# 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**

*Vice President Message*
*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

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT
NNO
2026
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

Elks New Jersey




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



Remember Our VETERANS

**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.***





Elks Care Elks Share

## *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 if 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 | THURSDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|---|
| $25 | $15 | $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 AND 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.

*Thank you* for supporting drug awareness in our communities!

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

*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

RECYCLE REUSE REDUCE

# Start Saving Your Empty Ink Cartridges




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 AVAILABLLE

For More Information Call 732-727-7170




Made with PosterMyWall.com


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
DELIVERY


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 ARUS SOIME!!


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
Pretzels
INCLUDES
SNACKS AND
SOFT DRINKS
50/50
A 50/50
WILL BE SOLD
ON THE BUS


WOODBRIDGE 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
WOODBRIDGE ELKS LODGE #2116


WATCHUNG HILLS ELKS #885
PIG ROAST 2026
SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 26TH
1:00 PM – 6:00 PM
BRING A LAWN CHAIR!
$40 ADMISSION PER PERSON
$30 VETERANS (WITH ID)
KIDS 12 AND UNDER FREE!
EARLY BIRD SPECIAL!
BEFORE AUGUST 31ST!
EARLY BIRD SPECIAL GENERAL ADMISSION $35 PER PERSON
EARLY BIRD SPECIAL VETERANS (WITH ID) $25 PER PERSON
SCAN TO PURCHASE EARLY BIRD TICKETS!
venmo
Secure • Fast • Easy Tickets Online!
50/50
50/50 RAFFLE!
LIVE MUSIC!
CORNHOLE!
Eating Everything from the Rooter to the Tooter!
Pulled Beef, Pork Belly Burnt Ends, Chicken, Smash Burgers, Hotdogs & All the Fixings!
TALKING BLUES BARBECUE
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
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


WOODBRIDGE ELKS
FOOTBALL SUNDAYS!
#1
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.

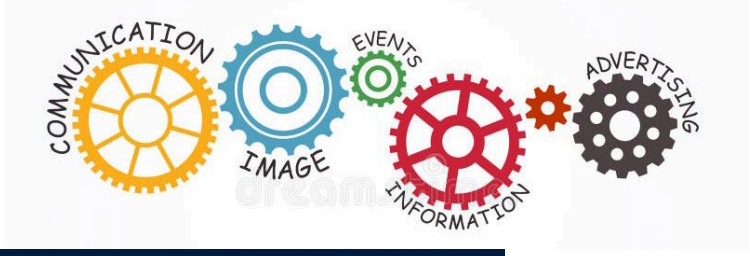
Remember the Elks image: we are lodges that have a bar, not a bar that has a lodge. No photos of alcohol.

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 tendence 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 Elkdom'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



# *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 Dist** | **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 & Elkdom. 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