



Florence Elks Lodge 611

December 2025 Volume 4 Number 21

Exalted Ruler Debbie Channel



Greetings Members,

We are now well into the Holidays. I hope you all enjoyed your Thanksgiving and are gearing up for Christmas!

We will have a busy December 7. The local Girl Scouts will be joining us and instructing us on the proper retirement of US flags.

Following that, we will have a Memorial Ritual for our Departed Members at 1pm.

Our Children's Christmas Stocking Party will be December 20. We will be stuffing stockings with candy on December 10 and with other Christmas Goodies on December 17. As always, volunteers are welcome and needed.

The Lodge Members Christmas Stocking Exchange will be Sunday, December 21. We will be exchanging stockings after King of Klubs, unless someone lucky wins between now and then!

I will be having neck surgery on the 9th and will be unavailable for a few weeks, so I will be missing a few December events. I apologize but have no choice but to be on a mandatory vacation!

As you all may know, the Lodge has been closed on Fridays and Saturdays for the last few weeks. We have had some issues come up that have prevented the Trustees from opening and manning the bar. I am hopeful this will get resolved in the near future. Please stay posted. We are open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Sundays for the time being.

As we move into the New Year, please be safe and if you drink, please drink responsibly.

Best regards, Debbie Channel, Exalted Ruler

From Loyal Knight Kim Bungard Grant News!



Our lodge was recently approved for the Gratitude Grant. We are going to use this grant to support the Beaver and Bear Pack Program. This program sends food home with elementary children on weekends and holidays. On December 14 at 2pm members are needed to help prepare food packs for the children to take home over Christmas break. If you would like to help just show up at the lodge. If you have questions please contact Kim Bungard at 719-225-3486.

Clem and Evelyn Audin

In November our lodge was awarded Community Partner of the Month for The Department of Human Services. This award was in recognition of our help to three boys recently placed in foster care. Our lodge applied for help through the Clem and Evelyn Audin fund and was able to get each boy \$500 worth of clothes, shoes and personal items. If you know a child in need please contact Kim Bungard to see if this fund is a possibility to help.

Trivia by Geno! On December 5 Geno will be hosting Trivia and Kim will be cooking dinner. Come on down to the lodge for a fun evening.

Save the Date

Dec 1, 2025 Request help to decorate the Lodge for Christmas 10:00

Dec 5 Trivia with Gino Budget meeting 2:00

December 6, Hoop Shoot Registration 9:30 Shoot at 10:30 Old High School Gym

December 7, Flag Retirement Ceremony 12:00 PM

Dec 7, Elks Memorial Service 1:00 PM

Dec 10 Stuffing Christmas Stockings for Children

Dec 14 Gratitude Grant Beaver/ Bear Bag Packing

Dec 20 Childrens Christmas Party

Dec 21 Adult Christmas Stocking exchange 4:00

Jan 1, 2026 Free Tom and Jerry's for members and guests 10:00 to 12:00



A WORD FROM BRIAN KLATT, GRAND EXALTED RULER



Season's greetings and happy holidays!

Remember to be kind and compassionate to one another as you attend social events at your Lodges. It must be a time when we can be the best of who we are. Think of ways to serve your community by donating food or presents to less fortunate children and families, or giving veterans a gift or holiday card. What about hosting a breakfast with Santa? Keep in mind, giving is always better than receiving because at the end of the day, it's truly about putting our hearts toward enjoying family, friends, and service to others.

The Elks Memorial Service is to be held on the first Sunday of December. The ceremony is an occasion to honor all Elks who have passed away. It's a time to cherish the memory of those who recently left us, as well as rekindle the thoughts of those who left us long ago and remember how each served our Order.

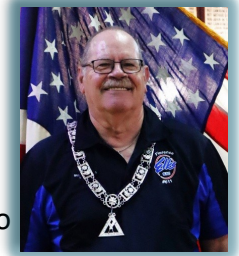
An integral part of the ceremony and assisting us in remembering those Members who have left us is our Eleven O'Clock Toast. The Toast symbolizes how we feel about our departed Elks. "To our absent Members." Does your Lodge do the Toast regularly?

Membership! Membership! Membership!

The current Lodge year has less than four months until it's over. Have you achieved the membership goals you set at the start of your year? The goal of every Lodge is simple: a plus-1 in membership. It's not too late to form a committee to contact delinquent Members and ask them to re-up. How about one or two last efforts to get those new applicants onto the membership rolls? Can you Be The Difference and show a membership gain this year?

In closing, Sue and I wish you and your family a very merry holiday season and a joyous new year, always keeping in mind that you can Be The Difference by promoting "Elks Care—Elks Share."

A WORD FROM BILL HARTLESS, SECRETARY



I hope everyone had a nice Thanksgiving with family. Our membership is at 347 with 39 delinquents'. Anyone thinking about becoming an officer Please call the office 719-784-3892. Please plan on coming down to our annual Tom and Jerry party on New Years Day from 10:00 to 12:00. It is a good time to meet up with other members. The new statements for 2026-2027 should be in the mail early January, I encourage you to get your dues in as soon as you receive your statement. I am ready to issue the new cards for next year. We are still in need of volunteers. I hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Hope to see you around the Lodge.

Bill Hartless Secretary

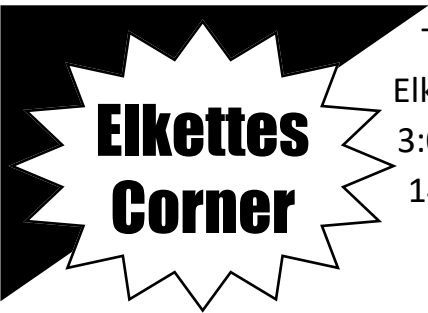


See ya at the Elks

Opportunity to Volunteer

Are you wanting to help the lodge but not sure how? **BINGO** is in need of helpers. We need ticket sales, callers, food runners. One Tuesday a month would be great. We feed you dinner and it's a great opportunity to help the lodge and meet some really great people. If you are interested just let Kara Averhoff know. December 23 and 30th no BINGO





There will be an Elkette meeting at 3:00 on December 14.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Jason	Hilterbran	12/1
Fran	Black	12/2
Cynthia	Harper	12/2
Dean	Burger	12/3
Trystin	Bungard	12/4
Sydney	Ward	12/5
James	Shadwell	12/6
Rose	Webster	12/6
Thomas	Ballman	12/7
Beverly	Kowalewski	12/7
Troy	Johnston	12/8
Gerry	Buderus	12/12
Terri	Norton	12/12
Thomas	Tedesko	12/13
Michael	Iniguez	12/14
D'Ann	Baldrige	12/15
Kim	Martinez	12/15
Willie	Slack	12/15
Steven	Hallman	12/16
Wes	Kowalewski	12/16
Brenda	Becraft	12/18
Dotty	Gardunio	12/18
	Bourlon-	
Amy	Hilterbrand	12/19
Jayne	Newsom	12/21
Richard	Averhoff	12/22
Daniel	Cornella	12/22
Glenette	Esquibel	12/23
Steve	Fischer	12/23
Carol	Vincent	12/27
Scott	Gardunio	12/28
Timothy	Pricket	12/30
Myron	Smith Jr.	12/30
Robert	Kassebaum	12/31

Website Help Needed
We would like to find someone to keep our website up to date.
If anyone has that talent, please reach out to Lodge at 784-3892 or

Community • Friendship • Charity

ELKS

Serving our communities to build a stronger America

4,350+
Community Investment Grants were funded by Elks National Foundation, Inc. 1,541 Lodges received at least one grant.

UNITED IN SERVICE SINCE 1868

join.elks.org



Sickness and Distress
 Sharon Parker—Colon Cancer
 ER Debbie Channel Neck Surgery

DID YOU KNOW.....

Using the Elks website, a current paid up Member of the Order can forward a membership invitation to family and friends. Invitees can complete and submit the application online. Go to Elks.org.



ENF Our Legacy to the Future

In 1928, one man's dream became a reality for all Elks and the communities we serve. Then-National President John F. Malley envisioned a plan that would “unite the forces of the Order into a mighty army for the service of mankind.” During the annual Grand Lodge Convention in Miami that year, Malley's call to service inspired delegates to take action by voting to establish the Elks National Foundation with an initial \$100,000 grant.

Nearly 100 years after Malley shared his vision with the Order, the ENF continues to unite all Elks in service to their communities.

Our Mission

The [mission of the ENF](#) is to help Elks build stronger communities. We fulfill this pledge by investing in communities where Elks live and work. We help youth develop lifelong skills, send students to college, meet the needs of today's veterans, support the charitable work of the state Elks associations, and fund projects that improve the quality of life in local Elks communities.

Our Impact

Since inception, the ENF has contributed more than \$500 million toward Elks charitable projects nationwide. Our programs continue to grow each year, allowing Elks to do even more to build stronger communities. This year, the ENF allocated \$18 million to fund the [Community Investments Program](#), investing in Elks communities through grants for Elks Lodges. Community Investments Program grants offer your Lodge an opportunity to serve your community in ways that will raise the Lodge's profile, energize the membership, encourage former members to return to the fold, and gain the notice of people who want to be part of an organization that's doing great things.

How the ENF Works

The ENF is able to help Elks build stronger communities thanks to contributions from our generous donors. Since inception, we have received more than \$322.6 million in contributions and bequests. Today, we have more than 124,000 active donors and an endowment fund valued at \$878 million.

A [board of seven trustees](#), who are all past national presidents of the Order, governs the ENF, which is located at the Elks national headquarters in the Elks Veterans Memorial in Chicago. The director, Jim O'Kelley, oversees the administration of the ENF's day-to-day operations. The ENF also has volunteers at the Lodge, district and state levels who help coordinate our fundraising strategy and implement our programs.

Thanks to the ongoing support of our donors, the ENF continues to expand on Malley's vision, mobilizing Elks across the country into a force for positive change.

Marisol Cruz Velasco
 2022 Most Valuable Student Scholar
 Sponsored by Gilroy, Calif., Lodge No. 1567

“As an Elks scholar, I understand the importance of investing in the education of young people, empowering them to reach their full potential and make positive contributions to society.”



Invest in the education of young people today.



Donate online!

elks.org/ENF

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..VACANT
 TRUSTEE, 3 YEARSTEVE CHANNEL
 INNER GUARDCHARLIE WANNER
 TILER.....JOHN BERNAL

BE THE DIFFERENCE



BINGO

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO ON TUESDAY NIGHTS?

COME JOIN US AT THE ELKS LODGE EVERY TUESDAY FROM 5:30 - 9

- Food served until 8
- Doors open at 5:30pm
Early Bird game 6:45pm
Bingo at 7:00pm
- Open to the public
- 131 E Front Street
Florence
719-784-3892



Elks membership inspires a sense of belonging

The holidays bring light, warmth, and gratitude—but inside every Elks Lodge, the true glow comes from our Members. This season, we see what it really means to Be The Difference as Elks across the country deliver food baskets, visit veterans, and make sure no one spends the holidays alone.

Every act of kindness—big or small — reflects what makes the Elks so special: generosity, compassion, and belonging. Belonging to a place where you're known. Belonging to a cause bigger than yourself. Belonging to a family that stands together in service and friendship.

That sense of belonging is the greatest gift we can give or receive—and it's the foundation for growing strong Lodges. When we share what it means to be an Elk, we invite others to join a community of purpose and pride.

So, as we celebrate this season of giving, let's also renew our promise to each other and to the mission that binds us.



Leave your doubt at the door

By Rick Gathen
Membership Marketing Manager

Every year, when it is time to renew your Elks membership, a thought may creep in: Does my membership really matter?

Maybe you've felt that moment of hesitation. But let us tell you this, loud and clear: Leave your doubt at the door.

Because when you walk through that Lodge door, you stand in a place where heroes are honored, children are lifted, communities are strengthened, and kindness wins. You are part of something that stretches across generations, across towns and cities, across this entire nation.

Small acts can make big impressions

With the challenge to "Be The Difference," one begins to think: What can I do to make a difference, and what makes a difference? We can always make big swings for big impact but surprisingly, it is the smallest thing that makes the largest impression "for the influence of a good deed, honestly and promptly performed will continue forever."

New Year's Day At The Lodge!



Traditional Tom and Jerry's
By
Bill Hartless
10:00am - 12:00pm

Raise the Roof POKER TOURNAMENT



January 1, 2026

Registration begins at 11:00am

Cards fly at 12:00pm

\$50 buy in includes bounty and high hand contribution

Guaranteed pay outs 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th

Members + 1 guest only

Not open to the public

Bring a potluck dish to share!



December 2025



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

	1	2 BINGO 5:30	3 TACOS 4:30	4	5 Trivia with Gino 7:00 Kim Cooking	6 Local Hoop Shoot 9:00 Emergent Campus
7 Flag Retirement 12:00 Elks Memorial Service 1:00 King of Klubs Poker and Pot- luck	8 Trustee Meeting 5:00	9 BINGO 5:30	10 TACOS 4:30 Union Meeting	11 District Deputy Visit Lodge Meeting 7:00	12 Quilters	13
14 King of Klubs Poker and Pot- luck Elkettes Meet- ing—3pm	15 Activities 6:00 BOD 7:00	16 BINGO 5:30	17 TACOS 4:30 PER Meeting 6:30 Stuffing Stock- ings 4:30	18	19 Set up Children's Christmas party 4:00 Quilters	20 Children's Christmas party 10:00
21 King of Klubs Poker and Pot- luck	22	23 NO BINGO	24	25 No Lodge Merry Christmas Lodge Closed	26	27
28 King of Klubs Poker and Pot- luck	29	30 NO BINGO	31	Jan 1 Tom and Jerry's 10-12 Poker 11:00- 3:00		



Membership/ Lapsation Report

Beginning Membership Total 4/1/2025: 329

Initiated 19
Affiliated: 5
Reinstated: 3
Subtotal: 27

Dropped: 0
Transferred Out: 2
Absolute Dimit: 0
Deaths: 6
Expelled: 1
Subtotal: 9

Calculated Membership Total: 347
CLMS Active Members: 347
Average Age: 62.72
Gain/Loss: 18

Six Months: 0
One Year: 38
Over One Year: 1
Total: 39
Lapsation Rate: 11.85%

Waiting to read at next lodge meeting: 3
In the hands of the investigating committee: 0
Ready for balloting: 0
Ready for Orientation: 0
Ready for Initiation: 2
Ready for Affiliation: 0
Ready for Reinstatement: 0
Other: 0
Total: 5

Life Members: 59
Honorary Life Members: 0
Total: 59
Life Percentage: 17.93%

Elks training is in the planning stages for January 4th in Canon City. If you are interested in attending please call Bill Hartless at 719-429-3277

The newsletter editor advised us a week before the newsletter was due that she no longer would do the newsletter. So this newsletter was quickly put together. Going forward until we get a new newsletter editor you will see some changes from what you are used to. Please bear with us during this transition. I am not near as talented as she was at newsletters but I will do my best.

The Lodge is in need of several nonofficer volunteer bartenders or another paid bartender. If you are interested please pickup an application and turn it in to the Trustees. Because we have discovered an issue which prevents several officers from bartending we have had to close the club on Friday and Saturday nights.

Coming up in February we elect our officers for next year. If you think you might be interested in helping lead this Lodge into our new year please talk to a PER. Finding people interested in being an officer is a challenge every year.

In early to mid January the dues statements will be coming to your mailbox. I do not anticipate that the dues will change from last year. On that statement is optional payments. I encourage you if you are able to give to the optional donations. These are items that helps our lodge with our charitable contributions or care for our aging Lodge. Elks National Foundation give the Lodge Grants every year in which we get back more than \$2.00 for every dollar we put in. Lodge 611 takes every opportunity to use these grants and with out them we cannot do the community contributions that we have been. The Clem and Evalyn Audin donation helps pay for grants for youth in our community in need of clothes and other essentials that they cannot afford. Kim Bungard takes care of this committee and does an outstanding job of taking care of our youth in our community in dire need. The Veterans donation helps us do things for our Veterans especially at the Bruce McCandless Nursing Home. We have two of the best Veterans representatives around taking care of them. The building maintenance donation helps us keep up with the constant upkeep of our extremely old Lodge. It takes a lot of money keep the Lodge up. Our officers and volunteers have done an outstanding job of maintenance this year but there is still a lot to do. Lastly our building renovation donation will help us to obtain a historical grant to do some high cost repairs to our Lodge. Our roof is our number one priority because our roof is in very poor shape and needs to be replaced. In order to receive the historical grant we must be able to pay a portion of the cost. Most members join because of the things we do in the community and these donations helps us fulfill that obligation. If you are able to help us please consider giving to the optional donations. Our Lodge just celebrated 125 years of service to Florence and I hope we are still around 125 years from now. Still doing it.

Bill Hartless PDDGER

Elks Care - Elks Share

Business Hours:

Monday—Closed

Tuesday—BINGO 5:30-9:00

Wednesday—Tacos 4:30pm–9:00

Thursday—2nd & 4th—Lodge Nights

Thursday—1st, 3rd & 5th—Club Bingo 6:00

Friday—4:00–9:00

Saturday—2:00–9:00

Sunday—Bar Opens 2:00-9:00

Lodge Mailing Address:

Florence Elks Lodge #611

P. O. Box 662

Lodge Address:

131 E Front Street

Florence, CO 81226

Lodge Contact Information:

Telephone: (719) 784-3892 (Lodge)

E-Mail: treasurer611@bpoe611.com (Lodge)

Office Hours:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday

9:00 am–1:00pm

Lodge Meetings:

Meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays.

(Exceptions: July and August meets only the 4th Thursday. November the 2nd Thursday only.)

Greetings All,

BE THE DIFFERENCE



Return Address Requested

BPOE Elks Lodge #611
P. O. Box 662
131 East Front Street
Florence, CO 81226

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Florence, CO
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