

President Message for August

Hello Members and visitors,

I hope each Lodge had a wonderful Fourth of July Celebration, and your Lodge has been full of summer activities for your members. As for me, my Fourth of July was filled with activities at the Grand Lodge Convention in Atlanta Georgia. On July the Third, I was among not only my friends from New Mexico but thousands of Elks and guest from all 50 states as we attended the opening ceremony of the 157th Grand Lodge session, where we learned of the past year's successes by the Elks National Foundation, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission, and the Elks National Drug Awareness Program. The evening's highlight was a presentation by Grand Exalted Ruler T. Keith Mills, who congratulated the assembled Elks for "Meeting the Challenge" of the past year. My personal highlight was being able to represent New Mexico as I got to carry our New Mexico Flag across the stage during the Parade Of Flags ceremony, and the ceremony was concluded with the greatest symbol of freedom, the flag of the United States of America was escorted to the front of the stage and paused as the assembled Elks recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

There was a combined total of 5,740 members and guest that attended the convention and each day was filled with business session and training opportunities. Throughout the convention I Was pleased to learn that we are coming off one of the greatest years that our organization has had, with an increase in membership and record-setting donations to the Elks National Foundation. Now is not the time to sit back and take it easy. Now is the time to continue that momentum and continue to remind everyone what we stand for, what we do, and exactly who we are. New Mexico Elks must stay focused on how we can find ways to reinvent ourselves in ways that will make us good partners within our communities, and encourage the citizens of our communities to join us for our good times and great causes.

During the month of August we will continue with our efforts of becoming better at doing the work it takes for the lodges to succeed, and we will be having two DDGER Clinics. The first Clinic will be held in Santa Fe on August 6th with NE DDGER Daniel Gutierrez, and NW DDGER Steven Holland leading the Clinic. The Second Clinic will be held in Alamogordo on August 28th with SE DDGER Aaron Ballew, and SW DDGER Glenda Greene leading us through this Clinic. I hope all our Lodge Officers and Committee chairs throughout the state will make plans to attend these clinics for there is so much useful information shared during these Clinics that will help you succeed in leading your Lodge. Also, in August school starts, and this is a good reminder that it is time, if you haven't already done so, to get started on your Lodges youth programs, such as Hoop Shoot, Soccer Shoot, and Dictionary programs. Taking care of, and providing activities for our youth is our greatest assets to our communities. Also in August, if your Lodge hasn't been practicing Ritual it time you get started, and if you have been practicing Ritual, practice harder.

I hope each and every one of you have a wonderful and prosperous August.

New Mexico Elks Association

President Jerry Hitchcock

“Find Your Path”

August 2022