



EMPIRE STATE ELK

Official Publication of the New York State Elks Major Projects, Inc.
Summer 2025 Issue



STATE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

John Lawless
2025-2026

"Together Elks Achieve More"

PGER Carr, PGER Hidley, Past President DeFrank, Members of the Advisory Board, and my fellow Members:

To those of us here today, this is a solemn and most momentous occasion, and yet in the history of our Association it is a commonplace occurrence.

The orderly transfer of authority as called for in our Association Constitution routinely takes place, as it has, for over a century, and few of us stop to think how unique we really are.

Past State President Tania, I want our fellow Members to know how much you did to help carry on this tradition. By your gracious leadership, you have moved the New York State Elks Association forward in important and lasting ways. Like your predecessors, you have created a powerful legacy as a testament to how important the work of our Association and our Order are!

My motto for this year is – Together Elks Achieve More! To my thinking, it encompasses 3 important fundamentals:

1. To Strengthen Veteran Support and Engagement
2. To Enhance Community Impact within our State Major Project CP
3. To Boost Membership and Lodge Vitality

If we can succeed at accomplishing these three simple objectives, it will go a long way towards fostering unity within and among our Lodges, fostering a sense of service to others, and finally, fostering a year of growth.

On the night when Elks becomes Members, we are advised that Elks are **'distinctively American'**, presented with an American Flag and summoned to a noble cause by the statement,

'may it ever stimulate you to the performance of your full duty in the preservation and defense of all it represents.'

The Flag of our Nation **IS** the flag of the Order of Elks.

From the moment a person becomes an Elk to the moment they pass into the greater light, this flag stays front and center in their lives!

The Flag is equally a symbol of our rights in this Nation and more importantly, our duties to preserve those rights.

It means that we honor our country's veterans and first responders – men and women, who at one point in their lives have given the United States of America a blank check – by each pledging their life in defense of the freedoms we all enjoy.

It means that we look after our country's youth, on their journey to becoming full, productive citizens of our great Nation.

It means that we help others deal with life's challenges or infirmities, like supporting the great work of our State Major Projects and ENF; through which we provide resources that make a difference in the lives of individuals and communities.

It means that we pay it forward. It means that, as Elks, we share a common commitment to making our great Nation better than it is today.

How can we not reflect the charity that is so much a part of our makeup? How can we love our country and not love our countrymen; and in loving them, reach out a hand when they fall, feed them when they're hungry, help them find secure, safe places in which to live, and help to make them self-sufficient so they will be equal in fact and not just in theory?

We have every right to dream heroic dreams. Those who say that we're in a time when there are not heroes, just don't know where to look. You can see heroes every day going in and out of factory gates.

Others, a handful in number, produce enough food to feed all of us and then the world beyond. You meet heroes across counters, and they're on both sides of those counters.

They are entrepreneurs with faith in themselves and faith in an idea, who create new jobs, new wealth and opportunity.

They're individuals and families whose voluntary gifts support church, charity, culture, art, and education.

Most especially, they're in our Lodges. Their patriotism is quiet, yet deep.

I'd like to tell you something very special about your Lodges, the NYS Elks Association, and indeed, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks and America itself.

They were all built by American citizens who took charge of their own lives and had the courage to forge ahead with purpose and determination.

They were tenacious and had enough confidence to take the necessary risks. That self-reliance is what characterizes Americans as Americans.

It is our duty, our honor and especially our privilege every day in all Elks Lodges, to remember what it means; and to assert our American Patriotism.

The business of our Lodges, our Association and our Order goes forward. The challenges we face today are no less intense, serious or important than they have always been:

Declining Membership, Cost Increases to operate Lodges, Increasing Liabilities, greater need for benevolence in our communities, challenges recruiting officers and leadership in Lodges...just to name a few.

Can we solve the problems confronting us?

The answer is an unequivocal and emphatic **'YES!'**

To paraphrase Winston Churchill, I did not take the oath I've just taken with the intention of presiding over the dissolution of this Association.

Our lives as Elks may well be filled with service to others, but when each of us was charged to:

"Strive diligently that the name of Elk as borne by you may be worthy of an American citizen -- one who loves their fellow man,"

an extra ingredient was added.

The name of Elk, as defined by our cardinal principles – *Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity* – symbolizes a moral code unique to Elks.

They are not mere words; rather they guide the conduct and patriotism of Elks; indeed, the journey of an Elk. They are the great star of hope for those that love family and home and friend.

Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love, Fidelity: these four respected words dictate what we ought to be, what we can be, what we will be.

They call us to action: to build resolve when resolve seems to fail; to regain faith when there seems to be little cause for faith; to create hope when hope becomes desperate.

Our principles, which those words enable, embrace the highest moral laws and will stand the test of any ethics or philosophies ever proclaimed for the advancement of humanity.

Above all, we must realize that there is nothing so formidable as the will and moral courage of Elks.

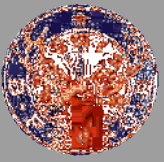
And after all, why shouldn't we believe that? We are Elks.

God bless you and thank you for the honor of serving as President of this great Association



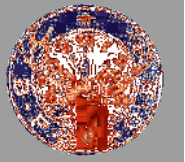
New York State Elks Association President John Lawless, of Haverstraw Lodge #877 is pictured above as he proudly waves and presented the New York State Flag during the Flag Presentation Ceremony during the Opening Ceremony at the Grand Lodge Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. He is pictured below meeting Grand Exalted Ruler Brian Klatt.





NEW YORK STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION

Meet State President John Lawless



John Lawless was initiated into Haverstraw Lodge #877, 33 years ago on December 8, 1992. Early on, he worked on many committees in the Lodge until he was able to find the time around his career and family obligations to serve as a Lodge Officer. John was appointed Lodge Esquire in 2009 and subsequently elected into the chairs before becoming the Exalted Ruler in 2013. After his year as Exalted Ruler, he returned to the Loyal Knight position to fill in for an Officer who could not fulfill his duties. In the following year, 2015, John was elected Lodge Secretary, a position he still holds.

John descends from a rich family history at the Haverstraw Elks Lodge. His great uncle James Finnegan was a Charter member of the Lodge in 1903, and his family has maintained a continuous presence in the Lodge ever since. Family life instilled within John, at an early age, that the Elks are a team. Family members coached that each Elk lives, sleeps, eats and serves as part of that team.

At Haverstraw Lodge, John has chaired or served on every Lodge Committee, taking particular interest in the ENF and Membership Committees, both of which he continues to chair. In his Membership Chair role, John has worked hard and significantly increased Haverstraw Lodge's membership to over 1,500 members. John has earned numerous awards, certificates and recognition for his hard work from the Grand Lodge, NYSEA and the Hudson Valley District for his roles as both Membership and ENF Chair's and consistently achieves an over 80 percent membership support and retention rate for ENF donations.

As a District Representative, John has served as Membership, ENF, and Training Chairman as well as serving as a Grand Lodge Special Representative for Lodges requiring assistance, both in the Hudson Valley District and adjacent districts. He has served on the teams of 7 State Vice-Presidents as well as 5 District Deputies. In the past few years, John has been assisting Past State President Joseph Petriello with District Sponsor responsibilities and obligations.

On the State level, John was elected NY State Trustee, serving from 2016 through 2019, and he was then elected as the Hudson Valley State Vice-President in 2019. John was further honored to serve as the NYSEA Elks Memorial Day Chairman from 2019-2023.

John's Grand Lodge service includes two terms as District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler in 2021- 2022 & 2022-2023 attending the respective Grand Lodge Conventions in Tampa, Fl. and Atlanta, Ga. John also attended Grand Lodge Sessions in 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024.

John served as a volunteer fireman in his hometown for over 30 years. He is a Veteran of the U.S. Army, having served in Operations Dessert Shield / Storm. He is a retired Town of Haverstraw Police Sergeant, also having worked for the Rockland County Sheriff's Department and the Rockland County District Attorney's Office Narcotics Task Force. In 2000, John received the New York State Police Officer of the Year Award, New York State's highest award for bravery in the line of duty, for his heroic actions while saving numerous residents, including infant children during a massive fast spreading apartment complex fire, risking his own life multiple times. The award was presented by Governor George Pataki, a fellow Elk and member of Peekskill Lodge #744.

John currently resides in the North Rockland area which comprises the Towns of Haverstraw and Stony Point. John is in a relationship with his long-time partner Maureen. Between them they have 5 grown adult children, as well as one beautiful granddaughter and a grandson on the way.



State President **John Lawless** is pictured as he is presented a Presidential Gavel from Past State President **Barry Griffith** at the closing of the Spring Convention Dinner Gala.



Newly installed State President **John Lawless** is pictured as he delivered his first speech as State President during the closing session at 2025 Spring Convention at the Villa Roma Resort in Callicoon, New York. During this speech he noted his motto for the coming year is "Together Elks Achieve More".



New York State Elks Association President **John Lawless** and fist Lady Maureen are pictured with newly installed State Trustee Paul Crumb and State Vice President Barbara Farber following the closing ceremony at the spring convention at the Villa Roma Resort. Paul and Barbara both represent the Hudson Valley District, State President John's home district.



John Lawless of Haverstraw Lodge #877 is pictured during the closing ceremony at the 2025 Spring Convention as he is sworn in as President for the 2025-2026 Fraternal Year. Also pictured being sworn in are State Treasurer Chris Maddock of Lyons Lodge #869 and State Secretary Renee Bott of Cohoes-Waterford Lodge #1317.



New York State Elks Association President **John Lawless**, of Haverstraw Lodge #877, and **First Lady Maureen** are pictured with Past Grand Exalted Ruler David R. Carr and his wife Penny at the State Association brunch. The brunch was held prior to the Opening Ceremony at the Grand Lodge Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. In the picture to the left, State President Lawless and First Lady Maureen are pictured with State Internet/Electronic Media Chair Mel Oliveira and Grand Lodge Housing Director Tony Thanopoulos prior to the Grand Lodge Opening Ceremony in Kansas City, Missouri.





NEW YORK STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION MAJOR PROJECT



**PAST STATE PRESIDENT
JAMIE PEACE
Major Project Message
Summer 2025**

As summer comes to a close and fall begins, many of our programs are ramping up for a busy and productive season.

Applications are now open for several scholarship opportunities, including the New York Elks Scholarships, as well as the ENF Most Valuable Student and Legacy Scholarships. Please encourage eligible students to apply!

Our **Soccer Shoot** competitions are in full swing, and **Hoop Shoot** events will kick off this fall. Be sure to support these great youth programs in your local areas.

The **District Deputy GER visits** and **State Vice President Visits** are now underway. These officers carry important messages from both our National Order and our State Association. During these visits, the State Vice-Presidents will be emphasizing the importance of meeting your **per capita donation** for our **Major Project** – the **CP Home Services Program**.

This year's per capita rate for the Major Project remains \$8.00 per member. Thanks to your generosity, last year's donations reached an incredible milestone - \$10.00 per member, the highest total since 1964! A sincere thank-you to everyone who contributed. Let's aim to exceed that record this year!

At the **Fall Conference at the Villa Roma**, we will be announcing the new **Major Project Ambassadors** who will serve for the next three years. David and Vicki Brown, our State Major Projects Chairpersons, have been traveling throughout New York State interviewing a diverse group of candidates, including children, young adults, and older adults. These Ambassadors help showcase the vital work of our **Home Service Directors**, who provide support to individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities and their families.

Lodges and districts interested in inviting one of our Ambassadors to an event must submit their request through State Chairman David Brown.

We also want to thank everyone who participated in **Elks Day at Yankee Stadium**. Despite the game time change, the event was a huge success. A special thanks to the **New York Yankees**, who donated **\$5.00 per ticket** sold back to the Major Project.

To all New York Elk members: thank you for your continued support of our **Major Project** and all the programs within our association.

And always remember:

“The best preparation for tomorrow is being your best today.”



Herkimer Lodge #1439 recently hosted the Lodges annual car show. The car show, which benefits Cerebral Palsy, was very successful. The event raised over \$3,500.00 for the New York State Elks Association Major Project. At the event, a special C. P. award was presented to Cheryl Robinson. She is pictured with Past District Deputy and event Chairman Roy Henry, Past State President and Major Projects Chairman Jamie Peace, Past District Deputy Yvonne Peace as she accepted the award.



New York State Elks Association President **John Lawless**, Past Grand Exalted Ruler **Bruce Hidley** and his wife **Helen**, were just some of the many New York State Elks Association members that recently attended a baseball game at Yankee Stadium to benefit the Major Project. The New York Yankee organization will be donating \$5.00 per ticket purchased by members to the Major Project.



Glens Falls Lodge #81 recently hosted the Lodges first annual car and craft show. Exalted Ruler Paul Reece Jr., member Bill Gray and Past State President Brian Greene are pictured at the event. Several of the cars in the car show are also pictured. The event was chaired by member Bill Grey. Proceeds from the event will benefit the New York State Elks Association Major Project.



MAJOR PROJECT COMMITTEE DUTIES

This committee shall promote the designated Major Projects of the Association and disseminate full and complete information concerning same to each Lodge. This committee shall carry out the program of the New York Elks Major Projects Corporation in accordance with the rules, regulations and procedures adopted by the Association. The Chairman shall file a written report with the Secretary of the Association, and report to the membership concerning the activities of his/her committee. The MAJOR PROJECTS Committee shall operate, manage, and control the Major Projects of this Association. It shall apply and expend for charitable purposes, and no other, monies paid to the Major Projects Fund by the Elks of New York or any other persons or corporations. It shall plan and execute campaigns and activities for the raising of additional monies to further said Major Projects. In any matters relating to the raising of funds or the disbursement of money, the advice and consent of the majority of the members of the Board of Trustees shall be first obtained. A full and complete report of all activities and an accounting for all funds received and expended by said committee shall be submitted to each annual meeting of this Association.

The 2025-2026 Committee members/District Chairs are: Chair **David Brown** from Ballston Spa Lodge #2619, **Deb Kruk** (Mohawk Valley), **William P. Murphey** (East), **Joseph Hussey** (East Central), **John Downs** (Hudson), **Holly Drew** (Colonial), **Joan Carlo** (North Central), **Alison Englert** (North Hudson), **Mary Bielby** (Central), **John Reidy** (South), **Tim Sayers** (South Central), **Norm Biegaj** (Southern Tier), **Jackie Oliveira** (State Capital), **Gerald Claude** (West) and **Cheryl Garlock** (West Central).



State wide leadership, support and coordination

NEW YORK STATE ELK ASSOCIATION MAJOR PROJECT



There are several keywords and paraphrases in these procedural statements that make reference to CP of New York State's commitment, their continued efforts to grow and achieve, and their efforts to improve the care and comfort of those whom they serve. These terms also seem to involve the New York State Elks Association's Major Projects Partnership with CP of New York State to help those less fortunate than ourselves.

Words and phrases such as: individual needs, advocacy, support, access, quality services, choices, inclusion, life long opportunities, person-centered, accessible comprehensive choices for independence – these terms all describe the varying roles that the Home Service Director plays in the life of a person with disabilities and his/her family.

For the past 60 years (since its founding in 1946), CP of New York State has striven to put "People First" – to provide unqualified help in the many areas stated above – for all people with disabilities. This "person centered and patient first" approach is a sacrosanct rule of CP of New York State, no policy supersedes it.

CP of New York State has worked (and continues to work) long and hard to do away with the "institutional" approach of by gone days and work through a community-based procedure to help people with disabilities and their families. The result is that the individual and his/her family now have a voice in the decisions that impact their lives on a daily basis. Who is in the forefront of this operation? The Home Service Director.

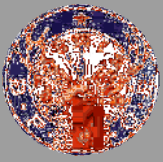
As you read this article, CP of New York State, through its 24 affiliates, is providing services for more than 88,000 people with disabilities. Seventeen thousand are employed – and many, many more – including several Elks Lodges are involved in volunteering at these agencies.

No person with a disability is ever turned away. In fact, this concept has caused CP of New York State to develop programs to meet the needs of those with autism and other developmental problems. Autism is a growing problem in our country – and CP of New York State, as ever is there to help.

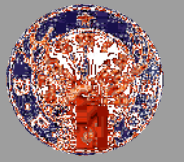
CP of New York State is also in the forefront of delivery health care to those with disabilities – and the community in general – through the Article 28 and Article 16 clinics. In many areas of our state, these clinics are the only dental provider that will accept Medicaid. It is another of CP New York's basic tenets that people with disabilities AND Medicaid recipients deserve the same health care services as are available to other New York Staters.

The days of the institutions – like Willowbrook – are gone. Community-based living in smaller settings is the trend of today – and the wave of the future. These significant accomplishments of CP of New York State are happenings we can all be proud of. **Elks Care** and **Elks Share** as we work hand in hand with CP of New York State.

The role of the Home Service Director is one of the vital strands that bind CP of New York State together. The New York State Elks Association Major Project is the solid foundation upon which the program of the Home Service Director rests.



NEW YORK STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION SPRING CONVENTION 2025 HIGHLIGHTS



The 111th Annual Convention of the New York State Elks Association and Spring Meeting of the New York Elks Major Projects, Inc. was held at the Villa Roma Resort in Callicoon, New York from May 15, 2025 to May 18, 2025. The convention was attended by members and guests representing Lodges from throughout the State. The convention began with an Opening Ceremony and Memorial Ceremony on Thursday evening, May 15th, 2025. The opening ceremony consisted of an invocation by Father Michael Martine, the Pledge of Allegiance, that was lead by East Central District SVP Brian Minerly, a musical selection sung by Vocalist Francine Nichols, an introduction of Dias Dignitaries provided by Past State President Richard Wunder, a welcoming from East Central District Deputy Merrill Connor, a State Association welcome from State President Tania DeFrank and remarks from the Honorable David R. Carr. He was introduced by Past Grand Exalted Ruler Bruce A. Hidley. Past State President Richard Wunder provided closing remarks. The Memorial Ceremony immediately followed the opening Ceremony. As part of the Memorial Ceremony, fifty-five Past Exalted Rulers who passed away from 2024-2025 were remembered. The ceremony featured an Invocation and Benediction from Father Michael Martini, the Eleven O'clock Toast by PDDGER Paul Crump, a Necrology by State Secretary Rena Bott and Past State President Kevin Connolly, a General Eulogy by Past District Deputy Michael Sage of Vestal Lodge #2508 and a Eulogy for Past State President Michael J. Bloss delivered by his daughter and Clifton Park #2466 member Kait Bloss. Two musical selections were song by Vocalist Francine Nichols.

On Friday morning, May 16th, State President Tania DeFrank called the Opening Business session to order. An Invocation was provided by Father Michael Martini, the Pledge of Allegiance by Past State President Richard Wunder, and the National Anthem was song by Past District Deputy Mark Stuparich of New York Lodge #1. State President DeFrank then introduced the Advisory Board members in attendance, followed by remarks from Past Grand Exalted Ruler's Bruce A. Hidley and David R. Carr. Reports from the different committee chairs then commenced. Following the committee reports, there were nominations for State Vice Presidents, Trustees and State President. John Lawless of Haverstraw Lodge #877 was elected as State President for the 2025-2026 fraternal year and shortly thereafter provided his acceptance speech. His speech will be featured in the summer electronic edition. The convention featured workshops on Friday and Saturday that were well attended by the many Association members. Workshop included National Veterans Service (featuring guest speakers Fred S. Sganga and Jonathan C. Spier from the Long Island State Veterans Home), Government Relations, Community and Lodge Activities, Drug Awareness (featuring National Drug Awareness Motivational Speaker Ray Lozano), Membership/Membership Retention (featuring Grand Lodge Membership and Marketing Manager Rick Gathen), Elks National Foundation, Youth Activities/Soccer, Scholarship and Emergency Grants, Americanism/Flag Day, Empire State Elk/Public Relations/Internet-Website, Major Projects (featuring guest speakers Bill DeVoe and Sue Williams from State CP), Camp Bristol, Accident Prevention/Insurance and a Secretaries/Treasurers workshop.

During the convention workshop and business session, numerous members and Lodges were recognized with awards for the 2024-2025 fraternal year. Significant Awards were presented to; Michael Mondoux of Glens Falls Lodge #81 —CP Person of the Year; Thomas Hand of Wellsville Lodge #1495—Irene Pashley Memorial Major Project Award; John Nuzzi Sr. (New York Lodge #1) and Sharon Harris (Sidney #2175) —Veterans Volunteer of the Year; Gordan Kalisz (Colonial District) —Major Project State Vice President Award. All American Lodge Awards were presented to Ossining Lodge #1486 (Division I), Webster-Fairport Lodge #2396 (Division II), Gouverneur Lodge #2035 (Division III), Saratoga-Wilton Lodge #161 (Division V) and Vestal #2508 (Division VI). Islip Lodge #2533 placed second in Division I. During the Membership workshop, Beacon Lodge #1493 was announced as the Bruce A. Hidley Cup winner for greatest gain (68) and David R. Carr Exalted Ruler's Cup for biggest membership gain (66). Webster-Fairport Lodge #2396 was the winner of the Presidents Cup for best percentage gain (14.9). ENF Chairman Challenge Awards were presented to Mark Wunder (Lyons #869), Debra Kruk (Scotia-Glenville #2759), Jimmy Jackson (Gouverneur #2035), Lisa Moldovan (New York #1), Susan Waghorn (Saratoga-Wilton #161) and Pedro Rosa (Rotterdam #2157). Per member giving awards were presented to Mid -Westchester Lodge #535 (Division I), Wester-Fairport Lodge #2396 (Division II), Saugerties Lodge #2574 (Division III), New York Lodge #1 (Division IV), Clifton-Park Lodge #2466 (Division V) and Haverstraw Lodge #877 (Division VI). Numerous 2024-2025 Major Project per Capita Awards were presented during the Major Projects. Lodges recognized for achieving a per capita donation of \$20 were Islip Lodge #2533, Ballston Spa Lodge #2619, Cohoes-Waterford Lodge #1317. Lodges recognized for \$25 or more per capita were Liverpool Lodge #2348, New York Lodge #1, Glens Falls Lodge #81, Clifton-Park Lodge #2466 and Horseheads Lodge #2297. Mid-Westchester Lodge #535 was recognized for achieving a \$30 or more per capita. During the Ritual report, State Ritual Chair Brian Scott announced that Carthage Lodge \$1762 was the winner of the 2025 State Ritual Contest and will be representing the New York State Elks Association at the National Contest in Kansas City.

The Spring 2025 convention concluded with a Gala State Banquet and closing ceremonies that included the Installation of State Officers, including John Lawless from Haverstraw Lodge #877 as new State President for 2025-2026; Renee Bott of Cohoes-Waterford Lodge #1317 as State Secretary, Christopher Maddock of Lyons Lodge #869 as State Treasurer, John Nuzzi Sr. of New York Lodge #1 as Sergeant—At— Arms and William Pine of Kingston #550 as Tiler. The following were installed as State Vice Presidents; Audrey Osterlitz (Mohawk Valley), Jacqueline Karlin (East), Brian Minerly (East Central), Barbara Farber (Hudson Valley), Jill Lloyd (Colonial), Dan Shannon (North Central), Michael Pendergast (North Hudson), Michael Loughrey (Central), Paul Schneller (South), Brett Dubois (South Central), Thomas Hand (Southern Tier), William Rosenberger (State Capital), Benjamin Zieziula (West) and Paul Golding (West Central).



Mike Mondoux of Glens Falls Lodge #81 is the recipient of the 2024-2025 CP Person of the Year Award. Mike has provided dedicated service in support of the NYS Major Project. The award was presented during the closing Business Session at the Spring Convention. He is pictured as he accepted the award from Major Project Chair David Brown, Major Projects Board of Directors Chairperson Jamie Peace and State President Tania DeFrank. The inscription on his plaque reads "For Outstanding Dedication and Support of New York State Elks Major Projects".



Tom Hand of Wellsville Lodge #1495 is the recipients of the 2024-2025 Irene Pashley Memorial Major Project Award. Tom is pictured receiving the award from Major Project Chair David Brown, Major Projects Board of Director Chairperson Jamie Peace and State President Tania DeFrank. The inscription on his plaques reads "This Award is Presented Annually to a Member of the Major Project Family Who Through Their Dedication and Actions Exemplify the Concept of Quality of Life for Those We Serve. This Individual Continues to Recognize the Challenges Faced Daily and the Importance of Finding a Way to Productivity Include Them in the Everyday Activities We All Take For Granted".



Major Project Ambassador **Charles Dieteman** made his final appearance as an Ambassador at the Spring Convention. Charles chose to skip his college graduation at Niagara University so that he could attend the Convention. He spoke briefly at the Major Project Workshop and at the business session. During his remarks at the closing session, Charles informed members he had recently conducted a second annual meat raffle and as a result, raised \$19,000 for the New York State Elks Major Project. Charles is pictured as he presented the donation to Major Project Chair David Brown.



State Vice President **Gordan Kalisz** of Glens Falls Lodge #81 (Colonial District) is the recipients of the 2024-2025 State Vice President Award for Outstanding Support of the New York State Elks Major Projects. He is pictured receiving his award from Major Project Chair David Brown, Major Projects Board of Directors Chairperson Jamie Peace and NY State Elks Association President Tania DeFrank.

**NEW YORK STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION
SPRING CONVENTION AWARDS 2025**



**All American Lodge Contest
Ossining Lodge #1486
First Place-Division 1**



**All American Lodge Contest
Islip Lodge #2533
Second Place-Division 1**



**All American Lodge Contest
Webster-Fairport Lodge #2396
First Place-Division II**



**All American Lodge Contest
Gouverneur Lodge #2035
First Place-Division III**



**All American Lodge Contest Contest
Saratoga-Wilton Lodge #161
First Place Division V**



**All American Lodge Contest
Vestal Lodge #2508
First Place Division VI**



**Membership Awards
Beacon Lodge #1493
David R. Carr Exalter Rulers Cup Winner**



**Membership Awards
Beacon Lodge #1493
Bruce A. Hidley Cup Winner**

**NEW YORK STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION
SPRING CONVENTION AWARDS 2025**



**Membership Awards
Wester-Fairport Lodge #2396
Presidents Cup Winner**



**ENF Chair Challenge Award
Mark Wunder-Lyons Lodge #869
Division 1**



**ENF Chair Challenge Award
Debra B. Kruk-Scotia- Glenville Lodge #2759
Division II**



**ENF Chair Challenge
Jimmy Jackson-Gouverneur Lodge #2035
Division III**



**ENF Chair Challenge
Lisa Moldovan-New York Lodge #1
Division IV**



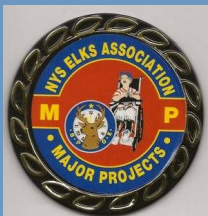
**ENF Chair Challenge
Susan Waghorn-Saratoga-Wilton Lodge #161
Division V**



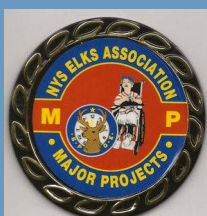
**ENF Chair Challenge
Pedro Rosa-Rotterdam Lodge #
Division VI**



**ENF Per Member Giving
Lisa Moldovan-New York Lodge #1
Division IV**



**NEW YORK ELK ASSOCIATION
MAJOR PROJECT
PER CAPITA AWARDS 2024-2025**



Major Project Per Capita Awards for the Fraternal year 2024-2025 were awarded at the Spring Convention. Lodge, Group and Individual Awards were presented during the Major Project Workshop. Some of the many awards presented are illustrated on this and the following page. Major Project Ambassador Charles Dietzman and Major Projects Board Chairman Jamie Peace presented the awards.



Keeseville Lodge #2072—\$10 per capita.



Greenwich Lodge #2223—\$10 per capita



Olean Lodge #491— \$10 per capita



Owego Lodge #1039—\$10 per capita



Twin Cities Lodge #860—\$10 per capita



Ticonderoga Lodge #1494—\$10 per capita

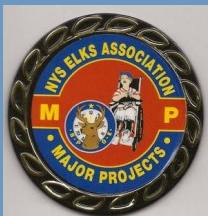


Brunswick Lodge #2566—\$10 per capita

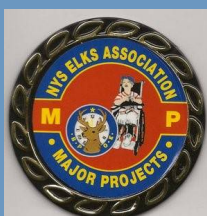


Vestal Lodge #2508—\$10 per capita





**NEW YORK ELK ASSOCIATION
MAJOR PROJECT
PER CAPITA AWARDS 2024-2025**



Binghamton Lodge #70—\$10 per capita.



Elmira Lodge #82—\$10 per capita



Brooklyn-Queensborough Lodge #878—\$10 per capita



New Hyde Park-North Shore Lodge #2107—\$10 per capita



Wellsville Lodge #1495—\$10 per capita



Esperance Lodge #2407—\$10 per capita

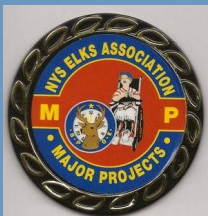


Amsterdam Lodge #101—\$10 per capita

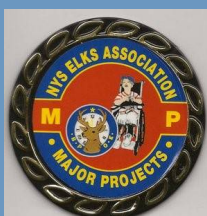


Canajoharie-Fort Plain Lodge #2621—\$10 per capita





**NEW YORK ELK ASSOCIATION
MAJOR PROJECT
PER CAPITA AWARDS 2024-2025**



Ossining Lodge #1486—\$10 per capita.



Monticello Lodge #1544—\$10 per capita



Rotterdam Lodge #2157—\$10 per capita



Ellenville Lodge #1971—\$10 per capita



Cobleskill Lodge #2040—\$10 per capita



Herkimer Lodge #1439—\$10 per capita

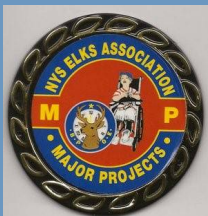


Massapequa Lodge #2162—\$10 per capita

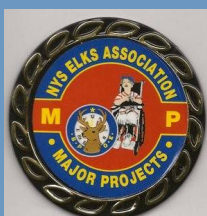


Scotia Glenville Lodge #2759—\$10 per capita





**NEW YORK ELKS ASSOCIATION
MAJOR PROJECT
PER CAPITA AWARDS 2024-2025**



Riverhead Lodge #2044—\$10 per capita.



Rensselaer Lodge #2073—\$15 per capita



Port Jefferson Lodge #2138—\$15 per capita



Ken Ton Lodge #1942—\$15 per capita



Endicott Lodge #1977—\$15 per capita



Saratoga Wilton Lodge #161—\$15 per capita

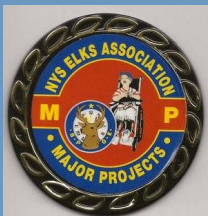


Cohoes Waterford Lodge #1317—\$20 per capita

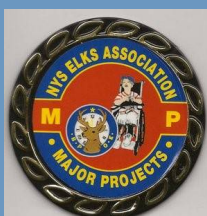


Islip Lodge #2533—\$20 per capita





**NEW YORK ELK ASSOCIATION
MAJOR PROJECT
PER CAPITA AWARDS 2024-2025**



Ballston Spa Lodge #2619—\$20 per capita.



New York Lodge #1—\$25 per capita



Glans Falls Lodge #81—\$25 per capita



Clifton Park Lodge #2466—\$25 per capita



Liverpool Lodge #2348—\$25 per capita



Horseheads Lodge #2237—\$25 per capita

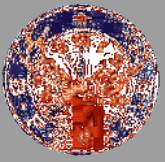


Mid Westchester Lodge #535—\$30 per capita

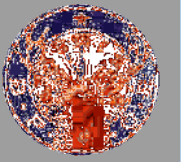


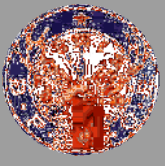
Personal Donation of \$1,000—Dora Lee Stanley, Saratoga Wilton Lodge #161



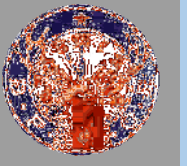


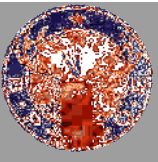
NEW YORK STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION SPRING CONVENTION 2025 PHOTO GALLERY



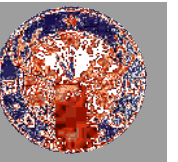


NEW YORK STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION SPRING CONVENTION 2025 PHOTO GALLERY





GRAND LODGE CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



Kansas City, Missouri

The 160th Grand Lodge Session of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks was held June 29, 2025—July 2, 2025 in Kansas City, Missouri. The 161st Grand Lodge Convention is scheduled for July 5 —July 8, 2025 in Chicago, Illinois. This year's convention activities began with a State Luncheon on Sunday, June 29, 2025 that was well attended by New York State Elks Association members and Area One Grand Lodge guests. In all, 351 people attended the luncheon. Past State President Tim Kelly served as Master of Ceremonies. Grand Lodge Chaplain, Father Christopher Ford, provided a benediction. Following an introduction by State President John Lawless, Past Grand Exalted Bruce A. Hidley introduced Past Grand Exalted Ruler, the Honorable David R. Carr. Past Grand Exalted Ruler Carr then then introduced the Grand Lodge members and special guests in attendance that included Joseph Balestriere and his wife Dorothy, Grand Chaplain Father Christopher Ford, Past Grand Exalted Ruler Bruce A. Hidley and his wife Helen, Special Deputy Richard M. Palanzo and his wife Karlyn, Grand Lodge Government Relations Committee member Robert E. Wambach and his wife Karen, Area One Auditing and Accounting Committee member Donna Wallace, Grand Lodge Activities Committee Chairman Terrance Ford and his wife Terry and Area One Judiciary Committee member Alan H. Sunukjian of Cohoes-Waterford Lodge #1317. Following the introduction of Grand Lodge members, State Association President John Lawless introduced the State Association dignitaries in attendance. The Opening Ceremony was held the afternoon of Sunday, June 29th. During the opening ceremony, Past Grand Exalted Ruler David R. Carr and his wife Penny and Past Grand Exalted Ruler Bruce A. Hidley and his wife Helen were introduced along with other Past Grand Exalted Rulers and their spouses that were in attendance. State President John Lawless had the distinct honor of carrying and presenting the New York State Flag during the flag presentation ceremony.

Our State Association had several highlights during the convention. Past State President Tony Gilberti was elected and sworn in a Grand Lodge Esteemed Leading Knight for the 2025-2026 Fraternal year. Robert E. Lumpkins of Clifton Park Lodge #2466 served as a Ritual Floor Judge. Our State Association won several Grand Lodge Award that were announced during the convention. The New York State Website earned a Five Star Award in the State Website Contest, the Empire State Elk publication earned a Five Star Award in the State Association Bulletin Contest and the Major Projects Booth earned a Five Star Award. In the All American Lodge contest, Gouverneur Lodge #2035 was a finalist in Division III. In the Community Project Contest, Islip Lodge #2533 took first place honors in Division I, Webster-Fairport Lodge #2396 took second place in Division II and Massapequa Lodge #2162 took first place honors in Division III. And in the 2024-2025 Americanism Contest, Jace Simonds, sponsored by Wolcott Lodge #1763, achieved 2nd place honors in the eighty grade division. Our State Association did very well in the National Ritual contests. After coming close in recent year's, Carthage Lodge #1762 achieved National Championship honors in the National Team Ritual Contest with a score of 96.9149. Carthage Lodge team members Andrew Smith and Sam Thesier achieved All American honors in the Eastern Division. Andrew as Esquire and Sam as Inner Guard. In the Flag Charge contest, Robert Sligar of Carthage Lodge #1762 took third place national honors and in the 11th Hour Toast Contest, Mark Stuparich of New York Lodge #1 took fourth place honors.

During the closing session on Wednesday, July 3, 2024, newly installed Grand Exalted Ruler Brian Klatt installed the following New York State Elks Association members as a District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler: Gary Rende (Mohawk Valley District), Ted Farkas (East District), Merrill Connor (East Central District), Cynthia Smart (Hudson Valley District), Donald Roy (Colonial District), Brian Dezell (North Central District), Ronald Barner (North Hudson District), Vickie Rowe (Central District), Jay Singer (South District), Paula Holowacz Decker (South Central District), Richard Taylor (Southern Tier District), Pedro Rosa (State Capital District), Lois Burns (West District) and Rob Taylor (West Central District).

In addition to Past Grand Exalted Ruler David R. Carr, Past Grand Exalted Ruler Bruce A. Hidley, and State President John Lawless, some of the New York State Elks Association Dignitaries attending the Grand Lodge Convention were; State Secretary Renee Bott, State Sergeant-At-Arms John Nuzzi, State Tiler William Pine, Reverend Michael Martini, Past State Presidents Tim Kelly, Tony Gilberti, Jamie Peace, Jerry Shook, Barry Griffith, Cam Ricci, Kevin Connolly, Phil Holowacz, Phil Conaty, and Tania DeFrank. State Chairs attending included Empire State Elk Editor/Chair Tim Welpel, Public Relations Chair Michael Jones, Internet/Electronic Media Chair Mel Oliveria, Major Project Chair David Brown, Lodge Activities Chair Michael Sage, National Veteran's Service Chair Jack Stein, Ritual Chair Brian Scott, Emergency Grant Chair Colleen Quackenbush, Area One Soccer Chair Patrick Mansfield and Grand Lodge Housing Director Tony Thanopoulos. State Trustees attending included Paul Crumb, Vickie Brown, Robert Sligar, Lisa Moldovan and Tim Sayers.

The members of the New York State Elks Association in attendance extended a thank you to the Grand Lodge Convention Committee members for their efforts prior to the convention and for once again organizing a very successful Hospitality Room during the convention. They are: Past State President Tony Gilberti, GL Housing Director Tony Thanopoulos, Past State President Tim Kelly, and Past District Deputy John Blais. And a special thank you to Helen Blais, Mary Gilberti, Past State President Jerry Shook and Abby Shook for their assistance with the Hospitality Room and State luncheon.



Carthage Lodge #1762 are the 2024-2025 National ritual Champions. They achieved National first place honors with a score of 96.9149. Pictured with the National Championship Award are Exalted Ruler Michael Rohr, Leading Knight Kody Heukrath, Loyal Knight Eric Luther, Lecturing Knight Connor Ashlaw, Chaplain Jeremy Thesier, Inner Guard Sam Thesier, Candidate Robert Sligar and Coach Brian Scott. Not pictured is Esquire Andrew Smith.



Carthage Lodge #1762 team members **Andrew Smith** and **Sam Thesier** achieved Eastern Division All American honors. Andrew earned his award as the Esquire. Sam earned his award as Inner Guard. They are pictured with All American Awards in hand following the Ritual Award presentations.

BRIAN KLATT
Grand Exalted Ruler
2025-2026

“Be the Difference”

CARTHAGE LODGE #1762 WINS NATIONAL RITUAL CONTEST

Andrew Smith and Sam Thesier Achieve All American Awards

Carthage Lodge #1762 achieved National Ritualistic honors at the 2025 contest in Kansas City, Missouri. Carthage edged second place finisher Reno Nevada Lodge #597 by a score of 96.9149 to 96.9028 to win national championship honors. Carthage earned an opportunity to earn a final four berth and opportunity to compete for the national championship by finishing second in the Eastern Division preliminary round with an impressive score of 97.7407. During the preliminary contest, Lodge Esquire Andrew Smith and Inner Guard Sam Thesier earned All American Ritualistic honors with solid performances. When the final results were reported, Carthage Lodge members gathered on the Dias to receive The Benjamin Trophy, which is presented to the first place winner. Exalted Ruler Michael Rohr had the honor of receiving the trophy and introducing the Carthage Team. The Ritual team members are Exalted Ruler Michael Rohr, Esteemed Leading Knight Kody Heukrath, Esteemed Loyal Knight Connor Ashlaw, Esquire Andrew Smith, Chaplain Jeremy Thesier, Inner Guard Sam Thesier, Candidate Robert Sligar and Coach Brian Scott. Coach Scott was recognized with the John D. Franks Award which is presented to the Coach of the winning team.

In addition to Carthage team, New York State Elks Association members Robert Sligar of Carthage Lodge #1762 and Mark Stuparich of New York Lodge #1 competed in individual Ritual contests. Robert represented New York State in the Mulholland Flag Charge Contest, finishing third nationally. Mark represented New York State in the Callicott 11 O'clock Toast Contest, finishing fourth nationally.



Carthage Lodge #1762 Exalted Ruler Michael Rohr had the honor of accepting the National Championship Ritual Award from a member of the National Ritualistic Committee as Esteemed Leading Knight Kody Heukrath looks on. Exalted Ruler Rohr introduced the team members during the award presentation to the enthusiastic cheers of New York State Elk members.



Carthage Lodge #1762 Coach Brian Scott was the recipient of the John D. Franks award. This award is presented by the Tucson, Arizona Lodge #385 to the Coach of the winning Ritual Team. Exalted Ruler Robert Crawford of Tucson Lodge #385 presented the award.



Immediately following the National Ritual Award presentation, the **Carthage Lodge #1762** team was greeted by and offered congratulations from Past Grand Exalted Ruler David R. Carr Past Grand Exalted Ruler Bruce A. Hidley and Area 1 Grand Lodge Ritualistic Committee member Bruce Brunelle.



Following the Ritual Award presentations, the **Carthage Lodge #1762** Ritual Team gather for a picture. Pictured in front row are Exalted Ruler Michael Rohr, Leading Knight Kody Heukrath, Loyal Knight Eric Luther and Lecturing Knight Connor Ashlar. Standing in back row, from left are Chaplain Jeremy Thesier, Inner Guard Sam Thesier, Candidate Robert Sligar and Coach Brian Scott. Not pictured is Esquire Andrew Smith.

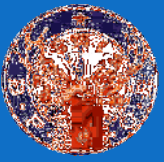


Robert Sligar of Carthage Lodge #1762 took third place honors in the National Flag Presentation Ritual Contest. He is pictured receiving his third place award during the award presentation ceremony. **Sam Thesier** is pictured below receiving his All American Inner Guard Award from Area 1 Ritualistic Committee member Bruce Brunelle.

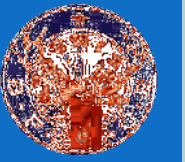


Mark Stuparich of New York Lodge #1 achieved nation fourth place honors in the 11th Hour Toast Ritual Contest. He is pictured receiving his fourth place award from Area 1 Ritualistic Committee member Bruce Brunelle. **Andrew Smith** is pictured below receiving his All American Esquire Award from Area 1 Ritualistic Committee member Bruce Brunelle.





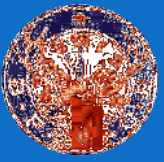
GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY



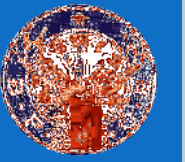
Kansas City, Missouri

Major Project Booth





GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY



Kansas City, Missouri

Major Project Booth





GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY

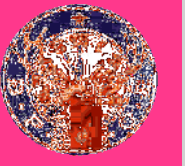


Kansas City, Missouri State Association Luncheon





GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY



Kansas City, Missouri State Association Luncheon





GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY



Kansas City, Missouri State Association Luncheon





GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY



Kansas City, Missouri State Association Luncheon





GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY



Kansas City, Missouri State Association Luncheon





GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY



Kansas City, Missouri State Association Luncheon



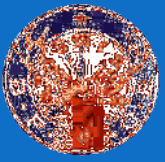


GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY

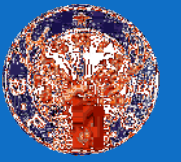


Kansas City, Missouri State Association Luncheon





GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY

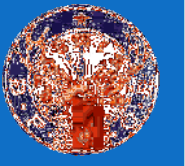


Kansas City, Missouri Convention Hall Candid's





GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY



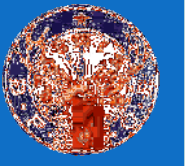
Kansas City, Missouri

Business Sessions





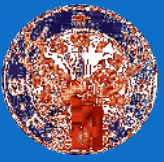
GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY



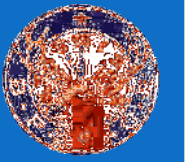
Kansas City, Missouri

Business Sessions



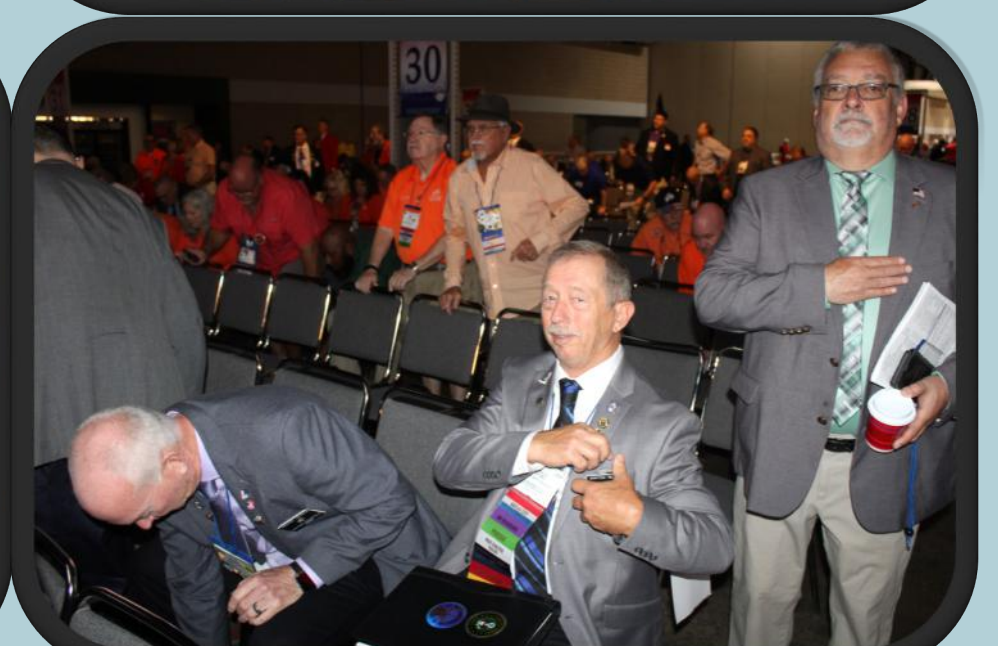


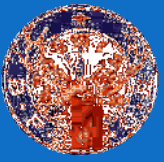
GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY



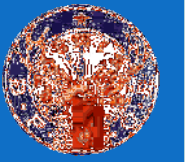
Kansas City, Missouri

Business Sessions



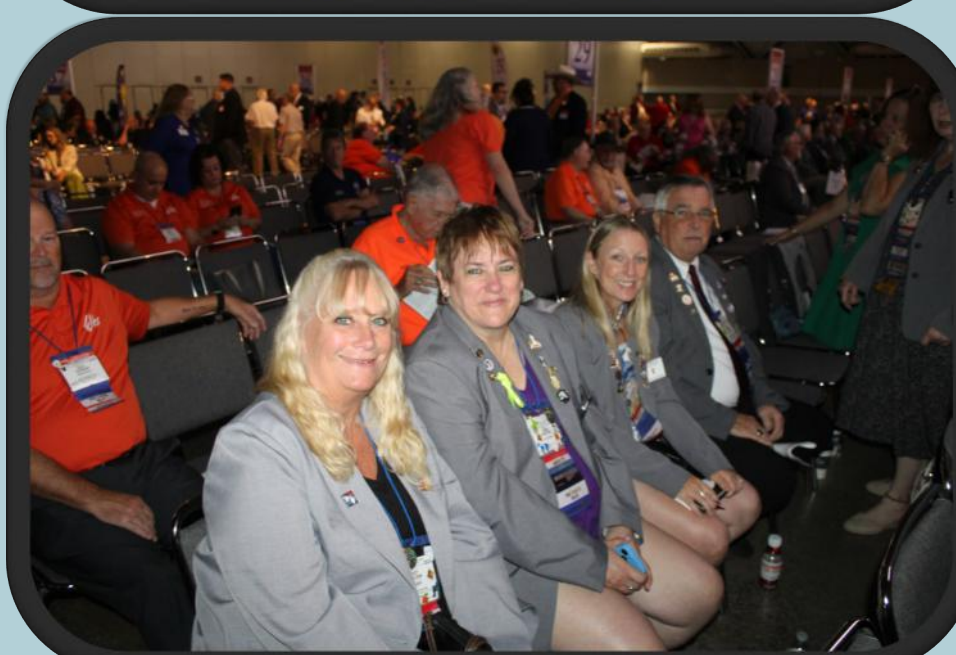


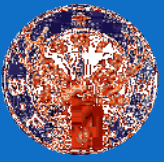
GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY



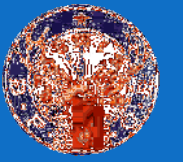
Kansas City, Missouri

Business Sessions



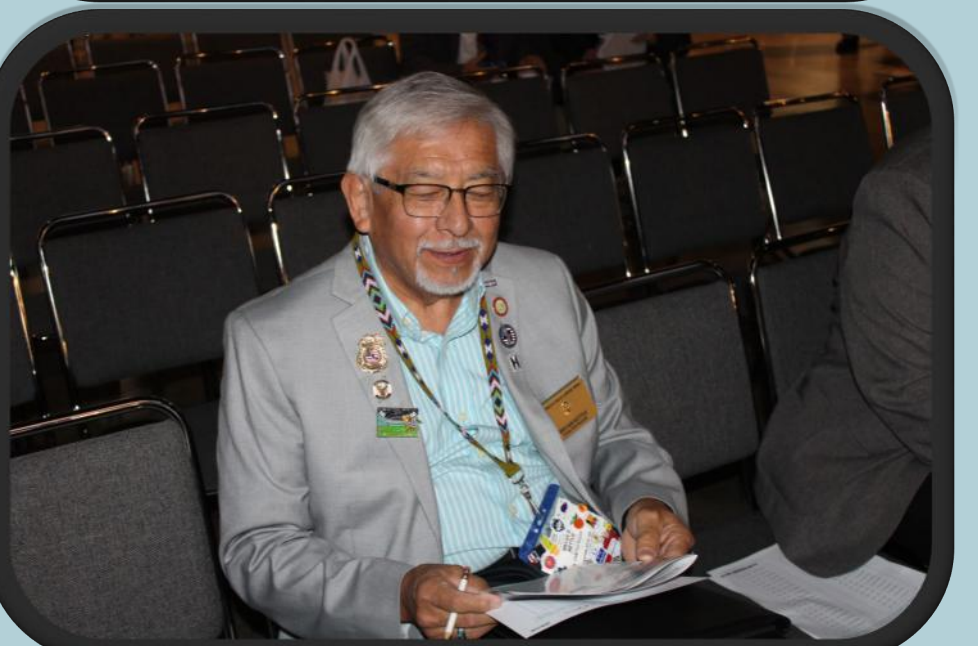


GRAND LODGE CONVENTION PHOTO GALLERY



Kansas City, Missouri

Business Sessions



Camp Bristol Update

VOL. 3 ISSUE 3
SEPTEMBER 2025

SPRUCE NEWS

Official Newsletter of NYS Elks Camp Bristol



Youth Camp

Summer 2025 was a wonderful season for the youth camp. With over 70 campers, the 5 week-long sessions were filled with a mix of day & residential campers. Campers enjoyed a myriad of activities like archery, art & crafts, creative writing, field games, boating, STEAM projects, fishing and water activities. They decorated mugs and planted flowers for our Veterans, as well as created their own drug awareness literature and stories. Thank you to all the staff and volunteers that made a memorable summer for our campers. We are very excited to grow the program for the 2026 summer season!



Veterans CampFest

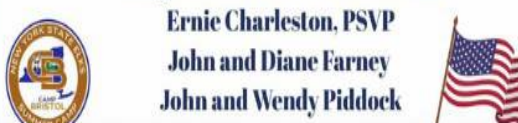
The 2nd annual Veterans CampFest weekend was held August 14th-17th. Returning & new Veteran Honorees from all over the state joined for recreation, relaxation, fellowship and some amazing meals! We were once again blessed with wonderful weather and enjoyed many outdoor activities, as well as arts & crafts, trivia and even campfire karaoke! A wonderful time was had by all and we look forward to this special event growing even bigger in the coming years. Thank you to all who donated and all of our dedicated volunteers...we couldn't have done it without you!



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Thank You Campfest Donors!

Rome Elks Lodge #96
 Watervliet-Colonie Lodge # 1500
 Lowville Elks Lodge #1605
 Gouverneur Elks Lodge #2035
 Sidney Elks Lodge #2175
 Liverpool Lodge #2348
 Ladies Auxilliary at Liverpool Lodge #2348
 Webster-Fairport Lodge # 2396
 Johnson City Lodge #2821
 Bill Reedy, Jr, PSP
 Sgl. Peter Colleva, Jr.
 Elizabeth and Steven Roberts
 Renee and Brian Bott
 State Capital Veterans' Services
 Patricia Carroll
 Michael Jones
 Mangino Chevrolet in Amsterdam
 Ernie Charleston, PSVP
 John and Diane Farney
 John and Wendy Piddock




Camp Bristol Update

SUMMER WRAP-UP



Fishing Derby

The 2nd Annual Youth Fishing Derby was held on August 23rd. The event was open to all children ages 9-15 on a first-come-first-serve basis. There was no cost to the children and all who attended received lunch & free fishing equipment if needed. 19 children from across 3 districts (North Central, Central and West Central) caught 37 fish in 2 hours and had an amazing time! Six trophies were awarded with a 16" large mouth bass caught by 8 yr old Lucas Parson winning for the largest fish. The Derby received a ton of support from Bass Pro Shops and will continue to be an annual state-wide event held at the beginning of summer with updates coming after the new year. A huge thanks to Youth Activities Chair/PDDGER John Piddock, PDDGER John Costello, PDDGER Sheila O'Conner, Camp Director Keeghan McSweeney and all the amazing volunteers who cooked, helped register children and more to make the event a great success!



Upcoming Events

Fall Golf Tournament

The Camp Bristol Fall Golf Tournament will be hosted by the Mohawk Valley District #6080 and will be held on September 27th at the Mohawk Valley Golf & Event Center in Little Falls, NY. There will be 18 holes of golf and lunch at the course followed by dinner at the Herkimer Elks Lodge. Additional information can be found on Camp Bristol's Facebook page. A huge thanks to the Mohawk Valley District for hosting this event!

Work Weekend

A Work Weekend will be held on October 11th & 12th. The main goal will be putting on the exterior siding and insulating the attic of the new building along with general maintenance/clean-up. 9am starts each day with lunch served for all and breakfast/dinner provided for our overnight volunteers. Please contact PSP Stuart Rishe at (315)323-2202 to let us know if you will be attending.

Upcoming Events

State Soccer Shoot

Camp Bristol is excited to be hosting the 2025 NY State Soccer Shoot on October 19th. We are looking forward to working with State Soccer Chair, SVP Dan Shannon, and all the District Directors to ensure an exciting and engaging youth event.



Staffing for Summer 2026

Our Youth Camp has seen wonderful growth over the past summers. Along with this growth comes the need for new camp activities, programs and an increased number of enthusiastic & qualified staff. We have many positions to fill including Camp Director, Waterfront Director, Lifeguards, Senior and Junior Counselors and more! Look out for job postings on our Facebook page and Camp Bristol emails and share!

CAMP BRISTOL FUN

Children's Camp 2025

This past summer, Camp Bristol provided 5 weeks of summer camp experience to 70 children. Day and overnight opportunities were provided. The camp provided diverse activities that included fishing, bingo, gift making, arts and crafts, volleyball, swimming, boating, soccer, archery, creative writing, field games, mug decorating and campfires to name a few. The pictures that follow on this and the next two (2) pages illustrate some of the activities mentioned, as well as the fun and enjoyment the children who attended the camp experienced!



CAMP BRISTOL FUN Children's Camp 2025

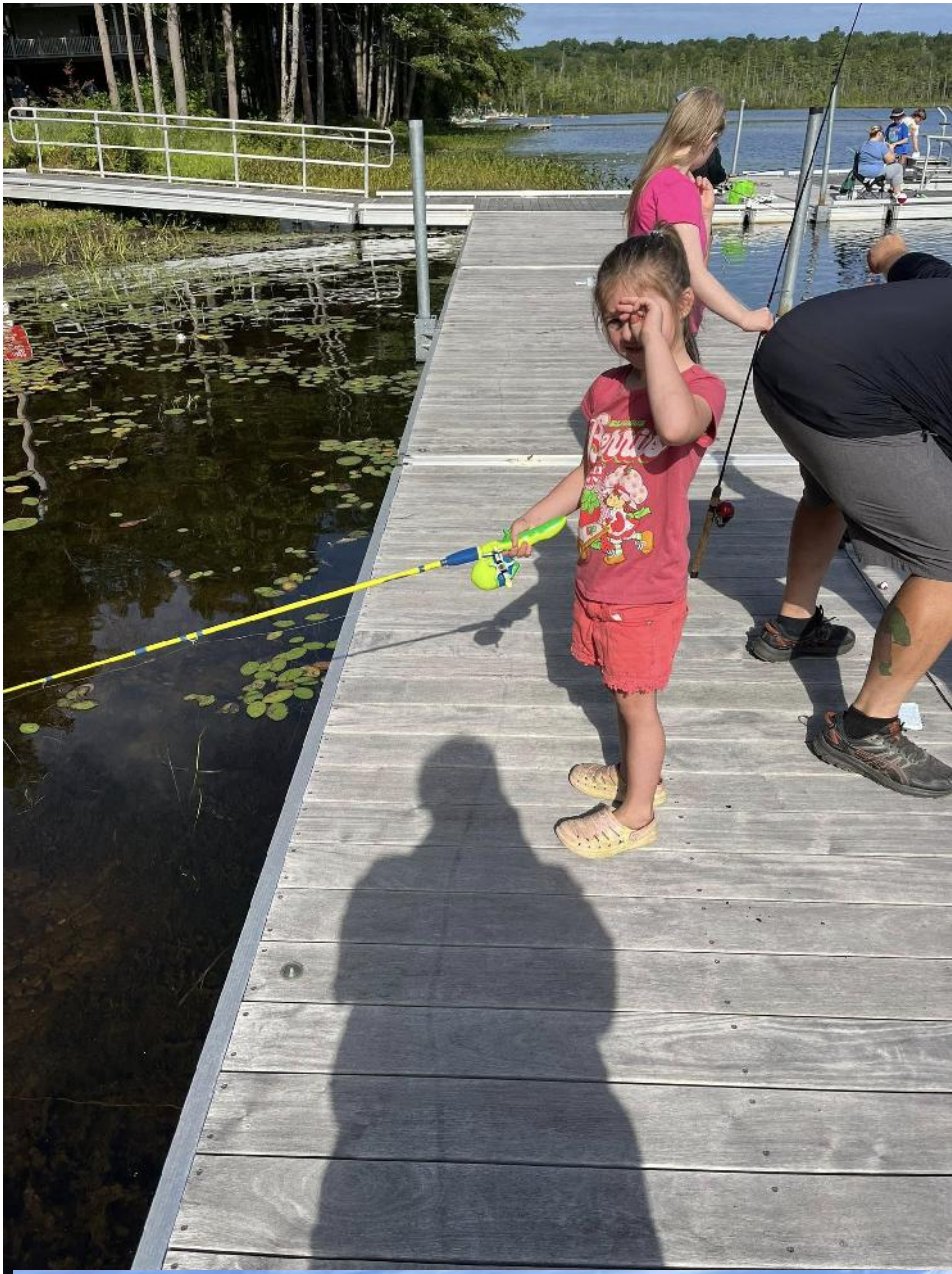


CAMP BRISTOL FISHING DERBY 2025

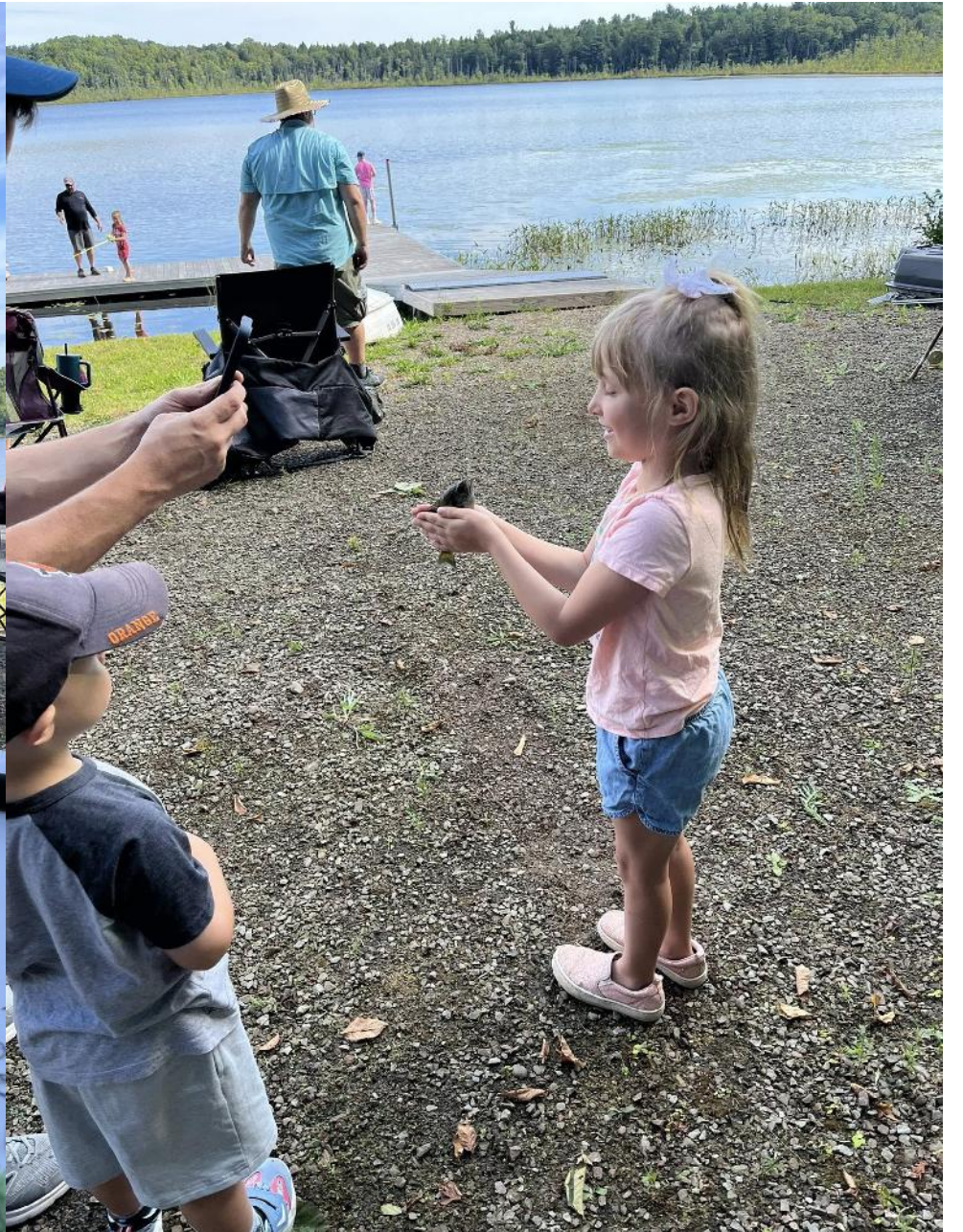
The 2nd Annual Youth Fishing Derby was held at Camp Bristol on Saturday, August 23, 2025. 19 children, ranging from ages 9 to 15, participated in the Derby. They represented the North Central, Central, and West Central Districts. A total of 37 fish were caught. At the end of the contest, six (6) trophies were awarded. 8 year old Lucas Parson caught the largest fish, a 16" large mouth bass. The event was coordinated by Youth Activities Chair John Piddock, PDDGER John Costello, PDDGER Sheila O'conner and Camp Bristol Director Keeghan McSweeney. The Derby will be an annual Camp Bristol event. Some of the many pictures taken at this years event are featured on this and the following 4 pages.



CAMP BRISTOL FISHING DERBY 2025



CAMP BRISTOL FISHING DERBY 2025



CAMP BRISTOL FISHING DERBY 2025



CAMP BRISTOL FISHING DERBY 2025



**CAMP BRISTOL
Golf Tournament 2025**

Camp Bristol Golf Outing Hosted by Mohawk Valley District #6080

**Saturday, September 27,
9 a.m. registration; 10 A.M. shotgun start
Mohawk Valley Golf & Event Center
6069 NY-5, Little Falls, NY 13365**

**Cost is \$360 per team. This includes 18 holes of
golf, lunch at the course, and dinner at Herkimer Elks
Lodge, located at 124 Mary Street in Herkimer.**

There will be 50/50 raffles.

Plan now to get your foursome finalized for the event.

**For questions or applications: contact Cameron Ricci at
315-534-0119 or via email at
cameron@ricciclaims.com**

All profits benefit New York Elks Camp Bristol



Camp Bristol Golf Outing

Hosted by Mohawk Valley District #6080

Saturday, September 27,

9 a.m. registration; 10 A.M. shotgun start

Mohawk Valley Golf & Event Center

6069 NY-5, Little Falls, NY 13365

Sponsorship Opportunities



\$100 Hole/Tee Sponsorship

\$300 Lunch Sponsorship

\$500 Dinner Sponsorship

**Any additional questions, please contact your host:
Cameron Ricci, PSP (315)-534-0119.**

Mail this form and payment to:

Nancy Williams

Secretary @ Herkimer Elks Lodge #1439

124 Mary Street

Herkimer, NY 13350





**NEW YORK STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION
STATE VICE PRESIDENTS**



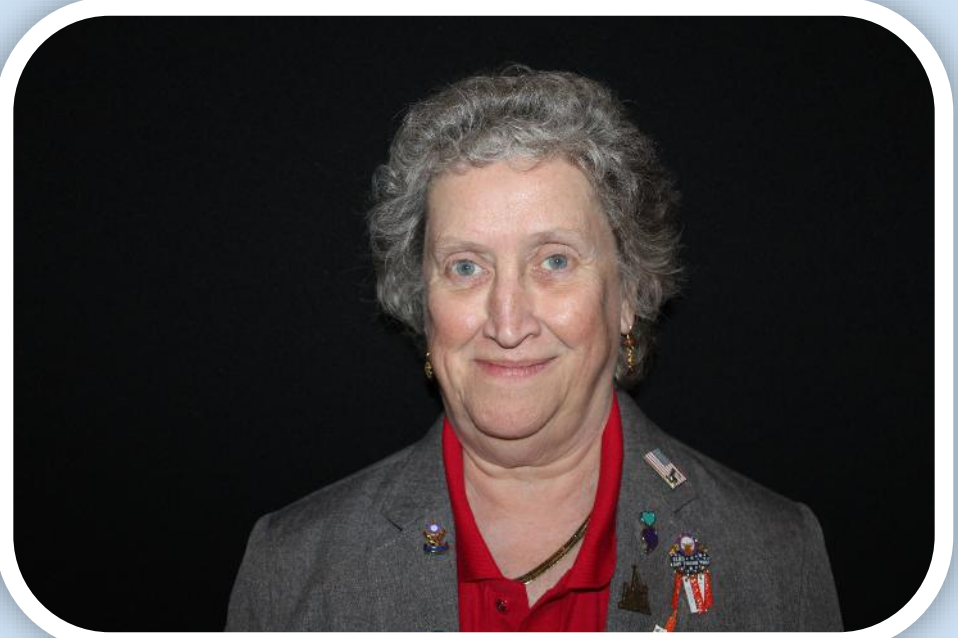
**AUDREY OSTERLITZ
CLIFTON PARK LODGE #2466
MOHAWK VALLEY DISTRICT**



**JACQUELINE KARLIN
RIVERHEAD LODGE #2044
EAST DISTRICT**



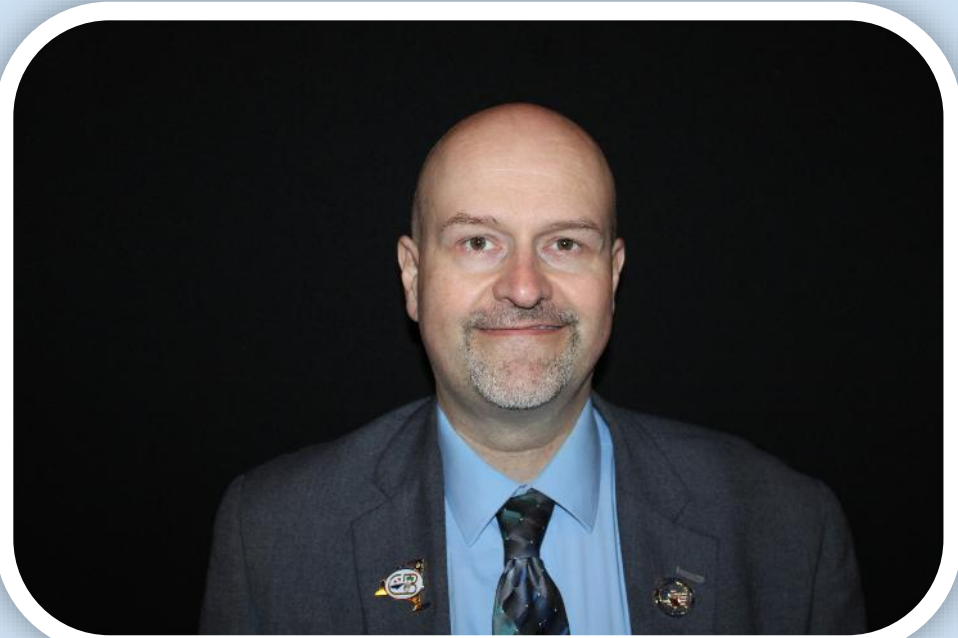
**BRIAN MINERLY
MIDDLETOWN LODGE #1097
EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT**



**BARBARA FARBER
BEACON LODGE #1493
HUDSON VALLEY DISTRICT**



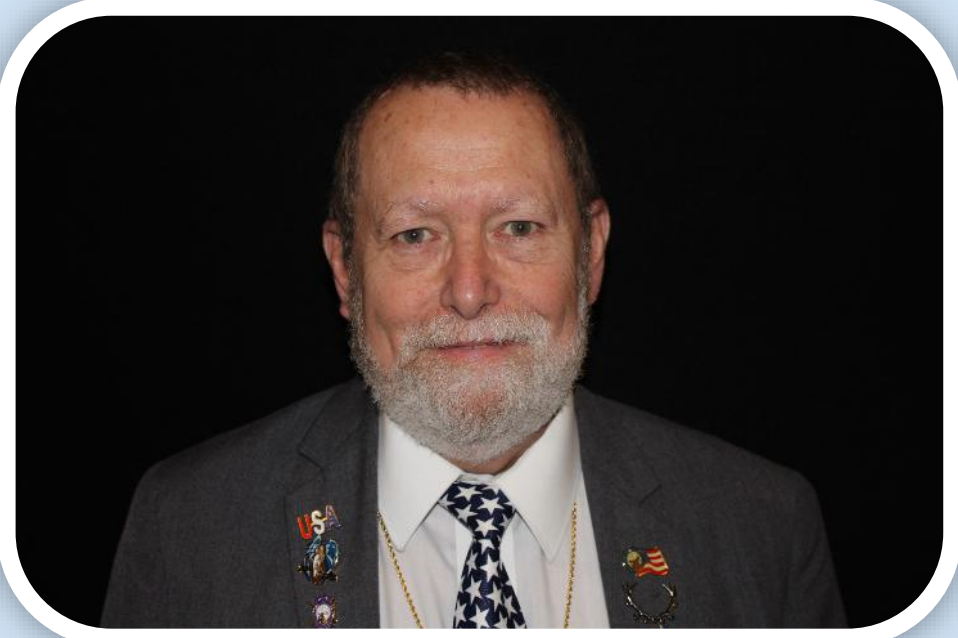
**JILL LLOYD
GREENWICH LODGE #2223
COLONIAL DISTRICT**



**DAN SHANNON
LOWVILLE LODGE #1605
NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT**



**MICHAEL PENDERGAST
BRUNSWICK LODGE #2556
NORTH HUDSON DISTRICT**



**MICHAEL LOUGHREY
OSWEGO LODGE #271
CENTRAL DISTRICT**

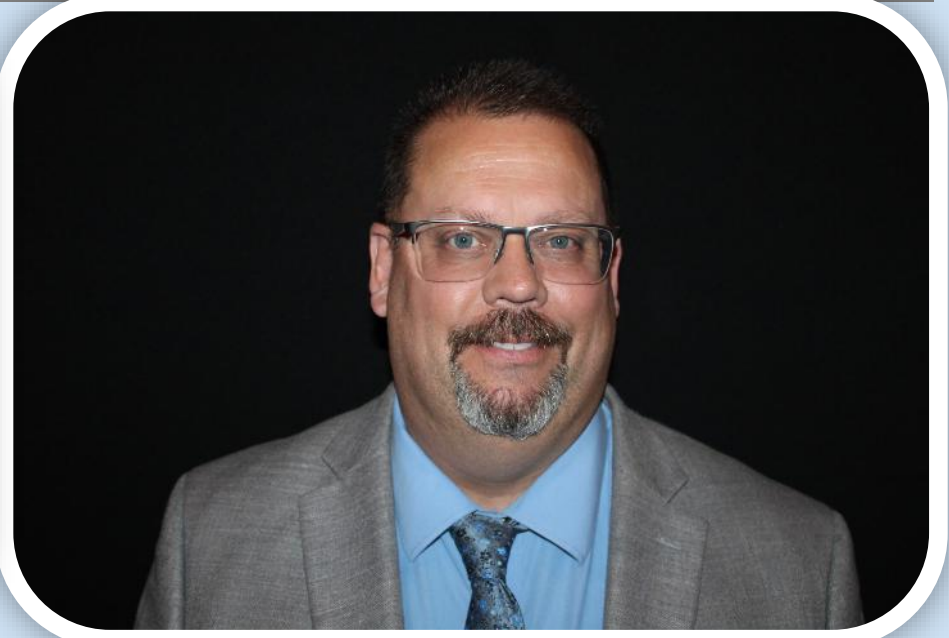
“Together Elks Achieve More”



**NEW YORK STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION
STATE VICE PRESIDENTS**



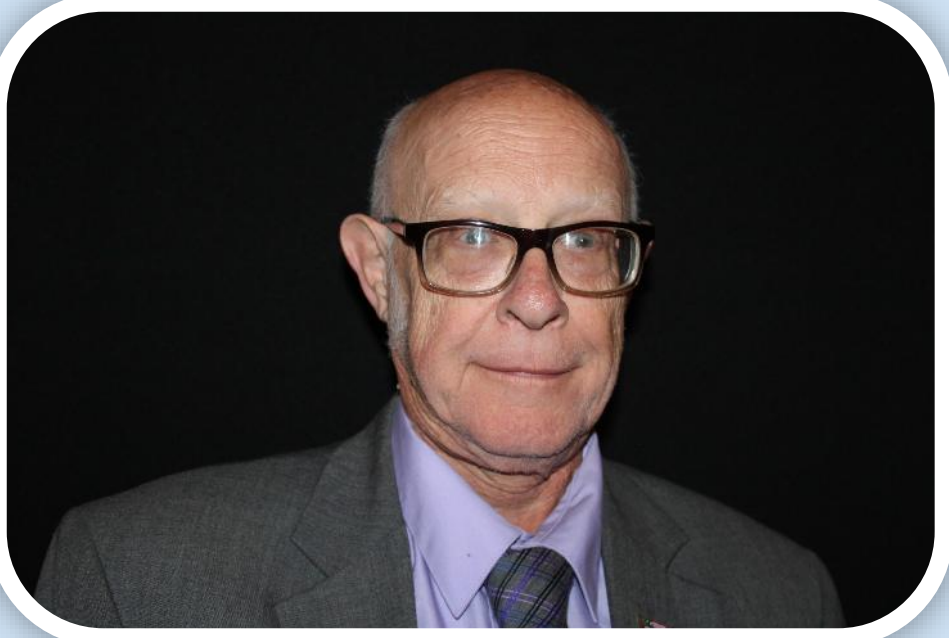
**PAUL SCHNELLER
NEW YORK LODGE #1
SOUTH DISTRICT**



**BRETT DUBOIS
VESTAL #2508
SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT**



**THOMAS HAND
WELLSVILLE LODGE #1495
SOUTHERN TIER DISTRICT**



**WILLIAM ROSENBERGER
COHOES-WATERFORD LODGE #1317
STATE CAPITAL DISTRICT**



**PAUL GOLDING
NEWARK LODGE #1249
WEST DISTRICT**



**BENJAMIN ZIELIULA
LOCKPORT LODGE #41
WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT**

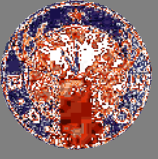


Dan Shannon (Lowville Lodge #1605), and Jill Lloyd (Greenwich Lodge #2223), are pictured at the Spring Convention prior to being sworn in as State Vice President for their home District. Dan is representing the North Central District, and Jill is representing the Colonial District.

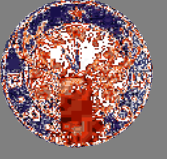


Jacqueline Karlin (Riverhead Lodge #2044), Brian Minerly (Middletown Lodge #1097) and Thomas Hand (Wellsville Lodge #1495) are pictured moments before they are sworn in as a State Vice President at the Spring Convention. Jacqueline represents the East District, Brian is representing the East Central District and Thomas is representing the Southern Tier District.

“Together Elks Achieve More”



**NEW YORK STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION
DISTRICT DEPUTIES**



**RONALD J. BARNER
RENNSELAER LODGE #2073
NORTH HUDSON DISTRICT**



**BRIAN DEZELL
OGDENSBURG LODGE #772
NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT**



**ROBERT W. TAYLOR
CANANDAIGUA LODGE #1844
WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT**



**LOIS E. BURNS
KEN-TON LODGE #1942
WEST DISTRICT**



**DONALD E. ROY
SARATOGA-WILTON LODGE #161
COLONIAL DISTRICT**



**PAULA HOLOWACZ-DECKER
SIDNEY LODGE #2175
SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT**

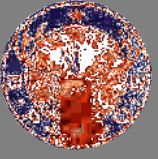


**MERRILL CONNOR
ELLENVILLE LODGE #1971
EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT**

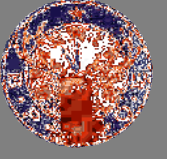


**JAY SINGER
MID-WESTCHESTER LODGE #535
SOUTH DISTRICT**





**NEW YORK STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION
DISTRICT DEPUTIES**



**TED FARKAS
RIVERHEAD LODGE #2044
EAST DISTRICT**



**CYNTHIA SMART
OSSINING LODGE #1486
HUDSON VALLEY DISTRICT**



**VICKIE ROWE
OSWEGO LODGE #271
CENTRAL DISTRICT**



**RICHARD TAYLOR
ELMIRA LODGE #82
SOUTHERN TIER DISTRICT**

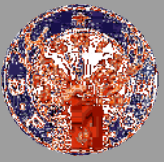


**PEDRO S. ROSA
ROTTERDAM LODGE #2157
CAPITOL DISTRICT**



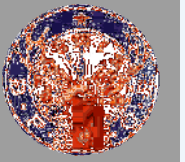
**GARY RENDE
ILION LODGE #1444
MOHAWK VALLEY DISTRICT**





ANTHONY GILBERTI

GRAND ESTEEMED LEADING KNIGHT



At the 2025 Grand Lodge Convention in Kansas City, Missouri, Past State President Anthony Gilberti, of Mid-Westchester Lodge #535, was nominated, elected and installed as the Grand Esteemed Leading Knight for the 2025-2026 Fraternal Year. Past State Following his installation, he had opportunity to participate in the Grand Lodge Closing Session as Grand Esteemed Leading Knight. President Gilberti served the New York State Elks association as President in 2003. His Presidential motto was "Be An Ambassador For Elkdom...Make a Difference". He has served as a Grand Lodge Convention Committee member for several year. He currently serves as a State Committee Liaison for the Elks Memorial Service, Empire State Elk, and Academic Scholarship. Grand Esteemed Leading Knight Gilberti resides with his wife Mary in White Plains, New York. The New York State Elks Associations extends sincere congratulations to Past State President Gilberti as he assumes his new role as Grand Esteemed Leading Knight. Several pictures taken of him at the 2025 Grand Lodge Convention are featured on this page.



NEW YORK STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION

John Lawless, President
P.O. Box 609
Stony Point, New York 10980-0609
(H) 845- 304-6464
E-Mail: statepresident2526@nyselks.org
Haverstraw #877

Renee Bott, State Secretary
17 Linda Lane
Waterford, New York 12188
(518) 279-2022
E-Mail: statesecretary@nyselks.org
Cohoes-Waterford #1317

Christopher Maddock, State Treasurer
P.O. Box 376
Lyons, New York 14489
(315) 946-6581
E-Mail: vest13735@yahoo.com

GRAND LODGE SPONSOR
Hon. David R. Carr, PGER
PSP (2009) Ticonderoga #1494
2705 Main Street
Crown Point, NY 12928-2607
Office # (518) 597-4664
E-Mail: dcarrelks@cptelco.net

Bruce A. Hidley, PGER
PSP (2007) Watervliet-Colonie #1500
2580 8th Street
Watervliet, New York 12189-1911
518-892-3693
E-Mail: psp0708hid@gmaol.com

NYSEA ADVISORY BOARD

PSP Donald J. Fischer, Chairman (2000)
(Horseheads #2297)
PSP Daniel J. Capella (1987)
(Oswego #271)
PSP Joseph Petriello (1989)
(Yorktown #2324)
PSP Ernest E. Southworth (1992)
PGELK (Cortland #748)
PSP Frank Melino (1997)
(Hudson #787)
PSP Paul Galarnau (1999)
PGT (Cohoes-Waterford #1317)
PSP Anthony Gilberti (2003)
(Mount Kisco #1552)
PSP James Peace (2004)
(Olean #491)
PSP Timothy E. Kelly (2005)
(Watertown # 496)
PSP Richard C. Wunder (2006)
(Lyons #869)
PSP Phillip Holowacz (2011)
(Sidney #2175)
PSP Gerald P. Shook (2014)
(Kinderhook #2530)
PSP John. E. Jacques (2015)
(Poughkeepsie #275)
PSP William Reedy Jr. (2016)
(Camillus #2367)
PSP Phillip E. Conaty (2017)
(Monticello #1544)
PSP Stuart Rische (2018)
(Ogdensburg #772)
PSP Brian Greene (2019)
(Glens Falls #81)
PSP Paul C. Galarnau (2020)
(Cohoes-Waterford #1317)
PSP Barry Griffith (2021)
(Lockport #41)
PSP Cam Ricci (2022)
(Herkimer #1439)
PSP Kevin Connelly (2023)
(Pearl River #2041)
PSP Tania DeFrank (2024)
(Liberty #1545)

THE EMPIRE STATE ELK PUBLICATION

The Empire State Elk is published quarterly (bi-annually on newsprint and bi-annually in electronic format) and is financed by the New York Elks Major Projects, Inc. The Empire State Elk is circulated to all members of New York State Lodges to promote our program goals and objectives by reporting on lodge, state and national programs developed to enhance patriotism, and provide assistance to our veterans, the disabled, youth, elderly, victims of disaster and others in need. This publication will take no partisan stands or furnish space for political, sectarian or personal prejudice.

Photographs that accompany submitted articles may be rejected for poor quality, poor contrast, ect. Photos that reference or display alcohol, gambling and non-Elk activities will not be considered. Photos printed on personal computer printers are not suitable for newsprint reproduction and thus will not be considered. Photos sent in JPEG and PDF formats are acceptable. Please send photos and articles to your District Editor.

Members who do not receive the Empire State Elk should contact their Lodge Secretary. Address changes or corrections should be sent to your Subordinate Lodge Secretary. The Lodge Secretary should correct the Lodge records and inform the Grand Lodge of the change. Please note the Editor of the Empire State Elk has no authority to make changes to the mailing list. Families of deceased members no longer wishing to receive a copy must make a request through the Secretary of the Lodge where the deceased was a member.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS THE EMPIRE STATE ELK

State Editor—Publisher

Tim Welpé, PDDGER
54 Waverly Street
Potsdam, New York 13676
(H) 315-265-8480
Cell 315-212-1876
E-Mail: timwelpé@gmail.com
tmwelpé@northnet.org
Potsdam #2074

District Editors

Janel Smith, Central District
26 Hillview Drive.
Union Springs, New York 13160
cell 315-7308822
jmjo603@msn.com
Auburn @474

Lynne Stein-East District.
6 Suydam Drive
Melville, New York 11747-1018
(H) 631-673-0375
Cell 631-678-6163
lynnestein11@gmail.com
Huntington #1565

Kelly Kalisz-Colonial District
13 Coriander Drive
Fort Edward, New York 12828
(H) 518-307-7843
Kalisz@aol.com
Glens Falls #81

Mary Mellan-North Hudson District
1345 Route 9, Apt. 2
Hudson, New York 12534
(H) 845-332-0466
BETHP@TBOGC.COM
Hudson #787

Matt Lacy-Mohawk Valley District
PO Box 667
Middleburgh, New York 12122
(H) 518-231-8896
lacym350@icloud.com
Cobleskill #2040

Michael Jones-State Capital District
State Public Relations Chair
31 Ontario Street
Cohoes, New York 12047
Cell 518-441-1845
michaeljns64@gmail.com
Guilderland #2480

Tracy Gilmore-West District
187 56th Street
Niagara Falls, New York 14304
(H) 716-280-2435
smiles4free@yahoo.com
Albion #1006

Steve Neuberger-West Central District
109 Hutton Street
Penn Yan, New York 14527
(H) 315-521-9528
sneubs@gmail.com
Penn Yan #1722

Brian Minerly-East Central District
22 Black Stallion Court
Middletown, New York 10940
Cell: 845-200-1723
brian.minerly@gmail.com
Middletown #2568

Alan Schrock-Hudson Valley District
6 Orlando Drive
Poughkeepsie, New York 12603
(H) 845-797-4143
aschrock@verizon.net
Beacon #1493

Lisa Moldovan-South District
150-09 Jewel Avenue, Apt. 314A
Flushing, New York 11367-1433
Cell 321-626-0957
lisam1071@gmail.com

GRAND LODGE REPRESENTATIVES

2025-2026

Senior Sponsor

David R. Carr, PGER, PGT, PSP (Penny)
2705 Main Street
Crown Point, New York 12928-2607
Ticonderoga #1494
dcarrelks@cptelco.net
518-597-4664

Sponsor

Bruce Hidley, PGER, PGT, PSP (Helen)
2580 8th Street
Watervliet, New York 12189-1911
Watervliet-Colonie #1500
psp0708hid@gmail.com
518-892-3693

Grand Lodge Committeeman Judiciary Area 1

Alan Sunukjian PAAGER, (Nancy)
37 Copperfield Drive
Waterford, New York 12188
Cohoes-Waterford #1317
nsunukji@nycap.rr.com
518-461-4745

Grand Esteemed Leading Knight

Anthony Gilberti (Mary)
18 Cleveland Street
White Plains, New York 10606-1606
Mid-Westchester #535
gilbertitony@gmail.com
914-588-6073

State Officers

John Nuzzi, Sergeant.-At-Arms
2715 Milburn Avenue
Baldwin, New York 11510-4115
New York #1
bigpapanuz@aol.com
516-546-6723

William Pine-Tiler
56 Dunneman Avenue
Kingston, New York 12401-4308
Kingston #550
billp57@twc.com
518-859-6722

Reverend Michael Martini-Chaplain
80 Jerome Avenue
Staten Island, New York 10305
New York #1
juris1917@aol.com
845-551-2980

Gregory Jakubowicz, Chaplain
P.O. Box BL
St. Bonaventure, New York 14778
Olean #491
frgregjofm@gmail.com
716-372-4841