



Central District News

New Jersey Elks/September 2026/Volume 23, Issue 4

Vice President Message Allen Hartland VP



Hello all Central District Elks-

Summer is about to close, and there was an exceeding amount of August heat. The month started with Batters-Up at the Howell Little League field. Howell Lodge was a great host with hospitality and friendliness. I need to congratulate Maureen Chapman and her committee for a job well done!

Our Central District competed and won a lot. Great job by all the Central District athletes. The Woodbridge Lodge Veterans Committee also had a picnic at their lodge. It was a huge success with live music and a DJ with all the picnic fare. Congratulations to Roy and his committee for the new emergence of the Woodbridge Elks Veterans Committee. Great job guys!

I also had the honor of attending a state dinner meeting at Camp Moore for Special Needs. It was a good meeting that finished with the campers singing songs for us, a very emotional event.

So sorry I had to miss the Central District Picnic that Sunday. I did see all the pictures and it looked like a fun event.

Our Central District Special Needs committee always goes above and beyond. Congrats for another successful event.

But the month is still not over! I still have the Central District Menlo Park Veterans picnic to look forward to, I have youth sports, soccer, and drug awareness meetings and an Americanism meeting I am still trying to get to. The AoH State golf outing is coming up this month also, and I'm most definitely looking forward to that.

So to all our committees in the Central District, keep up the good work of Elkdom, and bring on the picnics in September!

Fraternally,
Allen Hartland
Central District Vice-President



INSIDE THE DISTRICT

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District Deputy Message
Elking Around the District
District Chairpersons
Chairperson Messages
Lodges in the District
ERs and Secretaries
Antler Lodges*

DISTRICT LEADERS

*Francis J. Decibus PSDGER
Peter D. Smith PSP*

DISTRICT DIGNITARIES

*Allen Hartland VP
Eileen Jennings DDGER
Betty Bellanca CDST*

Newsletter & Calendar

Bill Seesselberg PER

Our State Project



Please send articles and events to CJElksCalendar@gmail.com



District Deputy Message Eileen Jennings DDGER



Dear Members and Friends of the Central District,

Where did the summer go!? I feel like Chicago was just the other day and now here we are getting ready to begin Pre-Visits and Official visits!! We have had a wonderful summer and are so proud to have been able to attend so many events, especially the Lyons Veteran BBQ, the Menlo Park Veterans BBQ, Central District Camp Moore BBQ, the Central District Parade Picnic and some wonderful events at lodges. Please remember to reach out to me about events going on at your lodge.

As we begin a new month let's begin to focus on membership and how important it is to all of us. At my clinic in August we discussed the process of bringing new members in and how important that process is to follow. I hope that everyone took the *I Will Program* back to their lodge and shared it with not only your Membership Committee but everyone in your lodge.

Perhaps you have a member who is struggling, would the *I Will Program* benefit them? You don't have to be brand new to do the *I Will Program*, you have to be a member that is willing to get involved and focus on "Why are We Elks." That being said, remember your members today are also as important as your new members are. I have found through my work experience that reinforcement is the key to success, so please remember to be kind and supportive to all members, reach out and tell someone they are doing a Great Job!!!

As your District Deputy, I look forward to the upcoming visits to each of our lodges in the Central District. These visits are not only an important duty entrusted to me by the Grand Exalted Ruler, but also a wonderful opportunity to meet with all of you, learn more about the great work being done in our communities and share in the spirit of Elkdom. My goal is to support each lodge, celebrate your accomplishments, and provide guidance where needed so that together we can continue to grow stronger. I invite every member to take part in their lodge's visit, as it is a time to show your pride, dedication, and fellowship that makes your lodge and our District simply *Better than the Rest!!!*

Wishing everyone a great September and as always please feel free to reach out to me with anything that you would like to discuss.

Fraternally,
Eileen Jennings
District Deputy Central District





Elking Around the District



POLICE • COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



South Plainfield Leading Knight Debbie Boyle, ER Tom Perry and member Maria Perry with literature and membership information at the National Night Out.



Piscataway Lodge wELKomes a new member



Central District Veterans Committee made a Welcome Home Kit delivery to this and another





South Plainfield Lodge used their Gratitude Grant to contribute \$3500 to Fish, Inc. in Piscataway



Central District Elks cook up some great food for veterans at the Lyons Hospital Annual Picnic



Two of the proud winners of Wildwood Parade recognition at the Central District Parades Picnic



Central District VP Allen Hartland, SCC Chair Jessica Dudik and ST Betty Bellanca at the State Special Childrens Committee meeting at Camp Moore.



Enjoying Cheeseburgers in Paradise at South Plainfield Lodge.



South Plainfield kitchen crew making these delicious Italian Hot Dogs



Scenes from the Army of Hope Golf Outing held at Warrenbrook Golf Course



Thanks to State Photographer Peter Namen for these and other pictures.





DISTRICT CHAIRPERSONS

Americanism	Hank Hart PER	tahklikid@gmail.com	609-401-6512
Army of Hope	Sal Malinconico PVP	smalinconico@aol.com	732-690-9421
Auditing	Megan Hayes PER	mah411@optonline.net	732-986-2887
CLMS	Rita Massimi PDD	joereets@yahoo.com	908-966-3242
Conventions	Karen Imperatrice PER	adele310@aol.com	908-472-8649
Drug Awareness	Jeanine Sieber PER	jaselks784@gmail.com	732-690-8858
Government Relations	Ginger Olszewski PER	golszewski@msn.com	732-668-2392
Hoop Shoot	Brian Molnar PER	bmolnar20@aol.com	732-750-9252
Internet Operations	Bill Seesselberg PER	billseess@gmail.com	908-217-1831
Lodge Activities	Betty Bellanca PDD	booper336@yahoo.com	908-917-3166
Membership	Jennifer Hammill PER	jhammillelks@gmail.com	732-718-0167
National Foundation	Paula Kopcho PDD	pjkopcho@gmail.com	732-501-2280.
National Veterans Services	Danny Larsen PDD	dlarsen321.dl@gmail.com	908-752-0071
Parades	Tina Bartko	tinabartko@gmail.com	732-983-2699
Public Relations	George Michaels PER	geomichaels@aol.com	609-802-2182
Ritual	Jami Gill PER	jgill102178@gmail.com	908-419-3143
Scholarship	Jerry Mercado PER	Jbm.elkslodge324@gmail.com	908-812-5905
Soccer Shoot	Karen Finney	queenfinney@comcast.net	908-337-3866
Special Children	Jessica Dudik ER PER	misspris55@aol.com	732-718-3240
Training	Chris Sauer PDD	yackhunt@aol.com	732-672-9829
Youth Activities	Maureen Chapman PER	mojochapman@aol.com	732-236-7296
Youth Sports Tournament	Bill Negvesky PER	billynjad@gmail.com	



Be sure to visit www.njelks.org to keep up with our state organization!

Americanism - Hank Hart PER

August turned out to be a quiet month for the Central District lodges with little activity. However, I did attend the State meeting on August 21st at which a great handout was distributed, which in turn was given to our lodge directors at our meeting on August 31st.

For the upcoming month of September, most of the lodges will be attending or involved in some type of remembrance of the 25th anniversary of 9/11.

With students returning to school, the lodge directors will be focusing on getting word out about this year's Essay Contest,

“Explain a Constitutional Right or Privilege and How it Affects You and Your Family”

As always, our lodges will remind all of us to keep our military and first responders in our prayers, and to personally thank them when an opportunity arises.

Fraternally

Hank Hart PER

Central District Americanism Chair



Army of Hope – Sal Malinconico PVP

Our last state meeting was held on August 19th at Metuchen lodge. Various assistance was given to veterans who qualified under AoH guidelines. The Drone Training Program is off and running with four veterans having been proposed and approved under the guidelines of our mission. One candidate dropped out due to new employment. The cost is \$1,300 each for a total of \$3900.

The rest of the meeting centered on the upcoming State AoH Picnic at Lacey Lodge. The next state meeting is Saturday, September 12th at Lacey Lodge after setting up for Sunday's picnic. Our last two district meetings were held at Piscataway lodge on July 28th and Carteret on August 18th.

Central District AoH committee has been busy. We donated \$750 worth of personal hygiene items and snacks for our deployed service personnel in conjunction with Woodbridge Lodge. We also voted to donate \$1,500 to Lacey Lodge to offset the cost for the state AoH picnic in September.

A \$100 gift card was given to Nancy and Jeff Mullins in recognition of the loss of Jeff's service dog.

Our next meeting will be held at Carteret on Tuesday, October 13th. You don't have to be a lodge chair to attend so come to our meetings and see what we are all about.

Fraternally,
Sal Malinconico, PVP
District AoH Chair



Auditing – Megan Hayes PER

District Committees that have Funds: We are approaching the due date for the State's 1st Quarter Financial Reporting (June, July & August). Committees within each District of the New Jersey State Elks Association (NJSEA) that have funds need to report. A quarterly financial reconciliation of all funds, including all cash, in the custody of each Central District Committee and bank statements are to be sent to the Central District Vice-President Allen Hartland and the Audit Chairperson (Megan Hayes-Mah411@optonline.net). I am traveling in September, so I will be requesting all information by September 12th, but the earlier the better. Thank you for your understanding.

FRS: The monthly FRS Report is due by Friday, September 18th.

Fraternally,
Megan Hayes PER
Central District Audit Chair



CLMS – Rita Massimi PDD

Secretaries, I hope your summer has been a fun one!

A few reminders -

Please ensure that you log into CLMS2PC at least monthly to ensure everything entered into CLMS2Web syncs over.

Please take a moment to reach out to your lapsed members to pay this year's dues. If necessary, reach out to their proposers.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Fraternally,

Rita Massimi, PDD

Central District CLMS Chair



Drug Awareness – Jeanine Sieber PER

September is here and it is “Welcome Back to School Month” for the young people that we serve! Our busy season has begun with our DAP student contests, Peer Leadership applications become available on-line, the Walk Out on Drugs takes place and the Enrique Camarena nominations begin. Also, all those “Back to School Nights,” which are a great opportunity to connect with your school community.

I will begin with the Annual Central District Walk Out on Drugs, which will be held on September 20th. Carteret Lodge is sponsoring the event this year and it will begin at Carteret Waterfront Park, 200 Middlesex Avenue, Carteret. Registration starts at 11am at Veteran’s Pier, with the walk beginning 12pm. We will walk one mile along the riverfront, through Danielle’s Garden and back. Please do not stay away if you cannot walk, come sign in for your lodge to get recognition. You can mingle with those like myself, who will not be able to physically walk.

Afterwards we will proceed to Carteret Lodge for hospitality and support one of the most crucial and lifesaving programs that Elks run. I hope to see representation from all eleven of our great lodges! Please make all checks out to NJSEA, with Central District Walk Out in the memo.

The Central District Yeti Cooler Raffle will be called on this day, at 2pm! Sell those tickets!

Next up is our Student Poster, Essay & Video Contests. This year’s theme is:

“A Healthy Me is Drug Free.”

It runs from September through January 2027. Please note-the poster can only be size 8 1/2 x 11 inches. An incorrect size cannot be judged. There is a DAP training site about this and a lot of other great information and resources on elks.org. It is recommended to have your lodge deadline before the students go out on winter break. We will vote on the lodge winners at our January meeting. State winners will be judged at the Peer Leadership Conference.

Enrique Camarena nominations need to be to the DAP State Chairperson, Mary Ellen Lawrence, by November 1st. Start contacting your local police department now. Last year we only had one out of eleven lodges, to submit an application. Let us do better this year!

The Peer Leadership weekend conference (high school) applications, will be available on-line on September 15th. The conference will take place on February 5-7, 2027. The Pathways to Leadership (middle school) one day conference applications will be available on-line on October 15th. It will take place on Thursday, February 4, 2027.

This year the State DAP Chili Cook Off Contest has been moved to Sunday, November 8 from 1pm to 5pm at Woodbridge Lodge. Central District will be on Sunday, October 25 from 4pm to 6pm at Colonia Lodge. Contestants can bring their chili entries at 2pm. We had a great time last with a great representation from the lodges. As to date, I only know of two out of our 11 lodges that have set a date for their lodge cook off. Please bring up on the floor and schedule asap!

Fraternally,

Jeanine A. Sieber, PER

Central District DAP Chairperson



Government Relations – Ginger Olszewski PER

Only with accurate and timely reporting can the Elks uphold our status as a non-profit organization.

All lodges need to complete their Government Relations form as soon as the event is held. This includes Hall Donations, Lodge Meetings, Committee Meetings (Lodge, District, or State) DD clinics, and VP meetings.

Fraternally,
Ginger Olszewski PER
Central District Government Relations Chair



National Foundation – Paula Kopcho PDD

Unfortunately, I can't give you updates on donations for this year, the ENF website is still under construction.

Please remember to continue to fundraise for Elks National Foundation, it is where the money comes from for our Grants, Scholarships and Veteran Services.

Apply for Grants as you can and let me know if you have any ENF Events coming up. Talk to your members about Legacy donations and remember October is ENF month!

Enjoy these beautiful days of fall, apply for those grants, and let me know if you have any questions. Be safe, be well, and be kind to each other.

Fraternally,

Paula Kopcho PDD

Central District National Foundation Chair



Lodge Activities – Betty Bellanca PDD

Hi all,

I Hope everyone had a wonderful summer. Before long the applications for “All American Lodge” will be coming out and I’m sure some if not all of you did some wonderful things during these past couple months. You may have participated in your town’s 4th of July celebrations, your lodge may have hosted a BBQ/lunch for veterans and you may have supported Camp Moore. There may have been a community day in your town that you were asked to support. All of these along with pictures and a description of the event can be collected and put into a 3-ring binder to submit for the “All American Lodge Contest”. So now is the time to start this process and when the time comes to submit it, you will have it almost done.

Stay safe.

God Bless America, God Bless the Elks and God Bless our troops.

Respectfully submitted

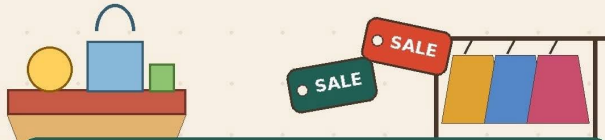
Betty Bellanca, PDD, ST

District Lodge Activities Chair



FLEA MARKET

The Woodbridge Elks



OPEN

Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays

8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Vendors may start setting up at 7:00 AM

Open All Year Round... Weather Permitting

VENDOR RATES

TUESDAY
\$25

THURSDAY
\$15

SATURDAY
\$20

LOCATION

The Woodbridge Elks
665 Rahway Ave., Woodbridge, NJ

SP ELKS #2298

presents the

"Fall Into Fun"

FAMILY PICNIC

SEPTEMBER 12, 2026

12-5PM

\$20
PRE-SALE

\$25
AT DOOR

TEENS
AGES 13-20
\$10

KIDS
UNDER 12
FREE

— PURCHASE TICKETS IN SOCIAL QUARTERS

Live Music by
Shore Soundz Band

RAIN OR SHINE

NJ STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION ARMY OF HOPE COMMITTEE

22nd Army of Hope Picnic

"A Day of Remembrance & Patriotism"

To Honor and express our sincere thanks and support to the families of our Fallen Heroes, our Severely Wounded Soldiers and the brave members of our military from NJ for their dedication and sacrifices in defending our Freedoms.

!!!! JOIN US !!!!

Meet & Mingle with Our Troops, their Families, our Severely Wounded Soldiers and the Families of Our Fallen Heroes

Sunday, September 13th, 2026

12:00 - 5:00 pm

Lacey Elks Lodge #2518

900 Beach Blvd, Forked River, NJ 609-693-1281

\$25 donation per Adult

\$5 for a child under 10

The cost of admission will include food, refreshments and entertainment. Join us in paying tribute to our brave members of the military.

We ask for you and your Lodge to make a donation so we can continue to assist these Veterans and their families.

There will be a donation line for Lodges to be recognized for all their hard work.

For Further Information contact:

Marty Hickey (201) 538-7146 Rich Hamilton (732) 677-6036
Robert Colwell (908) 230-7345

*** Tickets Are Now Available - See Your Lodge Chairman ***
Checks Payable to: NJSEA (Army of Hope)

Our mission statement has remained clear since our inception... "To assist NJ Active military Servicemen and Women, those severely wounded in the line of duty and our Fallen Hero families whose loved ones made the ultimate sacrifice."...and that statement and mission will ring true today.

*** LENNY RUCINSKI 908-601-5690, CHARLIE DAVIS 201-640-5423,
COURTNEY PAIGE 732-947-2190**

ELKS CENTRAL DISTRICT
DRUG AWARENESS

YETI COOLER

BEACH GEAR

RAFFLE

♥ PROCEEDS BENEFIT ♥
Walk Out On Drugs

\$365
VALUE!

★ SUNDAY ★
SEPTEMBER
20, 2026

2:00 PM

\$5
PER TICKET!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE. HAVE A CHANCE TO WIN!

Thank you for supporting
DRUG AWARENESS in Our Community!

ID: 444-6-29541 | RL: 26-13

**CENTRAL DISTRICT
DRUG AWARENESS COMMITTEE**

**WALK OUT
on
DRUGS**

**SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 20, 2026**

**HOSTED BY
CARTERET ELKS
LODGE NO. 2235**



**CARTERET WATERFRONT PARK
200 MIDDLESEX AVENUE
CARTERET, NJ**



**REGISTRATION BEGINS
AT 11:00 AM AT VETERAN'S PIER**



**THE WALK BEGINS
AT 12 NOON**



Approximately 1 mile along
the riverfront, through
Danielle's Garden, and back.



DONATION CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE OUT TO **NJSEA**,
WITH A NOTE IN THE MEMO THAT IT'S FOR
THE CENTRAL DISTRICT DAP WALK OUT.

Thank you
for supporting drug
awareness in our
communities!

**STRONGER COMMUNITIES, BRIGHTER FUTURES.
TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**



**SOUTH AMBOY
ANTLERS #45**

**ARE HAVING A
DINE
TO
DONATE**

15% OF YOUR PURCHASE
WILL GO TO HELP
ANTLERS #45

**AT BROADWAY
Diner**

SEPT. 26TH & 27TH

**FROM 9AM
TO 11:30AM**

**THERE WILL BE A
TRICKY
AND MORE!**

**126 N BROADWAY ST
SOUTH AMBOY, NJ**

From August 21st through October 25th
We Will Collecting Empty Ink Cartridges For Recycling.
Just Drive In Our Lot And Drop Off



OUTSIDE DRIVE-UP DROP-OFF

Sunday's from 12- 2 pm Wednesday's 10am- 12p Friday's 4-7pm
Or During Any Lodge Event Or Opening



A Small Token Of Time , For A Big Impact!
South Amboy Elks 784 601 Washington Ave
732-727-7170 or Text For Info 732-887-0316

**Spaghetti
FUNDRAISER**

South Amboy Elks

**Saturday September 19th
5:30 -7:30 pm**

\$15 PER PERSON

INCLUDES SPAGHETTI, SAUSAGE, SALAD,
BREAD, & DESSERT

PROCEEDS WILL BENEFIT THE
YOUTH ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

EAT IN OR TAKE OUT CASH BAR AVAILABBLE

For More Information Call 732-727-7170



601 Washington Ave

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FRANCESCO'S
PIZZERIA & RESTAURANT
*Authentic Italian.
Made with Passion.*

DINE TO DONATE
AT FRANCESCO'S for
EAST BRUNSWICK ELKS LODGE #2370

A HUGE 20% OF EVERY CHECK
WILL BE DONATED
TO THE LODGE

TUESDAY
SEPTEMBER 1, 2026
11 AM - 9 PM

INCLUDES FIXED MENU
DINE IN - FULL MENU
FOR TAKE OUT ONLY

MUST PRESENT
THIS FLYER OR
SHOW ON PHONE
TO YOUR SERVER

Thank you
FOR SUPPORTING THE
PARADES COMMITTEE!

CALL US
(732) 214-9222

VISIT US
23 North Main Street
Milltown, New Jersey 08850

FREE DELIVERY MINIMUM ORDER \$10

SOUTH PLAINFIELD ELKS LODGE 2298

SIPS AND SOULS
CAFÉ
FUNDRAISER

COME AND CHECK OUT SOUTH PLAINFIELD'S
NEWEST COFFEE HOUSE!

WHEN: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2026
TIME: 5:00 PM - 10:00 PM

WHERE: 218 HAMILTON BLVD,
SOUTH PLAINFIELD, NJ 07080

15% OF ALL SALES TO BENEFIT THE
SOUTH PLAINFIELD ELKS
DRUG AWARENESS COMMITTEE

ENJOY GREAT COFFEE!
CONTACT CHRIS SAUER
732-672-9829

SUPPORT OUR YOUTH & COMMUNITY - HELP FIGHT DRUG ABUSE SOME!!

CASINO
Bus Trip!
WIND CREEK CASINO

SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 20

BUS LEAVES
ELKS PARKING LOT
AT 10 AM

6 HOURS
AT CASINO

RETURN TO
PARKING LOT
AT 8 PM

BUS TRIP TO
WIND CREEK
CASINO

ELKS 601 WASHINGTON AVENUE
SOUTH AMBOY

TICKETS
\$50
PER PERSON
RECEIVE \$25
@ THE CASINO

TO RESERVE A SEAT -
CALL/TEXT LORI @ **732 763 6232**

INCLUDES
SNACKS AND
SOFT DRINKS

50/50 A 50/50
WILL BE SOLD
ON THE BUS

WOODBIDGE ELKS
CAR SHOW

★ **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH** ★

CLASSIC CARS **MODERN CARS**

\$20
PER CAR
★ REGISTRATION ★

FOOD & REFRESHMENTS
AVAILABLE

OPEN TO
THE PUBLIC

★ **LOCATION** ★
665 RAHWAY AVE., WOODBRIDGE, NJ

TO REGISTER CONTACT
ANTHONY CALANTONI
732-347-4643

★★★ **WOODBIDGE ELKS LODGE #2116** ★★★

★ WATCHUNG HILLS ELKS #885 ★

PIG ROAST 2026

BRING A LAWN CHAIR!

★ SATURDAY ★
SEPTEMBER 26TH

1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

\$40 ADMISSION PER PERSON	\$30 VETERANS (WITH ID)	★ KIDS 12 AND UNDER FREE!
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★ **EARLY BIRD SPECIAL!** ★
BEFORE AUGUST 31ST!

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL GENERAL ADMISSION \$35 PER PERSON	EARLY BIRD SPECIAL VETERANS (WITH ID) \$25 PER PERSON
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SCAN TO PURCHASE
EARLY BIRD TICKETS!

venmo

Secure • Fast • Easy
Tickets Online!

50/50
50/50
RAFFLE!

LIVE MUSIC!

CORNHOLE!

TALKING BLUES
BARBECUE

Eating Everything from the Rooter to the Tooter!
Pulled Beef, Pork Belly Burnt Ends,
Chicken, Smash Burgers, Hotdogs
& All the Fixings!

1 ELKS TRAIL ★ WARREN, NJ

ROLLING THUNDER

BREAKFAST

★ SEPTEMBER 20, 2026 ★

≡ BREAKFAST 8–11 AM ≡

ADULTS \$12 FOR AGES 12+	KIDS \$6 FOR AGES 6–11	KIDS FREE UNDER 5
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The Woodbridge Elks Motorcycle Committee is
hosting a Breakfast before the Rolling Thunder Run:
Ride for Freedom XXXVI.

📍 Meet us at the Woodbridge Elks,
665 Rahway Ave., Woodbridge.

★ Please come out and support the lodge.

★ **KICKSTANDS UP AT 10:15 AM** ★

WOODBIDGE ELKS

FOOTBALL SUNDAYS!

HALFTIME BUFFET IN THE COLONIAL ROOM!
Bring a Dessert to Share!

EVERY SUNDAY!

ALL GAMES BROADCASTED!

OPENING DAY SEPTEMBER 13TH

★ OPEN TO ELK MEMBERS & THEIR GUESTS ★

EAST BRUNSWICK ELKS LODGE #2370
Presents...

LABOR DAY PICNIC
2 to 7 PM

COZMIX

SEPTEMBER 6, 2026 |
|\$30 ENTRY FEE

FOOD & BBQ (Included):
HAMBURGERS | HOT DOGS | SIDE
SALADS | AND MORE

LIVE MUSIC BY THE COZMIX

Location: 21 OAKMONT AVENUE, EAST BRUNSWICK, NJ (Farrington Lake)

Parades – Tina Bartko

The 2026 Wildwood Parade season has officially come to a close!

We wrapped up a fantastic run with our Parades Award Picnic at Woodbridge Lodge on Sunday, August 23rd. A HUGE shoutout goes to Exalted Ruler Bruce Horvath, his family, and the Woodbridge Parades and Convention Committees for hosting us—the food was absolute top-tier!

Special thanks to all of our lodge chairpersons and parade committees for bringing 100% participation across the board. Between the gorgeous weather and great company, a fabulous time was had by all.

Looking Ahead:

- **October State Meeting:** We'll be revealing the 2027 Wildwood theme!
- **District Parades Meeting:** Scheduled to take place immediately following the state meeting.

Finally, if you're marching in any upcoming parades, please send your pictures to tinabartko@gmail.com so we can feature them!

Fraternally,
Tina Bartko
Central District Parades Chair



Public Relations – George Michaels PER

A few items for all of us to remember so we can all be Elks Public Relations experts:

Start publicizing your events as soon as they are planned. Put them in your newsletter/bulletin. If you have an electronic bulletin board, have them posted. Get it on your web site and social media. Send it to local media if appropriate.

Notify Bill Seesselberg for the district calendar. This will attract Elks from outside your lodge and may prevent conflicting events on the same date.

Remember the Elks image: we are lodges that have a bar, not a bar that has a lodge. No photos of alcohol.

Keep remembering our image and use our emblems as per guidelines. We should be using the Elks USA logo. Do not use AI versions. AI is great for design but has a tendency to have stupid attacks. Check what is written, or omitted, and cut out AI generated logos and paste in genuine ones.

After events, send stories and photos to the state newspaper and Elks magazine.

We all work on keeping and improving Elksdom's image.

As always, if you have any Public Relations concerns, have any questions, or wish us to publicize events and activities, please contact me.

Fraternally,

George Michaels PER

Central District Public Relations Chair



NJ ELKS RAFFLE FLYER REMINDER
BEFORE YOU POST, PRINT OR SHARE...

! All promotional flyers and advertisements for an Elks raffle must include:

TWO NUMBERS MUST APPEAR

- 1 NJ Legalized Games of Chance Identification Number**
ID No.: _____
- 2 Municipal Raffle License Number**
License No.: _____

WHY IT MATTERS

- ✓ Shows the raffle is properly registered and licensed
- ✓ Promotes transparency
- ✓ Protects the Lodge
- ✓ Helps prevent compliance problems or delays

CHECK BEFORE YOU PUBLISH!

★
Make sure both numbers appear clearly on every printed flyer, social media post, website listing and advertisement.

PLEASE UNDERSTAND

We are not policing Lodges' Facebook pages or other social media sites. Our goal is to help every Lodge promote the good work it does while maximizing outreach to Elks members throughout the South East District.

Required under N.J.A.C. 13:47-6.14
Questions? Contact your Municipal Clerk or the NJ Legalized Games of Chance Control Commission.

Ritual – Jami Gill PER

Good news! Starting this year, **ALL SITTING** Exalted Rulers (New and PER) are eligible to compete in the Flag and Toast Contest. A Flag and Toast Contest Clinic is scheduled for September 22nd at 7:00 PM at South Plainfield Lodge. The clinic will explain and demonstrate the required moves and provide an opportunity to ask questions to help everyone prepare for the Central District Competition on October 8th at 7:00 PM at Piscataway Lodge.

As a reminder, when initiating a new member, please take the time to read over your part beforehand, even if you will be reading it from the book or delivering your part from memory. Familiarizing yourself with your part in advance helps ensure the ceremony is performed smoothly, confidently, and with the dignity and respect it deserves.

It is also highly recommended that the officers hold a practice or rehearsal beforehand. This gives everyone an opportunity to review their parts, coordinate the order of the ceremony, and become comfortable with their roles. A little preparation beforehand can make a big difference in ensuring the Initiation is conducted properly and respectfully.

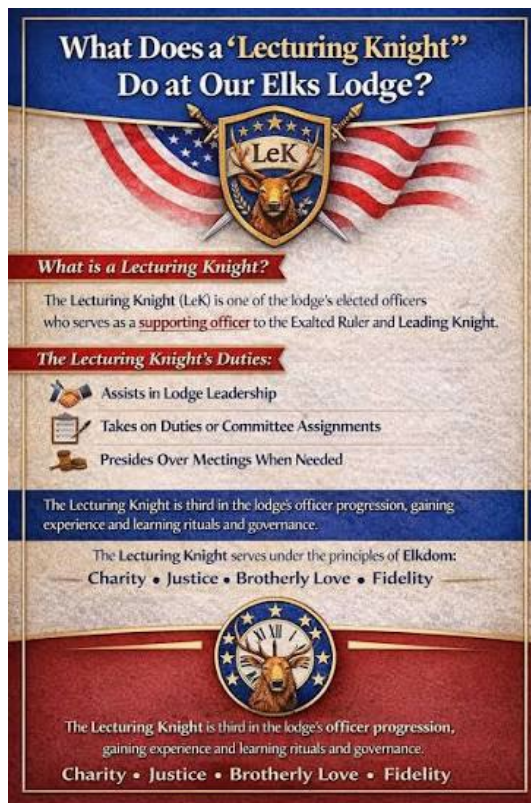
Exalted Rulers in particular are encouraged to commit the Eleventh Hour Toast to memory so it can be delivered with the dignity and reverence it deserves in honor of our absent members.

If your Lodge is called upon to perform the Elks' Funeral Service, please ensure that all participating officers read through the script in advance. Take the time to coordinate how you will enter, line up, and exit the room. This is a solemn and honorable ceremony that pays tribute to a departed member and should be conducted with the utmost respect, dignity, and decorum.

“An Elk is never forgotten, never forsaken.”

Whether participating in the Flag and Toast Contest, Ritual Contest, Initiation of new members, Eleventh Hour Toast, or Elks' Funeral Service, taking the time to practice and prepare helps preserve the traditions of our Order and ensures that these ceremonies are performed with the dignity they deserve.

Fraternally,
Jami Gill, PER
Central District Ritual Chair



Scholarship – Jerry Mercado PER

Dear Lodge Scholarship Chairs,

As summer is ending, our scholarship season is just heating up! We're excited to announce that our next **Central District Scholarship Committee meeting** is right around the corner.



Next Committee Meeting

Date: Monday, September 14th

Time: 7:00 PM

Location:  Virtual via Zoom

We hope to see many of you there as we discuss important **updates, upcoming deadlines, and planning** for our scholarship programs.



NJ Elks Family Scholarship

Status:  **CLOSED**

Applications for the **NJ Elks Family Scholarship** were due by **July 30, 2026**. All applicants will be notified of their status via email by the **end of August 2026**.



Important Reminder: Scholarship winners will receive an attachment that **must be completed and returned by September 15, 2026**.



Late submissions will not be accepted.



Most Valuable Student (MVS) Scholarship

The **2026 Most Valuable Student (MVS) Scholarship** application became available on **August 1, 2026**.



Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must:

- Be a current **high school senior or equivalent**
- Be a **U.S. citizen**
- Demonstrate **academic achievement, leadership, and financial need**



Please Note: Applicants **do not need to be related to an Elk**. However, **high school graduates are not eligible**.



Legacy Awards

The **2027 Legacy Awards** application opens on **September 1, 2026**.



Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must be:

- A **child, grandchild, step-child, step-grandchild, or legal ward** of a living Elk
- Sponsored by an Elk who joined **on or before April 1, 2023**, or who is a **charter member of a newly instituted lodge** after that date
- Sponsored by an Elk who is **paid-up through March 31, 2027**



Great-grandchildren are not eligible.



Working Together for Our Youth

Let's continue working together to support our young people and uphold the **values of the Elks** through these vital scholarship opportunities. Your dedication and commitment help make these programs a meaningful investment in the future of our communities.

Fraternally,

Jerry B. Mercado, PER

Central District Scholarship Chair

New Brunswick Elks Lodge #324



Soccer Shoot – Karen Finney

The first Soccer meeting of the season on August 25th at Watchung Hills Lodge was held in conjunction with Youth Activities and Drug Awareness. The following was discussed and attendees were asked for the information to be brought back to their respective lodges:

Local Shoots - Now is a good time to start planning your local shoots. Reach out to your local soccer clubs, youth clubs and little leagues and try to recruit children to participate in your local lodge shoots. It is also important that if you are planning on having a shoot, please reach out to the other lodges in our district to see if they are having a shoot and consider joining with them as we have in the past. Even if you only have one or two children, each one counts and will count towards our 100% participation (which is our ultimate goal). By all means, let me know so that I can attend.

Lodge Shoots - As of right now Woodbridge Lodge has a date set for Friday, September 18th at Woodbridge High School, upper field. Piscataway Lodge has a date set for Friday, September 25th at Piscataway High School with a rain date set for October 2nd. Watchung Hills Lodge has a date set for Saturday, September 19th with a rain date of Friday, September 25th at Piscataway High School. Please contact the Committee Chair from one of these lodges and make sure it would be OK to join them and don't just assume that if they are holding a shoot that you and your children can just show up. If your lodge will be joining these lodges, it is imperative to have help from all lodges for a smooth outcome. We will need all hands-on deck.

As of now I have discussed a date for our District Shoot with Brian Molnar to see if we can use the upper field at Woodbridge High School. If all goes well, we will be holding our District Shoot on Friday, October 9th at this location. We will discuss a time for this shoot at a later date.

Mid Atlantic Ad Journal – We will be looking for each lodge to place an ad or booster. At our next meeting, I will have copies of our ad journal forms. (we did not have a state meeting in July). When you receive them, please make copies and hand them out at your lodge and send them to local businesses. We are looking for 100% participation again this year.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 30th at New Brunswick lodge.

Fraternally,

Karen Finney

Central District Soccer Shoot Chair



Special Children Committee - Jessica Dudik PER

The Central District hosted a BBQ at Camp Moore on Sunday, August 16th. There were nearly 30 volunteers from the Central District in attendance, including Eileen Jennings Central District DD. Although the weather didn't cooperate it was still a great turnout and a great night.

All Elks helped cook and serve hamburgers, veggie burgers, and hot dogs. Watermelon, cookies, ice pops and chips were also served to all the campers and counselors. After dinner there was a DJ, dancing, laughter, and fun. It truly was a great experience. Check out the pictures below and on Facebook.

Piscataway, South Amboy and Woodbridge Lodges also hosted BBQs at Camp Moore this summer. THANK YOU. It's great to see the Central District lodges and members visiting and serving dinner at the Camp.

Almost all calendars have been sold and collected - thank you to everyone who sold and purchased.

As always please remember to check the district calendar for upcoming lodge and District SCC events and fundraisers.

The committee's next District meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 22nd at East Brunswick lodge starting at 7:30 PM.

And as always, thanks to everyone for their continued support.

After all, it's all for the kids.

Fraternally,

Jessica Dudik, PER

SCC District Chair



Training – Christine Sauer PDD

Hello and Happy September. Students are returning to school and the season of learning can be for all of us. With less outdoor distractions it might be the right time for us to catch up on our own studies and research.

Four times a year the Grand Lodge makes available to us Accident Prevention Quarterly Newsletters. These newsletters can be found on elks.org under Lodge Safety and Insurance Center. The next issue which will be put up is Fall 2026. These publications keep us current each season with steps lodges should take to make our buildings safe and help ensure our members and guests are our first priority. Recent insurance news, forms we must keep up to date, to things to watch out for when renovating or repairing the lodge are covered. This might seem silly to you at first, but you will be surprised how useful many of these articles and suggestions can be.

This time of the year might also be a good time to take some time and review many of the useful webinars available on line. If you are active on a committee, a new officer in your lodge or have a desire to learn more about ENF, scholarships available or how we can serve our communities better. Take a tour and browse the wealth of information on elks.org.

Fraternally,
Christine Sauer PDD
Central District Chair Training



Youth Activities – Maureen Chapman PER

The State Batters Up was held on August 1st, and the Central District rocked it again!! We had 50 kids participate, of which 24 were from the Central District. We had 7 out of the 12 districts represented and 9 out of 11 lodges from the Central District were represented. Our district was the highest scoring district with a score of 3,131 points.

Below is a list of the top 3 in each age group:

2026 NJ State Batters Up Winners							
	5-6 Girl	Score	District for State Batters UP		5-6 Boy	Score	District for State Batters UP
3rd	Lillian Bigelow	39	North - Park Ridge	3rd	Tyler Patterson	144	North - Park Ridge
2nd	Emmerysn Capocci	40	Southwest - Marlton	2nd	Mateo DeJesus	176	Central - Edison
1st	Serena Devine	45	North Central - North Arlington	1st	Cruz Lopez	183	Central - Piscataway
	7-8 Girl	Score	District for State Batters UP		7-8 boy	Score	District for State Batters UP
3rd	Hanna Anastos	10	North - Park Ridge	3rd	Jax Lopez	26	Central - Piscataway
2nd	Jenna Patterson	21	North - Park Ridge	2nd	Elliot Guzman- Felix	28	Central - Edison
1st	Olivia Bigelow	28	North - Park Ridge	1st	Lincoln Green	53	Southeast - Howell
	9-10 Girl	Score	District for State Soccer Shoot		9-10 Boy	Score	District for State Soccer Shoot
3rd	Chloe Devine	24	North Central-North Arlington	3rd	Owen Franolich	49	Southeast - Bayville
2nd	Parker Amirah Goodwin	30	Central - Piscataway	2nd	Justin Morio	50	Central - Piscataway
1st	Olivia Anastos	45	North - Park Ridge	1st	Deekshan Pedada	56	Central - Piscataway
	11-12 Girl	Score	District for State Batters UP		11-12 Boy	Score	District for State Batters UP
3rd	Emmy Welcome	50	Central - Edison	3rd			
2nd	Zarely Guzman-Feliz	56	Central - Edison	2nd			
1st	Savannah Wolenter	236	Central - Edison	1st	Jayden Fajardo	132	Central - South Amboy
	13-15 Girl	Score	District for State Batters UP		13-15 Boy	Score	District for State Soccer Shoot
3rd	Peyton Ashae Goodwin	43	Central - Piscataway	3rd	Billy Shrekgast	270	Southeast - Bayville
2nd	Emma Alves	81	East Central - Union	2nd	Connor DiFrenza	528	Central - Edison
1st	Skylar Hunt	362	Central - Piscataway	1st	Rayan Whyte	690	Central - Edison
	7-8 Girl Baseball	Score	District for State Batters UP				
1st	Lillia Crawford	12	Central - Edison		Highest Scoring Dis	Score	
	9-10 Girl Baseball	Score	District for State Batters UP	3rd	Southwest	400	
1st	Elizabeth Carmichael	35	South Central - Freehold	2nd	Southeast	680	
				1st	Central	3131	

The Somerset Patriots Game is scheduled for September 12th. The game time is 6:05pm & there will be fireworks after the game. Tickets are \$10 each. Please ask your lodges to purchase their 10 tickets and if they don't have members who want to go, maybe they can give the paid tickets to the children & their families who participated in our youth programs. Also, maybe there are some Veterans or Special Needs children who may enjoy the game. The game is meant to be a night of baseball, community & Elkdome. The money raised from this event will support all major NJSEA committees. I hope to see everyone at the game!

The State Tee It Up Contest is for children up to 18 years of age. It will be held on October 17, 2026, at the Cedar Creek Golf Course in Bayville. It's a fun drive, chip & putt contest. Registration is at 8:30am. Contest is from 9am – 11am. Awards & lunch to follow at Lacey Lodge.

Please continue to support our Central District Youth Activities Candy & Pretzel Fundraiser. The money from this fundraiser benefits our district for awards and equipment needed for our youth programs. It has also helped to send children and their families to the Somerset Patriots game. Please continue to purchase and support this fundraiser for our district.

We will be having our next District Youth Activities meeting on September 30th at New Brunswick Lodge. Hospitality at 7pm & meeting to follow at 7:30pm. This will be a combined meeting with Drug Awareness & Soccer.

Fraternally,

Maureen Chapman, PER

Central District Youth Activities Chair



District Lodge Information

Carteret #2235

233 Roosevelt Ave.

732-541-2880

Meetings 1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7:30 pm

ER Lars Astrom, Secy. Patricia Golino

Colonia #2282

855 Middlesex Tpke.

732-382-2282

Meetings 3rd Thursdays 7 pm

ER Jessica Dudik, Secy. Eileen Parks

East Brunswick #2370

21-B Oakmont Ave.

732-821-9527

Meetings 1st & 3rd Thursdays 7:30 pm

ER Gary Kelliher, Secy. Joan Scaduto

Edison #2487

375 Old Post Rd.

732-985-2487

Meetings 1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7:30 pm

ER Marty Langan, Secy. Aimee Malave

Metuchen #1914

87 Middlesex Ave. Rt. 27.

732-494-3557

Meetings 2nd & 4th Wednesdays 7:30pm

ER Maura McCunney Secy. Sharon Grice

New Brunswick #324

40 Livingston Ave.

732-249-3420

Meetings 1st & 3rd Thursdays 7:30 pm

ER Bill Negvesky, Secy. Elizabeth Bonura

Piscataway #2414

450 River Road

732-356-9827

Meetings 1st & 3rd Thursdays 8 pm

ER Peter Namen, Secy Rita Massimi PDD

South Amboy #784

601 Washington Ave.

732-727-7170

Meetings 1st & 3rd Wednesdays 7:30 pm

ER Dawn Roberts, Secy. Mary Patricia Kall

South Plainfield #2298

1254 New Market Ave.

908-668-9750

Meetings 1st & 3rd Thursdays 7:30 pm

ER Tom Perry, Secy. Sandi Smith

Watchung Hills #885

1 Elks Trail

908-668-9727

Meetings 1st & 3rd Thursdays 7:30 pm

ER Susan Dougherty, Secy. Danny Larsen PDD

Woodbridge #2116

665 Rahway Ave.

732-634-2116

Meetings 2nd & 4th Wednesdays 7:30 pm

ER Bruce Horvath, Secy. Paula Kopcho PDD

Antler Lodge#20

Sponsoring Lodge

Carteret #2235

233 Roosevelt Ave. 732-541-2880

Advisor Terri Kelly 732-904-8275

Antler Lodge #30

Sponsoring Lodge

South Plainfield #2298

1254 New Brunswick Ave. 908-668-9750

Advisor Irene Polanco 908-337-4360



Antler Lodge#28

Sponsoring Lodge

New Brunswick #324

40 Livingston Ave. 732-545-0658

Advisor Elsie Isaacson 908-917-2778

Antler Lodge #45

Sponsoring Lodge

South Amboy #784

601 Washington Ave. 732-727-7170

Advisor Dawn Roberts 732-642-5949