made Top 10 in their Respective Divisions:

Division I	Hackensack Lodge No. 658
Division II	Cedar Grove Lodge No. 2237 Elmwood Park-Paterson Lodge No. 60
Division III	Kearny-Belleville Lodge No. 1050
Division IV	Middletown Lodge No. 2179
Division V	Lake Hopatcong Lodge No. 782
Division VI	Manasquan Lodge No. 2534

The Committee is very proud to announce the following Winners of the All American Lodge Contest are:

First Place in Division II	Cedar Grove Lodge No. 2237
First Place in Division III	Kearny-Belleville Lodge No. 1050

### CONTEST DUE DATE

CONTEST	DUE TO DISTRICT	DUE TO STATE
LODGE BULLETIN	TUES 2/11/25	TUES 2/18/25
MEMORIAL SERVICE	TUES 2/11/25	TUES 2/18/25
COMMUNITY IMAGE	TUES 3/11/25	TUES 3/18/25

### STATE MEETING DATES

TUES 2/18/25 — UNION LODGE 1583  
JUDGING LODGE BULLETIN & MEMORIAL SERVICE CONTESTS  
7 PM RE-PAST 7:30 MEETING

TUES 3/18/25 — UNION LODGE 1583  
JUDGING COMMUNITY SERVICE & IMAGE CONTESTS  
7PM RE-PAST 7:30 MEETING

## Jack's Kids

Jack Gardner, a cherished figure in Somerset County, left an indelible mark on our community before his passing in November 1992. In tribute to Jack's spirit of generosity and compassion, the Jack Gardner Memorial Softball Tournament was established. This annual event serves as a testament to Jack's memory and his unwavering dedication to helping others. The 32nd Annual Jack Gardner Memorial Softball Tournament was held on Saturday, July 13, 2024.

Jack's Kids currently supports 59 families, and actively assists at least 20 of them. Since the last tournament, 26 families have been welcomed into the community.

This year, there were several weather-related meetings on Friday night to plan for the worst and hope for the best. There were approximately 40 volunteers at Somerville Lodge No. 1068, and over 500 players on 41 teams. 108 softballs were used.

Despite the rain, nine kids enthusiastically threw out the first pitch at various fields out of 19 utilized at the following locations: Mountain Park, Pleasant Valley Park, Chimney Park, Bridgewater-Raritan Middle School, Vanderveer School, Exchange Field, Manville High School, Docherty Park, and Ann Van Middlesworth.

Their determination to participate, rain or shine, set the tone for the day. However, the highlight was the gathering back at Somerville Lodge No. 1068. There were 112 Tricky Tray baskets and items, and 2,000 50/50 tickets were sold, with \$10,000 going to the winner. Thank you to the staff and members at the Lodge for their continued support and hard work to assist the Jack's Kids Committee in running the tournament.



<b>Central District</b>	<b>East Central District</b>			Millville #580	Manahawkin #2340
Carteret #2236	Cranford #2006			Penns Grove #1358	Manasquan #2534
Colonia #2282	Rahway #1075	Kearny-Belleville #1050	<b>Northwest District</b>		Toms River #1875
East Brunswick #2370	Stirling #2392	Lyndhurst #1505		<b>South Central District</b>	
Edison #2487	Summit #1246	Greater Essex #21	East Hanover #815		<b>Southwest District</b>
Metuchen #1914	Union #1583	North Arlington #1992	Hackettstown #2331	Eatontown #2402	Bordentown #2085
New Brunswick #324		Nutley #1290	Lake Hopatcong #782	Freehold #1454	Deptford #2708
Piscataway #2414	<b>North District</b>	South Orange #1154	Livingston #1855	Jamesburg #2180	Marlton #2514
South Amboy #784	Mahwah #1941	West Orange #1590	Parsippany-Troy Hills #2078	Keyport-Matawan #2030	Mount Holly #848
South Plainfield #2298	Oakland #2167		Sussex #2288	Long Branch #742	New Egypt #2457
Watchung Hills #885	Passaic Valley #2111	<b>Northeast District</b>	Sparta #2356	Middletown #2179	Trenton #105
Woodbridge #2116	Park Ridge #2234	Bergenfield #1477	<b>South District</b>	Millstone #2613	<b>West Central District</b>
<b>East District</b>	Pompton Lakes #1895	Clifton-Garfield #1569		Old Bridge #2229	Bound Brook #1388
Bayonne #434	Westwood #1562	Dumont #2593	Brigantine #2428	Red Bank #233	Clinton #2434
Closter #2304	Wayne #2181	Elmwood Park-Paterson #60	Clayton #2132		Flemington #1928
Greater Palisades #2475	West Milford #2236	Hackensack #658	Deerfield #733	<b>Southeast District</b>	Lambertville #1070
Hoboken #74		Hasbrouck Heights #1962	Galloway #2845		Manville-Hillsborough #2119
Ridgefield Park #1506	<b>North Central District</b>	New Milford-Teaneck #2290	Egg Harbor #2563	Asbury Park-Wall #128	Middlesex #1488
Tenafly #2271	Cedar Grove #2237	Paramus #2001	Greater Cape May #2839	Brick #2151	Princeton #2129
Weehawken #1456	Harrison East Newark #2326	Rutherford #547	Greater Wildwood #1896	Howell #2515	Somerville #1068
<b>THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!</b>					

The New Jersey **Elk**

The Official Publication of the New Jersey State Elks Association



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**Statement of Ownership and Management**

Title of Publication –  
Published Twice a Year:

**New Jersey Elk**

Publisher and Owner:

**New Jersey State Elks Association**

Offices located at:

**200 Madison Street,  
Eatontown, NJ 07724**

**Training Committee**

BY MARK DUNNDER, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**M**argaret Fuller once said “If you have any knowledge, let others light their candles at it.” The State Training Committee is currently finalizing the dates and agendas for the training sessions being held in each region towards the end of the year. We want to invite any members to attend these sessions and light their candles.

If any Vice President or District Deputy needs any specific training for their district, please reach out so we can do our best to assist. Anton Chekhov said “Knowledge is of no value unless you put it into practice.” Let us as NJ Elks take all of our available knowledge back to our lodges and districts and put it to good use as informed and knowledgeable leaders.



**Techniques of Alcohol Management – TAM**

BY MARC-ALLYN GLORIANDE, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**D**ates for 2025 TAM Classes are in the process of being scheduled and should be available by NJSEA Fall Conference. Please check njelks.org - State Activities – TAM for future dates. If you plan on attending any of these classes please let your Exalted Rulers know you are attending so there are sufficient tables and chairs.

Now some news about TAM registration and payment. We are streamlining the process. Registration is still 8:30 AM with the class beginning immediately thereafter. Starting in January 2025 there will be some changes. Lodges that pay for their members and employees will have to let us know who will be bringing the check. When that person arrives, they must identify themselves as such to the registration team. We are hoping this will eliminate the lengthy wait between registration and class commencement.

TAM policy has been to pay by checks only. Beginning January 2025 it is going to be strictly enforced. Vice Presidents will be getting reminder emails.

With everyone’s cooperation, everyone benefits. This will allow classes to begin on time and finish within the allotted time frame. See you in class!!!

**Auditing and Business Practice**

BY MEGHAN MCPHEARSON, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**T**he New Jersey State Elks Auditing and Business Practice Committee would like to thank the current District Vice Presidents and District Chairpeople for successfully submitting the first quarter reports. All committees within each district of the New Jersey State Elks Association (NJSEA) are to report to the District Vice President, District Auditing and Business Practices Chairperson, Region Co-Chairperson and State Chairperson of the NJSEA Auditing and Business Practices Committee, a quarterly financial reconciliation of all funds, including all cash, in the custody of the District Committee. The second quarter reports will be due on December 15th.

In accordance with the Constitution of the Laws of the Order, all lodges must be in full compliance with the Grand Lodge Financial Reporting System. Compliance requires every Lodge to fully implement and maintain FRS, including use of the current Grand Lodge Chart of Accounts and the submission of the lodge Budget, the Lodge 990 form filed with IRS, a balance sheet that matches the 990 form filed with the IRS, a starting balance for FRS as of April 1, 2021 and a timely submission and acceptance of the monthly financial reports to Adaptive. The monthly financial results are to be submitted to the FRS by the 3rd Friday of every month.

As a reminder, any Lodge that fails to submit its data monthly is subject to a fine of \$100 for each month or portion thereof that the submission is late up to a maximum fine of \$500. Payment of the fine does not relieve the Lodge of its duty to file the monthly submission and continued refusal to file will be considered Contumacy.

The members of the committee are available to assist your lodge with any questions or concerns.

## Special Children's Committee

BY ELYSE RUSSO, STATE CHAIRPERSON

**T**hank you to all lodges and districts that donated to Camp Moore and the Miracle on the Mountain Fund at Wildwood Convention and 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 \$147,000 donation.

Camping season has come to an end. Thank you Todd and Staff, for another great season. The 2025 applications will be available soon and will be filed electronically. Please file promptly, due to limited availability. Our new website should be ready so please check it out!

Each year one male and one female special needs scholar are chosen to receive a \$10,000 scholarship (\$2,500 over 4 years) The 2024 Scholarship Winners are: Cole Bigger sponsored by Hamilton Lodge No. 2262 and Haylie Rubinson sponsored by West Orange Lodge No.1590. The runners-up will receive \$1,000 a year for 4 years. Winners are Louis Citerella sponsored by Watchung Hills Lodge No. 885 and Meghan Pridham sponsored by East Hanover Lodge No. 815. Congratulations to all!

In July, the 25th Annual Miracle Run event was held. Thank you to those that attended this outstanding event. The 2024-25 Area Ambassadors were introduced and the Committee presented each with gifts.



## JCC Special Needs Adults/ Elks Gardeners Go Farm to Fork in June

The JCC Special Needs Adults/ Elks Gardeners had their first taste of fresh food straight from the garden in June. Despite an unseasonably wicked hot spring day, the Gardeners planted, tasted and explored the West Orange Elks Garden.

Breaking into two groups, the Gardeners had three projects. The first project was beautification of the driveway - planting sunflower seeds and making name tags for each planting.

June is pretty early for harvesting, yet several plants were ready to be picked. Gardeners were able to harvest, wash, and taste two types of lettuce - bibb lettuce and green leaf. After hand harvesting the leaves, they were rinsed and put in a chilled salad bowl to be enjoyed with lunch.

Mint was the second harvest. The Gardeners explored three different types of mint - lemon mint, spearmint, and apple mint.

Bagels by Jarrett (BXJ) generously donated lunch - chicken sandwiches, pickles, and a tray of french fries. Dessert was baked by neighbor Susan Reichman. The freshly picked salad was also served with dressings of choice. It was a delicious end to a wonderful day.

The JCC Special Needs Adults / Elks Garden Program is a monthly program. Hughie Curry and his crew maintain the garden between visits and Sharon Keigher designs the activities. For more information, contact Deb1590@gmail.com



## Rocking Out At Elks Camp

On Sunday, August 11, the South Central District hosted a Pizza and Dance Party for Camp Moore. State President, Mike Penschski, once again donated his time to DJ for the day, and he had the Pavillion rocking! District SCC Chairperson, Jessica Schoener, and SCD Elks presented Camp Director Todd Thompson with a donation of \$1,200!

## Zoo Show For SCC

Lacey Lodge No. 2518 Special Children's Committee organized such a successful lodge event. The Zoo Show and Luncheon was a fantastic experience for all children, thanks to the committee's hard work. The total guest attendance was 159, and volunteer attendance was 20, with a total of 80 volunteer hours invested, making this event unforgettable.

Mr. Danny, the Director of Popcorn Zoo, did an amazing job introducing the children to an opossum, turtle, and snake. The children were thrilled to have the opportunity to pet each animal. Mr. Dave Berroa entertained the children with his artistry, twisting and bending balloons into different fun shapes.





## His Name Lives On

One hundred years ago A. Harry Moore was the twelfth President of the New Jersey State Elks Association serving from 1924-1925. He then went on to be New Jersey's only 3-term Governor (not consecutive). More important was his work with Camp Moore – a camp run by the Essex County Democratic League. In 1970, when the league could no longer care for and maintain the camp, they deeded the camp over to the New Jersey State Elks Association. There was one condition that the name had to remain. Fifty-two years later Elks Camp Moore is still putting smiles on the faces of our special children.

## Helping A Park Become Adaptive

Freehold Lodge No. 1454 Special Children's Committee donated a Communication Board to Lake Topanemus Park. This donation makes Lake Topanemus the first park in Freehold Borough to have adaptive tools for those with special needs. The park is also in the planning stages to install ADA adaptive play equipment through grants. Jessica Schoener and Marianne Kenny worked closely with the Lake Topanemus Park Commission on sizing, design, layout and location. Freehold Lodge is excited to be able to kick off the adaptive changes with this board!



## Camp Moore Trustees Report

BY VINCE DITTA, CHAIRMAN OF THE TRUSTEES

**A**s we moved into our new Elk year, we welcomed Leon Dupas, Cedar Grove No. 2237 as the new three-year Trustee and Kevin Pent, Keyport/Matawan No. 2023 as the new five-year Trustee to the Board for the Special Children's Committee. We also had to bid farewell to outgoing Trustees Pete Appaluccio, Lake Hopatcong No. 782 and Chairman Doug Freund, Clayton Lodge No. 2132. We thank them for their hard work, dedication, and countless hours spent making the committee and camp run as smoothly as they do.

Elks Camp Moore completed another successful season. This was our first year of no charge to the lodges for sending campers to Camp Moore. The revitalization to our State's Major Project has impressed the campers, their families, counselors and visitors. The newly renovated and reconstructed Jernick/McPherson Residence Hall along with the other renovations at the camp have made for a more memorable experience for our children. The final phase of the revitalization, the Cantoli Hall renovation, is in the discussion and planning stage.

The camp staff, as usual, did a great job putting smiles on the faces of our children. Social media postings this year of the activities the campers shared with their counselors were great to see. The excitement and smiles on the camper's faces put smiles on our faces as well. The camp is always in need of repairs and projects to be completed in the off season. You can contact Anthony Alfonso Jr., our Property Maintenance Supervisor, to offer your assistance.

The online camper registration process that was implemented last year, continues to be invaluable in registering campers. This process helped to eliminate incomplete applications or misplaced applications. It records them 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.

At the conclusion of every camping season the Board of Trustees starts working on reviewing the health policy for the next camping season. Additionally, we review all insurance policies for the camp to ensure they are always up to date as a result of the ever-expanding camp. The Trustees are always working to ensure that the camp is well protected and secure.

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

The Board is continuing with the creation of an updated stand-alone website for Elks Camp Moore. This website is being created by our camp director, Todd Thompson, with the help the Trustees. The site will be an introduction and serve as a tool for prospective campers' families and counselors to view the camp. It will contain 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 will also serve as a reference tool for district and lodge chairpersons and will also include the ability to donate directly to the camp. There will be a link to NJElks.org and vice versa. The roll out is scheduled for late September early October, to be ready for the new application period starting in November. We believe this will be an exciting addition for the Camp and our State Organization.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you for all that you do in support of the Elks 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.



### A Day At The Beach

Each year a most unique experience is provided by the members of Manasquan Lodge No. 2534 for our Special Children from Elks Camp Moore and their aids. Some have never seen the beach or the ocean much less stick the toes in the sand. Great work by ther Special Children's Committee and the Day At The Beach steering group, the Manasquan HS Cheerleading Squad for coming out and putting smiles on so many faces. Special thank you to Jersey Mikes for donating all of the sandwiches... A Sub Above.



### A Day To Fish and Have Fun

Each year, members of Ridgefield Park No. 1506 organize their Fishing Day for special needs adults and children. The lodge provides everything they need to enjoy fishing off the dock of a nearby lake. As you can see from the reaction, the children are so excited when they catch a fish.

### Point Pleasant Camp Moore Day At The Beach

Every year members of Point Pleasant Lodge No. 1698 and the Southeast District help out the Camp Moore Day At The Beach. Buses bring down our campers and aids from Elks Camp Moore. They are treated to a boat ride, picnic, ice cream, and a chance to ride through the town atop a fire truck.

Pictured front row left to right, Elyse Russo, SCC State Chairperson, camper, Connie Cantwell, Southeast District Deputy.

Pictured back row left to right, Don Tonachio, PDD, Rich Bard, PGLC/PSP, and Ellen Veprek, Past First Lady.



### SCC State Meeting At Elks Camp Moore

The State Special Children's Committee held their August meeting at Elks Camp Moore. This was the first time since COVID that the committee has been able to hold their summer meeting at the Camp. After the meeting and dinner, the attendees were treated to a music fest courtesy of our special children.