



Florence Elks Lodge 611

November 2025 Volume 4 Number 11

FROM THE GRAND EXALTED RULER, BRYAN KLATT

Elks fundraising, donations aid communities

Can you Be The Difference in the most important program in our Order, the Elks National Foundation? Our goal for the 2025–2026 fraternal year is \$5.15 per Member—the monetary support we provide makes the Foundation’s work possible.

This year, the Foundation has an approved budget of \$48.2 million to make a difference in the U.S., including \$18 million for Lodge Community Investments Program grants. This grant program allows our Lodges to do more for your communities. I also encourage all Lodges to seriously consider forming an ENF committee to educate themselves on the various grants to assist their communities.

You can make an impact, and when united with our fellow Elks across the nation, we can Be The Difference. Also, make use of the fundraising program through the Foundation’s Fidelity Club. Any Member can sign up at elks.org to make automatic recurring donations for as little as \$5 per month. I encourage you to consider joining. This is once again a way for you to show your communities that “Elks Care— Elks Share.”

Another important program we must focus our attention on is Red Ribbon Week. This is our nation’s oldest and largest drug prevention program, held annually from October 23-31. There are many ways to celebrate. Have your local elected officials issue a proclamation declaring Red Ribbon Week. Pass out red ribbons to your local school administrators, government officials, and members of law enforcement.

When we wear a red ribbon, it means we are looking to take a stand against the horrible ramifications that drugs can have on our communities. Standing together will have a positive impact on the citizens where you live. The Elks will always lead the charge against the devastation that drugs have on families. By now, school is in full swing.

It’s a good time to introduce the Americanism Essay Contest to your local schools. The deadline for submissions is mid-December. There is complete essay information on the Elks website in the GL Fraternal Committee section under Forms and Contests. It’s time to let our youth express themselves about respecting patriotism and our country’s heritage. Students who win the essay contest should be recognized by your Local Lodge. Hold an event for them and give these students recognition certificates to administer to the schools. I am always amazed at the wisdom and knowledge that students can express.

All Americans would benefit from reading these essays. In closing, Be The Difference by promoting “Elks Care—Elks Share.”



FREE Take Out Thanksgiving Dinner For The Community
Pre-order your meal Call 784-3892
To Go Only Pick Up Your Meal On November 27 From 11am - 2pm

Florence Elks
131 East Front Street
Florence, CO

MESSAGE FROM THE EXALTED RULER

Seasons Greetings, and you all know what that means. The Holidays are coming. Just look at all the Holiday items in the stores. I trust everyone had a great Halloween. Now, it's time for us to get busy with two of our biggest community events of the year; Thanksgiving Community Meal and the Children's Christmas Stocking Party.

We are looking for various food items for the dinner (Dressing, bread, butter, etc.). Keep in mind we provide over 300 free Thanksgiving meals every year, so food donations are appreciated. We will be cooking the day before on November 26. We are also collecting gently used clothing to give away on Thanksgiving Day.

We have signup sheets in the bar for food and for those that can help cook and serve. For anyone that wants to help but are physically challenged, you can always donate or man the phones. This is one of our best community efforts.

In December we will have our annual Children's Christmas Stocking Party on December 20. We will be stuffing stockings on the 10th and 17th. We are accepting donations of gloves and hats, candy and small children's toys. This is a wonderful event, please consider supporting our kids.

In January we will have volunteer appreciation on the 23rd. It's also time for the 2026-2027 candidates for office to step up. If you would like to become an officer, please reach out to me or to Bill Hartless. In order to keep moving forward, we need hardworking, dynamic people to step up. The Elks is an amazing organization to be part of, please consider being an officer for our Lodge.

If you have an Elks.org account, you can now download your digital membership card. This will not replace your paper card but the digital card allows you to visit other Lodges using your digital card. (See The Secretary's message, page 8)

Our Lodge is participating in the All American Lodge contest this year. We have already met much of the criteria. We have been an extremely busy providing for our community in a variety of ways, have been working with our community through the Chamber of Commerce and the Schools and have worked hard to be good stewards of our finances. So far we have 19 new members. We are off to a great start, let's go out with a bang! For more information please contact Barbara Batulis, she is the lead for our Lodge. (See page 6)

Our Friday Dinners are taking off, where else can you go for a \$3 dinner? This is time limited so catch it while you can. We have a plethora of games being played from Shuffleboard, to Cornhole, to table games and cards. It's always a fun time. Check out the black shelf by the Bingo closet.

We have submitted a grant to the Colorado Historical Society for funds to fix our roof. We will be asking for donations from our members to help us meet the required matching funds. At this time, we need to raise at least \$10,000 more dollars to meet the requirement. Please understand, this is only the first phase of our project, we will have several more phases over the next few years.

As you see, we have a lot going on in our Lodge. We receive numerous compliments. We would love and invite you to come and join us and maybe do a little event with us.

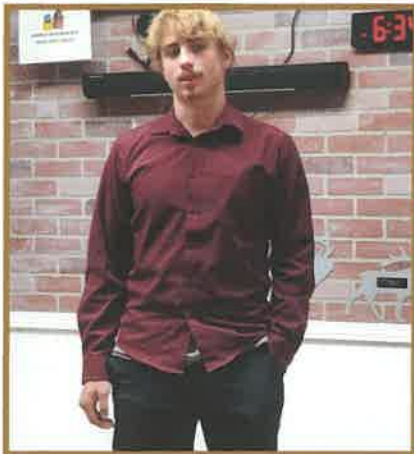
Debbie Channel, Exalted Ruler

BE THE DIFFERENCE!

OFFICERS FOR THE 2025-2026 YEAR

EXALTED RULER.....DEBBIE CHANNEL
ESTEEMED LEADING KNIGHT.....TARA WOJCIECHOWSKI
ESTEEMED LOYAL KNIGHT.....KIM BUNGARD
ESTEEMED LECTURING KNIGHTGLENETTE ESQUIBEL
ESQUIRE.....JB BATULIS
CHAPLAINDUANE WAHBORG
SECRETARY.....BILL HARTLESS
TREASURER.....KARA AVERHOFF
TRUSTEE, 1 YEAR.....BRIAN WHEATCRAFT
TRUSTEE, 2 YEAR..JIMMY VIGIL
TRUSTEE, 3 YEARSTEVE CHANNEL
INNER GUARDCHARLIE WARNER
TILER.....JOHN BERNAL

A Little This and That



Roll Call Night

Roll call was a great success. We logged 703 years of membership. A big shoutout to our Elkettes for cooking a delicious meal and to Nancy Herrera for the beautiful decorations.

It was a privilege to be able to present a \$1000 scholarship check to Charles Wanner for his continuing education and a check for \$650 to our Florence High School Cheerleaders to go toward their competition in Florida. The ladies helped the Lodge by serving all summer for Bingo. We were also pleased to have a request from Ethan Batulis, President of the High School SKILLS class for support as they earn money for competitions. They will take over what the ladies have been doing, serving at Bingo. Congratulation All!

Great Friday night at the lodge with the shuffleboard tournament. Here are your winners.



1st place winners taking home the prize of \$70 Terry (can't see over the board) Norton and Glenette Esquibel.



2nd place Angie and John L.



3rd place Steve Ropp and Angela Pope

SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

We will be holding a Flag Retirement and Disposal Ceremony on December 7th at 12 noon. The Girl Scouts will be conducting the ceremony. Please bring your tattered flags for proper respect and disposal.



BE THE DIFFERENCE

ELKS MEMORIAL DAY



The first Sunday in December of each year shall be a day commemorated to the memories of departed Members, and shall be known as "Elks Memorial Day." Florence Elks

We will be recognizing seven of our members that have passed this year on December 7th at 1:00.

Sickness and Distress



Sharon Parker—Cancer

Ken Maxson—Deceased

Michael McCallister—Deceased

A WORD FROM BILL HARTLESS, SECRETARY

Many new things are coming to our members the end of this year and beginning of next year. First for those members traveling is the new digital membership card. If you have an "Elks.org" account, you will soon be able to put a digital membership card on your phone. This membership card is directly linked to the Lodge membership program. When the Secretary inputs your dues into the Lodge membership program it will automatically show up on your Digital Membership Card. By the same token if you are suspended it will show that or if you are delinquent, it will show that. You will still need the paper membership/key card to access the Lodge.



To access the Digital Membership card, you will have to have an Elks.org account. To get this account go to Elks.org and sign up. You will have to have your email address and your membership number. There are many things for members in the Elks.org website. Our Lodge virtual website is located on the elks.org website and is currently under construction.

The second change coming is in your Lodge Membership Statement you will receive in January. Members will be able to pay their dues online by credit card or Echeck (Electronic Check). The Secretary will receive a message that your dues have been paid, and the money will automatically be deposited in the Lodge account. This is more convenience for our members and is done by the same company the Lodge uses to send out statements. Please note there are convenience fees that the member will have to pay to use these payment options. You are more than welcome to mail your payment or come to the Lodge and pay your dues by cash, credit card or check. Your membership matters to all of us, and we are trying to make it as easy as we can to pay your dues. The dues statements for next year are scheduled to be sent out January 9, 2026, and I am prepared to issue cards as soon as those statements go out. The Treasurer Kara Averhoff and I are planning Dues nights at the Lodge again this year. One in March and one in April is planned at your dues and get your card right then.

Hope to see you around the Lodge

Bill Hartless
Secretary



The digital card is now available.

We Are THE Elks!