

Arizona Elks News

The Arizona Elks News is an official publication of the Arizona Elks Association

September 2026



"Elks - Always Ready to Give "

Inside this edition:

AEA President's Message	1-2
Government Relations	3
Local Lodges Charitable and Community Contributions	4-10
Veterans News	11
Media Release	12
AEMP Mid-Year Raffle	13
Save The Date	14-17
Grand Lodge News	18

aeaneewsletter@arizonaelks.org

AEA Newsletter
Submission deadline:
25 September 2026



Hello Arizona Elks, we hope everyone is having a momentous year. We are 5 months into this year, and Angela and I are having a fun time representing all of you. July was a busy month to say the least, attending the Grand Lodge then starting our visits.

We first were supposed to go to Show Low but due to health issues we had to postpone it until September. We were off to Chandler #2429 for their "Christmas in July", what a magnificent event and well attended. The dinner was nothing short of fabulous, a complete holiday dinner. We had a wonderful time doing the gift exchange with PSP Mike Weishan hosting it. ER Mags was an awesome host and all our friends from Chandler always make us feel at home.

As we start to head into our busy season, I want to take the time to say thank you in advance for all the challenging work ahead. We are all heading to the first District Deputies Clinics of the year, let's go into them and take away all the valuable information presented.

We headed to San Manuel on August 8th for the South District Clinic and what great attendance. DD Mary did an excellent job, and San Manuel did an excellent job of hosting it. Next, we were off to Winslow for the North DD Clinic on August 15th, and DD Charlie was great, a lot of great reports but we had to leave early due to our visit to Prescott that evening.

Our visit to Prescott #330 was a full day to say the least, we attended their Casino Night. It was held along with the VFW and the local Moose Lodge to benefit Homeless Veterans. What a great night of fun, I only wish it would have been real money as I won \$5000 in chips.



Continued Page 2

ARIZONA ELKS ASSOCIATION 2025-2026 STATE OFFICERS

PRESIDENT:

Frank Buso

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT:

West: Pat Riley

VICE PRESIDENTS

South: Jack Ponzo

North: David Pulley

East: Giorgio Phillips

SECRETARY:

David Dean

TREASURER:

Angela Buso

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

East -1 Year:

Mike Weishan, PSP

North- 2 Year:

James R. Casacchia, PSP

West- 3 Year:

Albert "Al" Kayal, PSP

South -4 Year:

Susan Krausman, PSP

North- 5 Year:

Larry Carver, PSP

SERGEANT AT ARMS:

Sally Frankel

CHAPLAIN:

Renee Higginbotham

TILER:

Steve Cox

Inner Guard:

Joanne Lerma

ASST. SECRETARY:

Allen Swope

ASST TREASURER:

Diane Bodwell

ORGANIST:

Ira Cohen

"Elks - Always Ready to Give"

Continued from Page 1

They have a great partnership with the Moose Lodge and the VFW. Bryan Campbell did an excellent job on putting on the event. They raised a lot of money to get our Veterans off the streets and place them in homes. "God Bless Our Veterans"

We will be heading to Lake Havasu and Coolidge-Florence for the next two District Deputies Clinic at the end of August. Let us keep the hard work on bringing in new members and retaining our old members. Remember that we need to bring back those old members and make them feel they are a part of the Lodge. And get our new members active and work on committees as soon as possible.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the Show Low Golf Tournament on September 12th, come up and support their Major Projects fundraiser. Don't forget the Social Welfare Golf Tournament on October 3rd, we plan on being at both of these events. Also the Mid-Year Convention is going to be at a great new venue in October. We tasted the food and it was all delicious. See all of you down the road.

"READY ELKS – LETS GO"

"Elks Always Ready to Give"

Fraternally,
Frank Buso
Arizona Elks Association President,
Angela Buso First Lady



“Government Relations”

Reporting is our obligation to the nation

*By RICHARD SHEPARDSON
Government Relations Committee Member*

As Elks, we care, we share, and we report with purpose. Our nation recently marked its 250th anniversary. For 158 of those years, the Elks have served communities across the country. The preamble to the United States Constitution reflects on the commitments we uphold as Elks. It calls on us to support a strong home front for our military, those who serve today and those who have served in the past—while also caring for our youth, our elders, people facing poverty, and those with special needs.

The Elks honor the dedication of those who came before us and created the roadmap for success and service to others, as preserved in the statutes and manuals of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. The Elks' impact is seen in programs such as the Veterans Commission, Drug Awareness, Hoop Shoot, Scholarships, Camps, and other State Association efforts nationwide.

These efforts are possible because Elks faithfully report and preserve the history of their daily service. Each Lodge and State Association should already have four months of service recorded in its Charity Reporting System.

It is our obligation to continue to write history by reporting, recording, and documenting the cherished moments and activities of the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks. Let us be Elk Proud in our commitment to God, country, and citizens.

Submitted by
Ira Cohen, PDDGER
State Chairman
Government Relations Committee

“Mesa-Buckhorn #2656 Had a Busy Summer”

In June and July our Social Welfare Committee, lead by Leading Knight Troy Melton, raised over \$10K. That means the Social Welfare Committee once again has met it's goal. In December we will be able to take 100 kids in need on our lodge's shopping spree. The lodge is always excited for the shopping with the kids.

Our Veterans Committee, lead by Vikki Bass, was We were given a very large donation of \$60,000 a while ago in memory of some prior members. We were charged to use the money on local veteran groups and we have been able to help some of them. We gave \$10,000 checks to the Military Assistance Mission, Dogs 4 Vets, AZ Heroes to Hometowns and the Honor Flight Arizona. Each of these organizations all work tirelessly for veterans in our state. We look forward to finding a couple more organizations to give to as well!

We also worked at Valor on 8th at the pantry. As always the veterans were always so happy that we were there to help them. With the costs rising on food, they are grateful that there is some help.

The Americanism Committee, Barb Kalember and Anna Bozovich, have been extremely busy. In June, they drove around Mesa and choose 30 business' to recognize for properly flying the flag. The business range from Walmart, Red Lobster, to Circle K. Recognizing our community business' meant a lot to everyone one of them.

In August the Americanism Committee will be visiting schools in Mesa to talk about the Americanism Essay Contest. The theme this year is “ Explain a Constitution Right or Privilege and how it affects you and your family”. They will need volunteers to grade the essays we get back from the schools.

In August, several lodge committees will visit schools through out Mesa to talk about the Elk Youth Programs. The programs that we will be talking about are Americanism Essay Contest, Drug Awareness Poster and Essay Contest, Hoop Shoot, Soccer Shoot, and Scholarships. We want to engage our youth and community. Remember that all of these activities area national programs.

Submitted By; Tarrance Marrill

“Payson #2154 Donate to Payson Senior Center”

In July of 2026, the Payson Lodge #2154 responded with a \$1000 donation to a request for support from the Payson Senior Center for their Feeding Fido & Felix Program, a compassionate partnership between the Payson Senior Center and the Humane Society to help ensure local seniors never have to choose between feeding themselves and feeding the beloved pets who bring them comfort, companionship and purpose. Through this program, pet food is distributed directly to seniors in need, helping them keep their beloved companions healthy and at home where they belong. This partnership not only supports animal welfare but also strengthens the health and independence of local seniors.

Submitted By: Lu Anne Frost

Pictured Left to Right; Exalted Ruler Irma Bramlet, Janice Chesser, Director of Development at the Payson Senior Center

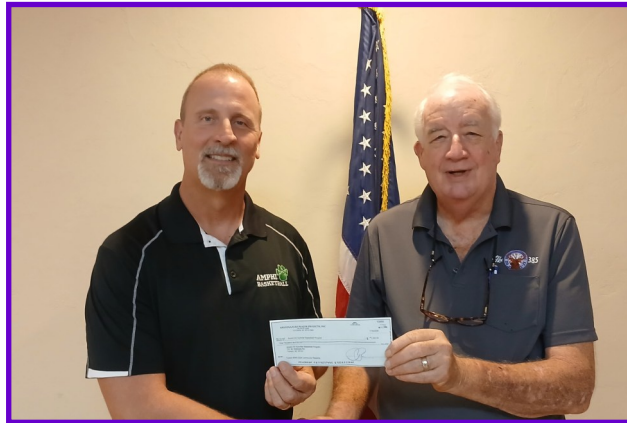


“Tucson #385 Donates Community Reward Grant”

On Wednesday, August 5, 2026, the Tucson AZ Elks Lodge #385 presented a donation of \$1,000 to Ben Hurley, Basketball Summer Program coach, Tucson AZ Amphitheater High School. This donation was made possible through the AZ Major Projects 2026 Community rewards program. Check was presented by Wayne Burns, Chairman of the Board of Directors/PER of the Tucson Elks Lodge 385.

Submitted by: Wayne Burns

Pictured Left to Right; Ben Hurley, Wayne Burns, PER



“Tucson East #2532 Stuffs Backpacks”

Members of the Elk Riders, officers and volunteers stuffed 50 backpacks for needy children from Steele Elementary School . The children and parents were also treated with a luncheon prepared by members of the Lodge Youth Activities Committee.

Submitted By; Rich Botkin, PSP

Adults pictured from left to right. Rick Botkin, President of Elk Riders, Leading night Tina Swope, Emily McDuffie school coordinator. Children photo releases on file with the school.



“Tucson East #2532 Donates Food and School Supplies”

Members of Tucson East Elks Lodge 2532 delivered over 1000 lbs. of food and teachers' supplies to Steele Elementary School. Prior to that, we presented some 50 students with backpacks completely filled with school supplies to start the school year. This was all made possible through the Beacon Grant, donations from members and money raised sponsored by the Tucson East Elk Riders.

Submitted By: Rich Botkin, PSP

Pictured Left to Right: PSP Rich Botkin, Gavin Botkin, Emily McDuffie School Coordinator, Rick Botkin, Elk Riders President



“Tucson East #2532 Donate Gratitude Grant”

Members of Tucson East donated through the Gratitude Grant a check for \$2500 dollars to "Gods Vast Resources " an organization that distributes food to the needy families in the community. Pictured here, receiving the check are Director Mark Struble and volunteer Debbie Struble.

Submitted By: Rich Botkin, PSP

Pictured Left to Right; Brigid Sherbo, Tina Swope Leading Knight, Debbie Struble, Mark Struble, Joann Botkin, Rich Botkin, PSP



“Tucson East #2532 Use Beacon Grant for Books”

In August in conjunction with the Pima County Library Tucson East was able to purchase \$2,500.00 in books with the Lodge's Beacon Grant and participate in the library annual Megamania Event. They had a great time in the Sketch workshop with Pablo Leon. Then talking with the community and coloring masks with children and as a bonus lent children a hand in making tote bags.

Submitted By: Megin Goetz, PER

Pictured Left to Right; Denise Lefkowitz Exalted Ruler, Megin Goetz PER, Bonnie Davis manning the Luchador Mask and Pima County Public Library Resource table during Megamania Event.



“Parker #1929 Holds Annual Youth Day Program”

Parker Elks Lodge #1929 held their annual Youth Day program on May 7, 2026 in honor of Elks National Youth Week. For over 50 years, Elks Youth Day has been a proud tradition in the Parker Community in collaboration with Parker High School, Town of Parker, Colorado River Indian Tribes, La Paz County and local businesses. During the event, students shadowed officials in tribal, town and county offices. The event concluded with lunch served at the Parker Elks Lodge where winners of various Elks awards were recognized. Parker Elks Lodge's \$1000 Scholarships were also presented to five Parker High School Seniors.

Submitted By: Joan Hall

Pictured Left to Right: Mesena Tunnell-Gilbert – Scholarship Chairperson, Joan Hall, Exalted Ruler. Scholarship recipients AnaMarie Baldanegro, Maddie Dunlap, Fernando Baldanegro, Haidyn Grau, Luke Martinez.



“Yuma #476 Donate to Honor Flight”

Yuma is now part of the Honor Flight Southern Arizona District. This means that our Veterans and their sponsor now have more access locations to apply for the flight program to Maryland The Yuma Elks Lodge 476 made a donation of \$5,000.00 This donation will assist the sponsor's monetary portion of the travel expenses.

Submitted By; Jim Thompson, PER

Pictured Left to Right: Leading Knight Jody Brandt, Brenda Taylor, Honor Flight Southern Arizona-Yuma Representative, Garrett Jacobson.



“Sun City #2559 Hosts Ice Cream Social at Veterans Home”

The Veteran's Service Committee organized an Ice Cream Social at the Arizona State Veterans Home on Wednesday, August 19th, where they provided personal and recreational supplies to the residents. The event was well-received by the Veterans, who enjoyed the ice cream and various recreational activities. Looking ahead, on Friday, September 18th, we are planning to host Veterans from MANA House and Ashley's Place for a special evening of recognition and dinner with our lodge members at the Lodge's POW/MIA dinner

Submitted By: Sandy McLemore

Pictured Left to Right;

Lauren Arrivé, Benito Nava, Roel Zamora, Joseph Nicholas, Kevin Trovini, Jennifer Huff, Dominic DiGiovanni (in wheel chair) decorated Veteran and friend of Elks, David Courtney, Abigail Llamas, Myra Wisniewski, Michael DiFelice, Dave Kresl, Adi Etendis, Lester Romero, Ron Friedman



“Phoenix #335 Hosts Crafting Fundraiser”

Phoenix Elks Lodge #335 held a Seashell Crafting afternoon, raising about \$350 for the Thanksgiving Baskets charity. The event was hosted by Lodge Esquire Becky Simons and member Linda Thompson. Everyone enjoyed an afternoon of decoupage creations and tasty treats from our generous bakers.

Phoenix Lodge #335's semi-annual Cash Calendar is rolling out for winners every day in September, with prizes ranging from \$50-\$500. The sell-out Calendar raffle event will bring in approximately \$3,000 for the Children's Christmas Shopping Spree Charity.

Submitted By: Linda Thompson

Pictured Left to Right: PER Diane Bodwell, Linda Acritelli, PER Karen Seaman working on their seashell creations



“Phoenix #335 Supports North Phoenix Prep”

Phoenix Elks Lodge #335 is proud to support Great Hearts North Phoenix Preparatory Academy as it begins its inaugural football season. The Lodge is providing both the American flag and Arizona State flag, which will be presented by Lodge officers at all North Phoenix Prep home football games. At the team's historic first home game, Lodge Esquire Becky Simmons and Esteemed Loyal Knight Jeff Beasley had the honor of presenting the colors before kickoff. “Supporting our youth and honoring our country are at the heart of what the Elks stand for. We’re proud to be part of this new tradition.” - Clint Tompkins, Exalted Ruler, Phoenix Elks Lodge #335. Phoenix Elks #335 looks forward to standing alongside North Phoenix Prep throughout its first season and helping make the presentation of the colors a proud tradition at every home game. *Submitted By: Jeff Beasley*

Pictured left to right: Dr. Leyva of North Phoenix Preparatory Academy, Esteemed Loyal Knight Jeff Beasley, Lodge Esquire Becky Simmons



“Chandler #2429 Holds Monthly Food Pantry”

Members of the Chandler Elks #2429 held their monthly Food Pantry at Valor on Eighth. Volunteers included Lyn Owen, Milt Brown, Phil Pease and ER Mags Bohner. Valor on Eight is a unique community in the heart of Tempe, AZ with a preference for Veteran's.

Submitted By: Sandy Theobald

Pictured Left to Right (Photo on Left); Resident Wanda Jordan and Chandler Elks Lyn Owen Pictured Left to Right (Photo on Right); Resident David Farley and ER Mags Bohner



“Ready To Serve”

Community • Friendship • Charity

ELKS
Make a Difference



Ready to Serve
join.elks.org



“Veterans News”



September 2026

Information and Veterans News

Mary I Shaffer - Elks National Veteran Service

ED Chair - Tracy Cabell.....714 587-1070

ND Chair - John Roush.....719 313-0565

SD Chair - Linda Seggie.....520 401-3990

WD Chair - Jim Thompson.....929 782-3519

2026 LUKE AFB MILITARY RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY

★★★

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

8 AM – NOON
830 AM – OPENING CEREMONY

**DoD ID Required to
Access Luke AFB**

Navy Reserve Center
Bldg 300, 14160 Marauder St
Luke AFB, AZ 85309

★★★

ID Cards – Finance – Immunizations
Bloodmobile – Veteran Service Organizations
More than 40 information providers

More info: Luke AFB Retiree Activities Office (RAO)
(623) 856-3923
Email: 56FW.RAO@us.af.mil
FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/RAO56FW/>



“A Media Release”

FAX: (773) 755-4905



PHONE: (773) 755-4904
Email: RickG@elks.org

MEMBERSHIP/PUBLIC RELATIONS

Rick Gathen
Director

A Fraternal Organization

2750 N. Lakeview Avenue
Chicago, IL 60614-1889

MEDIA ALERT –NOTICE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Elks Lead Nation in Honoring 9/11 Heroes on 25th Anniversary

Chicago, IL – September 11, 2026 – Twenty-five years after September 11, 2001, Elks Lodges across the United States, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and the Panama Canal will come together to remember, honor and never forget.

Through Patriots Day ceremonies and community events, Elks will pay tribute to the nearly 3,000 Americans who lost their lives and honor the firefighters, police officers, first responders, military members and ordinary citizens whose courage and sacrifice defined that day.

September 11 brought America together in its darkest hour. Twenty-five years later, the Elks are committed to keeping that spirit of unity, patriotism and service alive.

For more than 157 years, the Elks have served America and its communities. Today, nearly 800,000 members in approximately 1,800 Lodges continue that tradition, contributing more than \$553 million in charitable service, goods and volunteer time in 2025 alone.

We remember those we lost. We honor those who served. And we recommit ourselves to serving the communities and country they gave so much to protect. **The Elks will never forget.**

About the Elks

Founded in 1868, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks is one of the nation's largest and oldest charitable and patriotic organizations. Through 1,800 local Lodges, Elks members provide millions of dollars and countless hours of volunteer service each year to support veterans, children, scholarships, youth programs and communities across the country.

For more information or to find an Elks Lodge near you, visit [Elks.org](https://elks.org). For membership information, visit [Join.Elks.org](https://join.elks.org).

“AEMP 2026 Mid-Year Raffle”**2026 Mid-Year Raffle****Win this 2026 Chevy Trailblazer****ONLY 15000 TICKETS AVAILABLE**

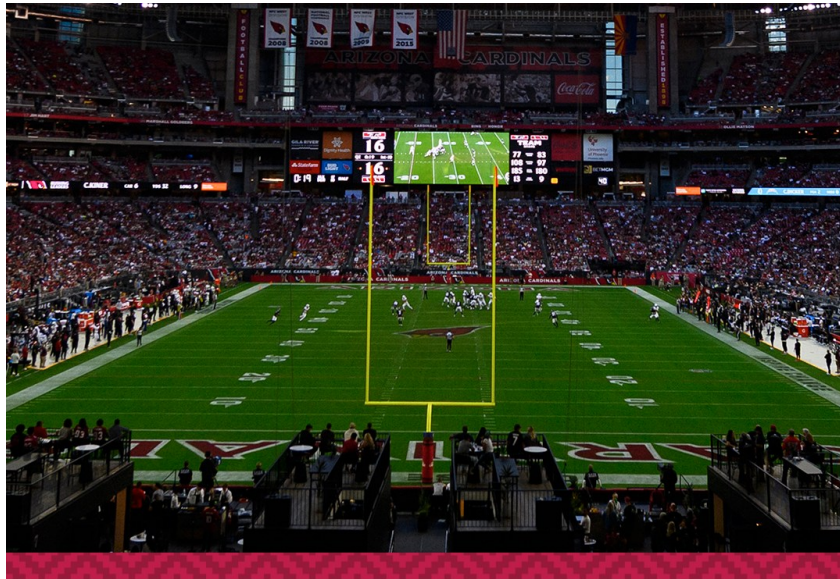
Get your Tickets at your local Elks Lodges, from the
Arizona Elks Major Projects Office
Or Scan the QR code below

**Ticket are: \$20 each, 3 tickets for \$50.**

Drawing will be held on October 17, 2026 at the
AEA Mid-Year Meeting in Tempe AZ.

Must be 21 years of age or older to win. Tickets are not tax deductible. Winners are responsible for any applicable taxes and vehicle registration fee's.

“Save The Date”



ARIZONA ELKS SUNDAY SHOWDOWN



SUNDAY, NOV. 15 | 2:05 PM | STATE FARM STADIUM

Get ready for an electrifying team bonding experience that's sure to be a touchdown! Join your fellow Elks on November 15, 2026, for an unforgettable day as the Arizona Cardinals clash with the Los Angeles Rams. This isn't just a game; it's your chance to cheer, connect, and make lasting memories with your association. Don't miss out on the ultimate group outing!



<https://www.gofevo.com/event/Arizonaelks4>

Use the above link to purchase tickets

Let's Go Cardinals!!!

"Save The Date"

Arizona Elks Association
Social Welfare
Annual "Children's Shopping Spree"

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Saturday, October 3rd, 2026

Continental Golf Course

7920 E Osborn Rd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

\$100 per Golfer (\$90 if paid by 9/20/2026)

Four Person Scramble

Shotgun Start 7AM

Price includes;

- * 18 holes of golf with cart and a Goodie Bag
- * Lunch following at Scottsdale Elks Lodge #2148
- * Putting Contest, Longest Drive, Closest to the pin, 50/50, and Mulligans

"...it's ALL for the KIDS!"

Tournament Coordinator; Lynn Youngs PER
480)299-0198 Email lynnyoungs58@gmail.com

Tee Box Sponsorships Available \$50 Per Sign

"Save The Date"

DOUGLAS ELKS LODGE #955
ARIZONA ELKS
MAJOR PROJECTS
& SPECIAL OLYMPICS
2026

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Supporting Youth, Veterans, & Local Community
Closest to pin prizes

742126 50/50 742126
Raffle



**\$50.00 per player includes: Green Fees,
Golf Cart, & Lunch**

4 MAN SCRAMBLE
8AM REGISTRATION
9AM SHOTGUN START
CONTACT
FOR INFO

SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 19TH 2026
AT DOUGLAS COUNTRY CLUB
Leave a message at: 520-364-5132
or call after 5pm Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
Nolan Robert: 520-227-5773
Or Email BPOE955@arizonaelks.org

SPONSOR SIGN
\$25.00



“Save The Date”



Save the Date!

SATURDAY OCTOBER 24, 2026

ALL DAY EVENT!

Ajo Elks Lodge # 1576

12th and BEST EVER ANNUAL

SKETCHBOOK.COM
JEEP RUN / DESERT SCAVENGER HUNT / POKER RUN

CASH PRIZES and Raffles

8 am to 10 am – Jeep Run Registration- \$25.00 per vehicle

(pick up sack lunch, Poker Run Bead, Desert Scavenger Hunt List and **NEW** Map)

(All Jeep Contestants must be back at the lodge by 2 pm.)

3 pm – Corn Hole Tournament- \$15.00 per person

Cash prize for winner

6 pm – Dinner: \$25.00 per person – Rib Dinner

Pie and Cake Auction

(Out of town participants are welcome to bring auction or raffle item)

50/50 Raffle

JEEP RUN/DESERT SCAVENGER HUNT/POKER RUN

\$25.00 for the first two people in Vehicle.

\$10.00 an additional person(s) (INCLUDES SACK LUNCH FOR ALL)

Cash prize for best Highest and Lowest Poker Hand.

Proceeds donated to A.E.M.P.

**DESERT
SCAVENGER
HUNT**

R.S.V.P with
Debbie Allen
debbie.allen7150@gmail.com

"Grand Lodge News"

SEPTEMBER 2026

www.elks.org

Volume 62, No. 2



Grand Lodge NEWSLETTER

Elks Care — Elks Share



Fall season means plenty of new goals for Lodges

As we move toward the fall season and the halfway point of our Elks year, it is time to assess how our Lodges are performing based on our goals. If you are not meeting them, consider what adjustments you can make to get your Lodge moving forward in a positive fashion.

This time of year is also the start of the visits from your District Deputy. These visits will provide a look into your overall Lodge operations. Be sure to plan with your Lodge leadership for the visit by completing the audit items, building a self-inspection checklist, and compiling all the other information that is needed by the DD. This planning and preparation will lay the foundation for a successful visit.

Lodge Secretaries, if you are not on the Grand Lodge billing system, I encourage



Message from the Grand Exalted Ruler

**TIMOTHY F.
JAEGER**

you to consider looking into the system. If you are not on the system, it is time to begin sending your six-month dues and delinquent notices. Reach out to a team to proactively contact the delinquent Members. Just ask *Ready Elks* and your team will respond *Let's Go!*

It is also time to begin getting information out to the school guidance counselors and providing them with information for the student applications

for scholarships. Please follow the Elks website for application deadlines for these grants. Don't wait, act quickly.

Do not forget to apply for the grants that your Lodge is eligible for. Those funds can expand your reach in the community.

Be sure and share the good work with your Members and the community. Let people know that when Elks see a need they send out the cry and respond. *Ready Elks—Let's Go!*

Consider holding a 9/11 remembrance celebration in your Lodge and include your community. This is the 25th anniversary of the tragedy. What an important time to remember those we lost and to share the Elks' patriotism within your communities.

Please see GER, Page 2

GER From Page 1

Please visit elks.org for information on the various contests for Lodges and our youth. The site also contains awards you can request to honor Members and leaders in your community. [Elks.org](http://elks.org) also has manuals,

designed to help us manage our Lodges.

Thank you for your continued efforts as we grow and improve our Lodges and the great works you are doing for your communities. I know you will all be quick to respond when you hear the call: *Ready Elks—Let's Go!*

Famous Elks

"Life is 10 percent
what you make it and
90 percent how you
take it."

-Irving Berlin,
American Composer
New York Lodge No. 1
New York, NY

Community • Friendship • Charity
join.elks.org



ELKS National Memorial



**Celebrating
100 Years**

