

Sebring Elk of the Month January-May 2026

May 2026

The Sebring Elks Lodge #1529 is recognizing Ivonne Oyola as the May Elk of the Month. Ivonne is a fairly new member having joined the lodge one year ago. She became a member and hit the road running. After growing up in New Jersey, she later lived in Puerto Rico, where she said she discovered hard work and the importance of family. She is married and has three daughters and six grandchildren. She is really a go getter and sets her standards high in whatever endeavor she is working on. Upon moving to Florida, she enrolled in South Florida State College and earned a high school diploma in record time and then set her goal of becoming a real estate agent. She is currently an associate with Berkshire Hathaway Florida Property Group. She also sells Tupperware on the side and is involved in many civic organizations within the county. She volunteers with the Disabled American Veterans Program helping organize veteran activities as well as helping to organize Quarter for a Cause programs. When asked if she would like to step up and take a leadership role with the Sebring Elks, she did not hesitate for a minute and is currently serving as Lecturing Knight.

Whenever someone needs help with a program, she is right on the spot helping wherever and doing whatever needs to be done to make the program a success. When the Elks Veterans Committee needed someone to help with their recent Classic Car Show fundraiser, she was right there. When asked to help work on the Elks Workday at Hands for Homeless, she was right there on the front lines packing, sorting, and distributing food to those in need in the community. A few months ago, she volunteered to work Friday evenings cashiering and greeting those coming in for Friday evening meals. Her recent activity is stepping up to help volunteer and chair Bingo for Monday afternoon and evenings. As you can see, she is a true Elk in that she steps in when there is a need and works tirelessly to make sure that whatever the task, she is giving it 100%. Next time you see Ivonne, take time to talk and visit and we are certain that you will find her story amazing. Elks like Ivonne truly demonstrate what ELKdom is all about. Thank you, Ivonne, for stepping up and sharing your talents with us.



April 2026

Mr. William "Billy" Brown has been selected as the April 2026 Sebring Elk of the month. As all the Sebring Elks Lodge #1529 members know, Billy is the VOLUNTEER bar manager. For years Billy has worked countless hours doing his job, probably well over 40 hours a week. The Sebring Elks club has many volunteers who donate many hours to lodge projects, but not many donate more time than Billy Brown does.

Billy wears his heart on his sleeve and sometimes shows it. Nothing wrong with that! He has a heart of gold and just wants to do a good job. Drive by the lodge most any morning and you'll probably see Billy's truck out back because he's there quietly doing his job in the background. Who's there when the AC or internet needs service? Billy is, sometimes 12-13 hours a day. Our members may not know this, but Billy donates all his tips back to the lodge and that total is now just shy of \$20,000! That allows our Sebring Elks Lodge to contribute significantly to many community projects here in Sebring.

Billy is always trying to find new ways to increase revenue for the bar and is always open to new ideas. I wonder how many trips around the bar he's made for bar chips nights? He does his job without a lot of fanfare or thanks. So, next time you are at the Sebring Elks lodge this month, stop and say "Thank You Billy" for all you do for the Lodge! For our Elks members, that is your brotherly love assignment for April.



March 2026

The Sebring Elks Lodge #1529 has chosen Peggy Alley as the Elk of the Month for March. Peggy is currently our lodge secretary and has been nominated for the second year as secretary. She has been a member for three years and has taken on the job as secretary with enthusiasm and zeal. Peggy is very committed and focused in her role as secretary. She is a “go to” person and if she doesn’t know the answer she will research and research until she finds the answer. She is very detailed oriented and as her husband Bob remarks: “She is just awesome in everything she does”.

Peggy is originally from Saginaw, Michigan and spent 4 years in the Navy in Personnel. After leaving the Navy she worked doing Title Work for Time Shares. She and Bob moved to Sebring in 2020 after a time in Boynton Beach, Florida. She has a daughter and son and two grandchildren living in Sebring. Peggy is a “Dog Person” doting and caring for a German Shepherd and Yorkie. Bob shared that they have spent considerable time traveling and two years ago embarked on a river cruise down both the Danube and Rhine Rivers. She also spends considerable time as a crafter and is always working on projects. So, if any Elk Member has a need or question, stop by the office and Peggy will get the answers to all your questions. Thank you, Peggy, for a job well done during the past year. And we know that the coming year will be even better!



February 2026

The Sebring Elks have chosen Ron Schilfarth as the February 2026 Elk of the Month. Ron has been an Elk member for the past 22 years. He became a member in 2004 at Gila Bend Lodge, AZ and transferred to the Sebring lodge in January 2009. He was born and raised in Kentucky. He is a fan of the Kentucky Wildcats football team and proudly roots them on.

Ron worked for GE as a field representative taking care of problems with aircraft engines. He lived in China and Korea for six years while working for GE as their field representative. After 42 years with GE, he retired, bought an RV, and traveled around the United States visiting Elk lodges and socializing with members of the lodges while camping on their sites. One little piece of information we learned is that Ron was a snare drummer for a Highlands Scottish band for many years. In fact, that is how he met his wife, Suzanne. He played in a Scottish band as a drummer and after they moved to Florida, he and Suzanne traveled to Sarasota for three or four years to play in the Caledonian Band. The band played around Florida when a Scottish band was needed.

During the past 17 years he has become very active in our lodge. He began working in the kitchen helping with Sunday breakfasts, Friday meals, and meals during the week. He was known as the official “fish fryer” for the lodge. Ron’s passion has been serving on the lodge’s Veteran’s Committee. He has been very active on the committee, helping with whatever needed to be done and regularly visiting veterans residing in local assisted living facilities and nursing homes.

Ron has served as a lodge officer for many years as a long-time lodge Esquire and Trustee. As you can see, Ron exemplifies what true ELKdom means, and he is proud of the work the lodge is doing within the community. Thank you, Ron, for all you have done and continue to do to see the Sebring Lodge “shine” within our community and state. You are a true Elk and we at the lodge congratulate you on being recognized as Elk of the Month.



January 2026

The Sebring Elks Lodge is proud to announce Dawn Bartolomeo as the January 2026 Elk of the Month. Dawn was born and raised in Massapequa, NY. She moved to Sebring about 25 years ago and is married to Mike Gilliam, also an Elk member. Dawn retired from the Sun Trust Bank in 2021. Mike shared that she is a “cat mom” and loves her cats! She joined the lodge in November 2023. Since becoming a member Dawn has become very active in many areas of the lodge. She has a giving heart and gives generously of her time and talent. She has many talents, especially in decorating and making things look great. She works at organizing and preparing the raffle baskets so that they are attractive and those purchasing tickets remark on how nicely they are done. She always steps up to help in areas of need around the lodge. Just looking around the lodge and seeing how festive it is during Christmas; one can see her handiwork in preparing the trees and wreathes.

Dawn works tirelessly on the Sebring Elks Lodge Newsletter each month; a task that takes considerable time and rolls around once a month! She collects articles from committee chairs, helps edit the articles and on many occasions does the complete write-up of articles. She works many hours working with the printshop to ensure that our newsletter is prepped and ready for printing. She takes pictures of many events around the lodge and submits them to the newsletter. She also prepares the calendar at the beginning of each month for timely distribution to members.

Now if that was not enough, she helps with Monday night Bingo. When there was a short notice need for a caller to work the Bingo machine, Dawn stepped right up and took over the role as if she had been doing it for years. Friday evenings she welcomes members and guests entering the lodge from behind the register. Now one might ask what Dawn does in her spare time. She is heavy into crafts, preparing products and selling them at craft fairs. She is very active in the Sebring Women’s Club and the Historical Society. Thank you, Dawn, for all you are doing to make the Sebring Lodge shine in our community and around the state. Your tireless work does not go unnoticed, and we are proud to recognize you as Elk of the Month.

