



Elk in the Headlights: KIETH HUFF CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

By Amber Spurlock



Kieth has been a member of Garden Grove Lodge #1952 for eight years and has been an integral part of the organization from the get-go. Like many other members, he joined after attending a Tiki Marketplace event and being asked to by Chris and Karen Garland! Shortly after, he was invited by Sharon Violano to be part of the Taco Team, slinging tacos on Mondays for fifty cents apiece! He spent some fun Saturday evenings eating steak and ice cream served by Hallie, the bartender at that time. In October he attended the Elk Enders Halloween Rally where he met Tim Draughon, who convinced him he needed to join the RV club. He became hooked on the Elks and began volunteering wherever help was needed. Tim asked if he would be interested in becoming a Trustee; Kieth started as 5th Year Trustee, and progressed through every chair for all 5 years, becoming 1st Year Trustee as well as Chairman of the Board for the 2026-27 Elk Year! He takes his responsibilities seriously and is focused on preparing his team for success over the next five years.

How did he get here? Before that fateful day at the Tiki Marketplace, what kinds of things was Kieth up to? Turns out, he was up to a whole lot!!!

In 1980 Kieth was in a band, managing a bar, and helping his friend clean offices after his bar shift. He was also attending Long Beach City College studying fire sciences and loved it! He recognized the potential in the cleaning business and asked his friend if he'd like to become partners – his friend declined but allowed him to start working his own accounts. Kieth landed his first client in 1982, the Seal Beach Mall, and started his own business. It's a testament to his leadership and quality of work that the mall remains his client to this day, 44 years later! Kieth's business employs dozens of people across three states: California, Nevada, and Florida!

Kieth is a licensed private pilot of single-engine fixed-wing aircraft. He's the President of the American Motorcycle Association, District 37 – one of the longest sitting presidents at 20+ years; he's even lobbied in Sacramento on behalf of the AMA. He was in a bad motorcycle accident in 2013 that he was lucky to survive. As a result, he suffered 27 broken bones including his back and a shattered forearm and hand, which took about a year to heal. He no longer rides motorcycles, but he does satisfy his need for speed with his Corvette and 28-foot Cigarette boat! He is the current president of Corvette Super Sports, which was founded by Carol Shelby in the 1950s and is one of the oldest Corvette clubs. Up until Covid, Kieth was the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation National Task Force Leader, raising over \$6 MILLION dollars with local motorcycle groups under his umbrella. He's been an Orange County Fire Authority Company officer and reserve firefighter for 45 years – we've all heard him being summoned from a Lodge meeting to render assistance to those in distress – he's one of those who rush toward danger while the rest of us are running away! He was even part of the heroic team that fought the 1993 Firestorm! He's also part of the AirOps helicopter support crew, driving the fuel truck known as the Bomb – their motto is "We Bring the Fuel to the Fire!" One of his favorite calls ended with him delivering a baby in the back of an ambulance, after having to call one of his Spanish speaking employees to translate over speakerphone with the expectant mother – apparently thinking outside the box and doing whatever it takes to get the job done has always been his style!

Kieth has two sons, ages 36 and 31, and a grandson Hank who is almost three – he's expecting to be a grandpa for the second time when Hank's little brother arrives in about 3-months! He enjoys spending time with his two dogs, a Belgian Tervuran named Tucker and a Golden Retriever named Midas, and a cat named Simon.

When his year as COB comes to an end, Kieth plans to carry on in the Officer Corps of the Garden Grove Elks, continuing to give his time and energy to better our lodge. We should all aspire to be more like Kieth and give back however we can! It's been a pleasure illuminating the accomplishments of this issue's Elk in the Headlights, Kieth Huff!

Save the Date! On Thursday, September 24 at 7:30 PM, the Garden Grove Elks will proudly honor some of our community's finest public servants:

- **Garden Grove Police Department Sergeant of the Year**
- **Orange County Fire Authority Firefighter of the Year**
- **Garden Grove Police Department – Kiki Camarena Award Recipient**

This special event recognizes the dedication, professionalism, and service of the very best among those who work tirelessly to keep our community safe. Please mark your calendars and join us as we celebrate these outstanding individuals and their contributions to our community. **Thursday, September 24 • 7:30 PM** By Stephanie Janji



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B.P.O.E. Trivia

What color do Elks wear on Fridays to honor our active military?

Garden Grove Trivia

Approximately how many residents were recently evacuated due to the chemical leak at GKN Aerospace?

GG Elks Trivia

Which P.E.R. from our Lodge has a park named after his family in Santa Ana?

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE GARDEN GROVE ELKS HISTORIAN COMMITTEE

CONTACT US AT HISTORIAN.BPOE.1952@GMAIL.COM WITH SUGGESTIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS OR COMMENTS

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF THE ELKS NATIONAL MEMORIAL AND HEADQUARTERS

By Mark Schuster

In 2026, Elks are celebrating a remarkable milestone—the 100th anniversary of the Elks National Memorial and Headquarters in Chicago, Illinois. For a century, this magnificent structure has stood as a symbol of the values that define our Order: Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love, and Fidelity.

The story of the Memorial began in the years following World War I. Elks sought a lasting way to honor members who had served and sacrificed for their country. The result was the creation of a grand national memorial overlooking Lake Michigan in Chicago. The cornerstone was laid in 1924, and the building was formally dedicated on July 14, 1926.

FUN FACT: To pay for the structure, a special assessment of \$3.50 (\$66.00 in today's dollars) was levied on all active Elks members nationally. The total construction cost was nearly \$3 Million (roughly \$50 Million today) – which was an enormous amount in the 1920's and one of the largest and most ambitious projects ever undertaken by the Elks.

Since its completion in 1926, the structure has served not only as a memorial to veterans but also as the national headquarters of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

Rising nearly 100 feet above the surrounding landscape, the Memorial is one of the most impressive fraternal monuments in the United States. Inspired by classical architecture, the building features a majestic rotunda, towering columns, intricate bronze work, murals, sculptures, and memorial displays that tell the story of American patriotism and Elks service. Visitors are often struck by both its beauty and its sense of purpose. The Memorial serves as a constant reminder that the Elks are an organization dedicated not only to fellowship, but also to service to community and country.

Over the past 100 years, generations of Elks have passed through its doors. During that time, the Order has grown into one of America's largest charitable and patriotic organizations, supporting veterans, providing scholarships to young people, assisting children with special needs, responding to disasters, and strengthening local communities through the work of lodges nationwide. The Memorial stands as a tribute to these countless acts of kindness and generosity.

To commemorate this historic centennial, the Grand Lodge has planned a special celebration during the 2026 Elks National Convention in Chicago. The event will include a commemorative ceremony, opportunities to tour the Memorial, and special programs honoring both the building's history and the generations of Elks who have helped preserve its legacy. The theme of the celebration—"A Century of Service, Patriotism & Peace"—captures the enduring spirit of the Memorial and the Order it represents.

As members of the Elks family, we can take pride in this extraordinary anniversary. The Elks National Memorial is more than a beautiful building; it is a living symbol of our commitment to service, remembrance, and patriotism. One hundred years after its dedication, it continues to inspire members to carry forward the mission envisioned by those who came before us.



WHY DO THE ELKS HOLD A NATIONAL CONVENTION?

By Terese Caiazzo

The National Convention is the annual meeting of the Grand Lodge, the governing body of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. It brings together delegates and members from lodges across the country for legislation, elections, ceremonies, parades, charitable presentations, and large-scale social events. More than just a business meeting, it is a celebration of Elkdom, fellowship, and service.

Originally, the organization began as the Jolly Corks in 1868; however on February 16, 1868, the group reorganized as the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. As membership grew and lodges spread across the nation, the need for a national governing body became apparent, leading to the creation of the Grand Lodge in 1871.



Early conventions were held in major American cities and often featured elaborate parades, decorated floats, bands, and public celebrations that reflected the Elks' strong civic presence within their communities. These gatherings quickly became a cherished tradition and an opportunity for members to strengthen bonds of friendship while conducting the business of the Order.

A Convention Fun Fact: As National Conventions became increasingly elaborate and attracted thousands of members and their families, remarkable stories of dedication emerged. In 1912, four Elks famously walked 2,223 miles from Brookfield, Missouri to Portland, Oregon to attend the convention. Their journey became a symbol of the commitment, camaraderie, and adventurous spirit that have long defined Elkdom.

Today, with nearly 2,000 lodges and more than 750,000 members nationwide, the National Convention serves as the central gathering for the Order. Delegates conduct the business of the Grand Lodge by passing legislation, electing Grand Lodge Officers, reviewing programs and finances, and helping shape the future direction of the organization. It is also a time to recognize outstanding accomplishments, celebrate traditions, and showcase the tremendous charitable impact of the Elks.

The growth of the National Convention mirrors the growth of the Order itself. What began as a small fraternal organization in New York has expanded lodge by lodge across the United States and into territories such as Puerto Rico and Guam, and even internationally to the Philippines. It is safe to say that the Elks have come a long way since their founding in 1868.

In many ways, the National Convention is both a family reunion and a vital organizational event. It provides members with an opportunity to reconnect with friends from across the country, share ideas and successes, and strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood that make the Order unique. At the same time, it serves as the official meeting place where national leadership sets policy, reviews finances, and makes decisions that affect the future of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

The Convention also shines a spotlight on the Elks' charitable mission. It is a venue for promoting and expanding programs that support veterans, youth scholarships, drug awareness initiatives, disaster relief efforts, and countless community service projects that benefit those in need.

As we gather for another National Convention, we celebrate not only the business of the Order, but also the friendships, traditions, and spirit of service that have united Elks for more than 158 years. That is why the Elks National Convention remains one of the most important and cherished traditions in Elkdom.

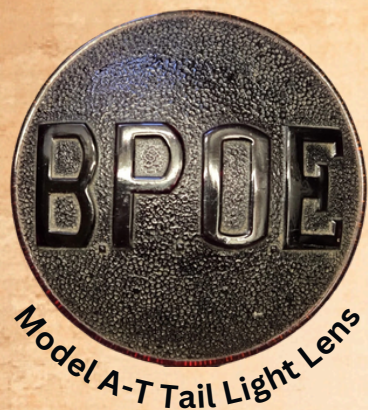
ELKS GRANTS: Strengthening Communities, One Project at a Time

By Sue Sawyer

If you've ever wondered what Elks Grants are available, you are certainly not alone. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks offers an impressive array of community-focused grants, most of them through the Elks National Foundation (ENF), and these funds are designed to help lodges make a real impact in the communities they serve. Best of all, our own PER Karen Lewin is an absolute rock star at securing these grants. If your committee or project has potential, she is the person to see for guidance, ideas, and hands-on assistance. ENF provides several major grant opportunities each year. Beacon Grants support long-term, Lodge-led service projects. These are ideal for ongoing community needs such as food programs, veteran outreach, or youth mentoring. Gratitude Grants are awarded to lodges that meet their ENF fundraising goals and can be used for a wide range of local charitable efforts chosen by the lodge - everything from school support to senior services. For issues requiring immediate attention, Spotlight Grants focus on urgent community needs such as homelessness, food insecurity, youth safety, and especially veteran support. Freedom Grants further strengthen efforts aimed at veterans and military families, funding projects like care packages, transportation assistance, and housing support. At the top of the list are Impact Grants, large and highly competitive awards for lodges running substantial, ongoing community programs. These grants can transform a lodge's ability to serve and often become cornerstone outreach efforts. In addition to national programs, many state associations and districts offer their own smaller, specialized grants that lodges can tap into. If you have a community service idea, big or small, talk to PER Karen Lewin. She can help turn a spark of inspiration into a funded project that carries forward the Elks' mission of charity, service, and community strength.



B.P.O.E. AUTOMOTIVE ACCESSORIES – ROLLING IN STYLE



I am a proud Elk of the early 1900's! My Lodge shirt is heavily decorated with my convention pins. My stylish watch fob holds my membership card, and is, of course, monogrammed with my initials and has the details of my initiation as well as my Lodge number. In my pocket I have a coin that proclaims my membership date and place of initiation into the Benevolent and Protective Order

of Elks. Around my neck is my prized Elk tooth pendant.

I love and hold these things near and dear to me. My BPOE pride is evident to my fellow Elks and my family, but how will the general public know that I am a proud Elk? When I'm out about the town, what could catch the eye of people I pass on the streets? Automobile and buggy accessories should do the trick! That's right. I am going to have a B.P.O.E. hood ornament! And I won't stop there – hubcap covers and grease caps, brake light lenses, license plate frames, dashboard ornaments, radiator grill badges, antennae flags, window decals, and bumper stickers!

Being a proud Elk is contagious and stands the test of time. Just ask the current Chairman of the Board at Garden Grove Lodge No. 1952. No simple B.P.O.E. bumper sticker for his Corvette – instead a personalized plate – “COB 1952”. What a way to display his love for his Lodge, and for Elkdom! Awesome!

The Hot August Days Car Show is fast approaching. Will this year's winning car have some sort of Elks memorabilia, and will that be just the thing that elevates them to 1st place? Don't take a chance of being left in 2nd place. Decorate your car with Elks automobile accessories today!

The Hot August Days car show is being held in the park at the Lodge on Saturday, August 8, 2026. If you have a cool car, contact Terese Caiazzo to get registered early! Terese can be reached by email at terese.caiazzo@gmail.com, or by phone/text at (714) 396-7281. There are several categories and everyone is welcome to participate. If you don't have a vehicle to show, save the date and come out to view all of the amazing cars that will be on display, listen to live music, win prizes in the raffles, and enjoy good food and drinks from the Tiki bar – it's a really fun day for the whole family!



By Jim Spurlock

A Cabinet of Treasures

By Amber Spurlock

The Historian Committee is proud to announce that the display cabinet just inside the front door has been updated and is ready for your viewing pleasure! What may catch your eye right off the bat is the new lighting; it's brightly lit by LEDs now and even has a color changing option to add some pizzazz! It's a cost-saving lighting option and looks fantastic!

Take a moment to appreciate the items on display! Here's a list of the current contents of the cabinet:

- A 48-Star American flag
- An American flag commemorating Garden Grove resident and Operation Iraqi Freedom hero, Navy SEAL Michael Monsoor
- Medals from past Rick Ross Elks Olympics
- Vintage BPOE postcards
- Elks Lodge commemorative coins
- Elk teeth, watch fobs, etc.
- Drinkware
- Commemorative plates
- Vintage Elks Magazine issues
- “Hello Bill” display including books, postcards, card cases, celluloid button, etc.
- A large display of vintage sterling silver & other card cases, membership card, etc.
- Antique bookends and tip trays



Elks Magazine - June 1945

We will be working on the website to add close-up photos and some details about the items on display. We also plan to rotate the display occasionally to keep things fresh and interesting. If anyone has memorabilia they would like to loan to the Historian Committee for future displays, or if you have suggestions on items you would like to see in the case, please email us at historian.bpoe.1952@gmail.com.

Thanks for being a part of Elks history!!!



Historian Committee
Collector Coins
ONLY \$10.00



America's 250th anniversary, known as the Semi-Quincentennial, marks the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. This historic milestone is being honored nationwide through patriotic, cultural, and educational events. To commemorate the occasion, the Garden Grove Elks Historian Committee created a special collector coin.

The “heads” side contains classic symbolism of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks: a strong and proud Elk, the letters “BPOE”, Forget-Me-Nots, “Cervus Alces”, the 11 O'clock Toast symbol, “Hello Bill”, and “Garden Grove No. 1952”. The “tails” side of the coin is our patriotic tribute to the 250th anniversary of our great country! It features the classic Colonial drummer from the 1976 Bicentennial Quarter, the Liberty Bell, two crossed flags (the Betsy Ross flag and the current US flag), the word “Semi-Quincentennial” at the top, and the years “1776 – 2026” at the bottom.

If you've already purchased one of our 2” collector coins, thank you for supporting the Garden Grove Elks Historian Committee. If you haven't purchased one yet, now is a great time to do so. Please consider buying one for yourself or gifting one to friends and family in honor of the 250th anniversary of the United States. There are many reasons to do so! The proceeds support the Historian Committee's work at the lodge, the coin makes a lasting and meaningful keepsake for someone you care about, and it commemorates a once-in-a-generation national milestone.

Your children and grandchildren may remember this anniversary the way many of us remember the Bicentennial in 1976. I still have quarters saved from that time, and if a collectible coin like this had been available then, it would be one of my prized possessions today.

Please ask Amber, Jim S., Dina or Paul, or ask to get one from the case in the hallway. Thanks in advance for your patriotism and for supporting our committee!

By Amber Spurlock



RUDY KAUL: THE FLAG IS UP.... AND THERE THEY GO!!



In the early 1970's they came into town with intentions; intentions to make change; change the culture. They landed on the corner of Trask and Newhope to create lifelong memories, and they focused on one particular event to start. Who was this group of dedicated Elks? It was led by Rudy Kaul and his posse of deputies: Tony Olivieri, Frank Cicero, Bill Lavalley, Howard Whitaker, and the one they called “The Kid,” David Skelton. Together they made an immediate impact by bringing to life a vision for an already existing party and pivoted that into a major annual event and fundraiser. And it was all due to the imagination of Rudy Kaul. So, who was Rudy Kaul and why was the “Night At The Races” Labor Day Weekend Event so special to him?

The “Night at the Races” party was started by GG Elk Frank Rizutto, and it spread throughout the Elks lodge community. It was meant to be a fun, wacky party, a very common theme at the GG Elks Lodge. Rudy Kaul was a proud, dedicated Elk. He owned the Union 76 Gas Station on the corner of Brookhurst and Chapman. He was very generous with his philanthropy and financial assistance to the Elks and to those in need; it was very common of Rudy to give away free gas to people who couldn't afford it. He participated in the GG Elks Bowling league at Champion Lanes and Westbrook Bowling. He was involved with the “SoCal All Elks Bowling Tournament” in Las Vegas. And speaking of Las Vegas? Let's talk about Rudy's true passions: horse racing and gambling!! And here's where “Night at the Races” gets interesting.

Rudy loved horse racing. Rudy and his partners Frank Cicero and California Angels shortstop and Angels Hall of Fame member Jim Fregosi owned quarter horses that they used to race at Los Alamitos Racetrack, and they were very successful. So how did this fun, wacky party turn into a major event? Rudy took over its operation in the 70's and brought the aspects of the racetrack to the GG Elks lodge. He initiated parimutuel wagering on the races including Daily Doubles; he turned the night into a “cowboy theme” event, where cowboy hats, fascinators, attire, and cowboy boots were encouraged. The overall benefit besides a whole bunch of Elk fun? ALL proceeds went to the operation of the lodge; plain and simple. This event became a huge lodge favorite with over 200 people attending annually, and is still a memorable lodge event every year, even after the passing of Rudy Kaul in 1987. “The Kid,” David Skelton, went in front of the lodge membership and because of Rudy's endeavors, motioned to rename this exceptional fundraising event the “Rudy Kaul: Night at the Races.” It overwhelmingly passed which brings us to today.

On Saturday, September 5, 2026, from 6-10 PM, the Garden Grove Elks Lodge #1952 will be hosting it's annual “Rudy Kaul – Night at the Races” event. Nothing like being part of the action as you'll get to be the jockey, mounting your filly or colt in your best colorful wacky jockey attire, as you enjoy theme-related food and beverage and other iconic pursuits you might find at the track. My money is on #5 Monarch in the 5th race. See you at the finish line!!

By Scott Singer

Getting to Know Our New Members

By Paul Escobar

Jessica Dinh



Jessica Dinh was born and raised in Southern California. She was born in Anaheim, lived in Westminster until she was 6 years old. She has lived in Garden Grove since then. Both her parents have immigrated from Vietnam when they were teens. They have always been hard workers and in 2001, they opened their own liquor store. After having the store for 12 years, Jessica's dad wanted to work closer to home, so he started an auto shop. Where her father self-taught himself to be a mechanic.

Jessica has one son, Theodore. She describes him as a sweet and caring boy. He never says anything mean about anyone. He never uses the word "Hate", even if he reads it in a book! Theo will use "Strongly Dislike" instead. Theodore is an excellent student and will be attending high school next year.

Jessica is a "Homegrown Educator" in the Garden Grove Unified School District. This means she attended all GGUSD schools and now works in the district as a School Social Worker. She supports students, families and staff in providing mental health support where needed. She also provides social emotional learning lessons in the classrooms so students can learn social skills on how to be nice to each other.

Jessica was initiated in January 2026; Karen Garland was her sponsor. Jessica's journey to Elkdom is a little different than most. She saw a post on Facebook on a Garden Grove Neighborhood page. After doing a little digging, she found our Elk FB page and requested to join. This is when Karen reached out and asked if she was interested in becoming a member. This is just another example of how powerful Social Media can be.

Jessica earned her Initiate of the Month badge and shirt. She was motivated by our members to keep coming to the meetings. She really wanted a red shirt like everyone else. She enjoyed being called to stand. She had members share with her that received their shirt years ago and still wear it.

When asked what she thought about the Elks before becoming a member and what she has learned since, Jessica has found a different outlook. Before becoming a member, she thought the Elks were just an organization that volunteered to help the community. But since becoming a member, she has learned that it is a lot more. She has learned that we are a family. The welcoming and warm environment has helped her keep coming back. One thing that stands out is how members would invite her to come sit with them when she was sitting alone.

Jessica volunteered for a few things; she went to the Hoxworth's home to help fill eggs and help with Easter Sunday Brunch. Although her work and attending school do not allow her to be as active as she would like, she hopes to do more in the future.

When asked if she has any advice to new members, Jessica answered, "Keep an open mind. Just talk to people, because everyone will talk to you. It's a warm, loving community and just keep coming back because it's so special what the Elks have."

An Inner Guard Interviews Two Knights...

By Paul Escobar



JIM HERNANDEZ grew up in Buena Park and is the second oldest of 4 boys. His parents are both from New Mexico but met in San Francisco while his father was in the Navy. His father is from El Paso, and his mom is from Clovis.

As a youth, Jim was active in sports; playing baseball, football and wrestling. His dad was a big sports fan and loved playing softball. He coached Jim in baseball. Jim played high school football and wrestling. He also wrestled

in the Army.

Jim met his wife Florence at church. Florence was a big Disney fan and worked at Disneyland. She enjoyed traveling and enjoyed her time in Germany when Jim was stationed there. Jim said she loved doing crafts and would have liked to have been part of the Entertainment Committee and decorating for our events. Unfortunately, Jim lost his wife to cancer.

Jim has two daughters and two grandchildren. Both daughters and grandchildren live with him. His grandson, 19 years old and enjoys music. He currently plays in a mariachi band and a quartet. He is also attending college for music. His granddaughter recently had her 2nd birthday.

Jim served in the Army for 25 years. He was a team leader, squad leader and platoon sergeant. He was also a team leader in the automated logistic field. After the Army, Jim worked for Hertz Rent-A-Car for 10 years and later for AAA for 20 years. Jim would attribute the military for his organization skills and being on time.

Jim has been a member of the Elks for 4 years. His Proposer was Rhonda Ashlock. Jim had a friend that introduced him to the Elks and later met Rhonda at a Veterans event. Jim was looking for something that would keep him busy and thought he would give the Elks a try. Jim became an Assistant Tiler and enjoyed serving at the lodge. After a year he was asked to be the Lodge Inner Guard.

As Inner Guard, Jim was introduced to the Ritual team and competed at District and State. Jim was awarded All-State as Inner Guard. He holds the position of Esteemed Loyal Knight this year. He hopes to move to Leading Knight next year.

Jim has kept busy by joining several committees. He has joined the Americanism, Veterans and Historian Committee. Jim is proud of all the members he has met and will continue to help where needed.



Our Esteemed Leading Knight, TERESE CAIAZZO was born in upstate New York and lived there until she was 7 years old. When her father retired from General Electric, he moved the family to Pensacola, Florida. She did all of her schooling in Pensacola and moved to California when she was 28 years old.

Terese's Father, Angelo Caiazzo is a direct descendant from Italy. He arrived at Ellis Island on a boat when he was 11 months old. He is related to a Countess from Italy. Her mother was Priscilla Bailey who was born in New York. Her parents met in New York, he was 20 years older than her mom.

When Terese was born, she did not have a name for 3 days! She was just "Baby Caiazzo" during this time. Her father wanted to give her a traditional Italian name, but her mom did not like the name Teresa. After three days, her parents agreed to remove the "a" from Teresa and add an "e" to get Terese.

Growing up, Terese loved riding horses. It is one love she got from her father. In middle school and part of high school she was in the marching band. She played the flute. Terese was also involved in beauty contests. She traveled through the Southern states and was named Miss Seafood Festival and Miss Christmas. One of her high school teachers suggested she get involved in beauty contests as a way to stay out of trouble.

Terese has two boys, Jordan and Ethan. Jodan is her oldest son, and she is proud of the person he has become. He is kind and loyal and "would give you the shirt off his back". The proudest thing about Jordan is his 10 years of sobriety. Ethan was recently initiated in our lodge and was named Elk of the Month. Ethan is very friendly and well mannered. He has faced adversities but has overcome them.

Terese has been a member of the Elks for 7 years. She wanted to find a place to volunteer. She was already volunteering at her church, but she wanted to find more. She met Tina Duarte when she adopted a dog from her. Tina invited her to the lodge for dinner. She met a few members and enjoyed the karaoke. After learning what the Elks were and finding out they do a lot of volunteer work, she was sold!

Terese started her journey with the Ritual team. She was the Candidate and was hooked ever since! She has been Chaplain, Lecturing Knight, Loyal Knight and currently is Leading Knight. Terese has been very successful during Ritual being awarded numerous individual awards at the district and state level. She has also been part of two teams that have competed at the national level (2022 in Atlanta and 2024 in Austin).

Terese was asked what advice she would give new members. She answered with, "Get involved. Volunteer because that's how you meet people. It's how you build friendships."



Conversations with our NEW District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler & His First Lady

By Paul Escobar

INTRODUCING THE ORANGE COAST DISTRICT'S 2026-27 DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND EXALTED RULER **MARK MAHONEY AND HIS FIRST LADY, DEBBIE**

Mark Mahoney has very deep roots in Orange County. His mother, Betty was a native Californian from Anaheim and his father moved to Anaheim from Minnesota with his parents. Mark's grandfather and father were both butchers in downtown Anaheim and his mother used to pick boysenberries for Walter Knott. The Mahoney family has been in the Anaheim area since 1881.

Mark has one sister that lives near Yosemite. Mark was born at St. Joseph's Hospital and has lived in Anaheim his entire life. Mark graduated from Anaheim High School, was an average student and didn't find interest in things like the prom or playing sports. He did attend football games with his grandfather who also graduated from Anaheim HS. Both his mother and father graduated from Anaheim HS too.

During his high school years, he and his father restored a Model T and Mark still drives it today. Mark and Debbie are members of a Model T club, and it is where they met (see Debbie's article).

Mark has been a member of the Elks for 34 years. He joined at the same time Grandpa Jackson (Debbie's dad) joined. Fun fact: Grandpa Jackson was issued membership #7000 and Mark received #7002. Mark would rather have been issued #7000!

In the early years Mark and Debbie kept active with the Elk Enders. Debbie's parents were part of the Elk Enders too and they spent a lot of time camping together. Later, Mark became President of the Elk Enders. They would occasionally attend Friday dinners and other events, but he never dreamed of becoming an officer. Until 2014 when Randy Eldridge was coming in as Exalted Ruler. Randy asked Mark to be his Lecturing Knight. Mark held off giving Randy an answer until December. Mark had to give Randy an answer. Debbie told him to do what he had to do, and she would support his decision. That day he agreed to be Randy's Lecturing Knight. When he got home that night and told Debbie he agreed, she said, "You did what!"

Ritual was something new for Mark. He had not seen many initiations since his own. So, his first year was a challenge, but he enjoyed it and has grown to love it. He learned to appreciate the tradition of it. The fact every Elk member has had to go through it for the last 158 years intrigues him.

Mark was Exalted Ruler in 2017-18 and his motto was "Enjoy the Ride with Elksdom". Being an ER before COVID and seeing the effects it had on membership is hard. Our Lodge had 1,250 members before COVID and we are down to 900 now. That has been one of the biggest differences Mark has seen over the years.

During Grand Lodge Convention, Mark will be sworn in as our District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler (DDGER or DD). There are 242 district deputies in the country, and everyone is a direct contact to Grand Lodge. Part of a DDGER's responsibilities is to visit every lodge in their district. There is an audit and inspection done and a report is given to the lodges. Another responsibility is to ensure that each lodge is adhering to the Statutes. If they are not following the Statutes, the DDGER will be involved and make sure actions are made and help get the lodge back on track. The DDGER main responsibility is to make sure every lodge is doing what the Statutes requires and provide guidance when needed.

Mark was asked if he could give a preview of his DD pin and his motto. At the time of this interview, the design was not finalized but it will more likely be a close design to his ER and AVP pin. His motto will be "Still Enjoying the Ride".



Debbie Mahoney was born in Lynwood, CA. Her father Jim was from San Diego, and her mother Judy was from Arkansas. Debbie and her family moved to Garden Grove in 1960 where she attended school. She went to all Garden Grove schools and graduated from Bolsa Grande High School.

Debbie is the oldest of six. She has three brothers and two sisters. Four of her siblings live in Southern California and two live out of state. One of her brothers is a member of our lodge. Debbie claims to have been shy in school. She was part of her high school Drill Team and was known as "Painter" by her schoolmates. She got this nick-

name because she enjoyed painting the posters for the football games.

Debbie is married to Mark Mahoney, our District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler. Debbie and Mark met when Mark was a member of a Model T Club. Debbie's parents were also members of the same Model T Club. Debbie's mom could not attend a function, and she asked Debbie to attend it with her father. At first, Debbie did not want to attend because "there was going to be a lot of old men there". The function was a Progressive Dinner; the members drove from house to house eating different stages of dinner. This is where Debbie first met Mark. Before the night was over, Debbie was riding with Mark in his Model T!!

Debbie has three children, Chris, Crystal and Miles. She is proud of all three of her children. Chris is an officer with the Anaheim Police. Crystal teaches chemistry and Miles is a diesel mechanic. Miles is also a member of the Garden Grove Elks.

Debbie has two grandchildren, Hunter and Carson. Both are very active in sports. Hunter has played baseball since childhood and has played professional baseball in Europe. Carson has also played softball since childhood and currently plays catcher for Vanguard University. And a small side note, I coached Hunter for three years and taught him everything he knows about baseball!

Debbie has been Mark's First Lady since he was Exalted Ruler in 2017. Her biggest challenge has been talking in front of people but has gotten more confident over the years. She has met so many wonderful members along the way. Debbie has been responsible for visiting other lodges and hosting dinners at our lodge. During her time as AVP First Lady, Debbie had a very busy schedule, they visited 14 different lodges. This covered most of the districts in the California Hawaii Elks Association; they could not visit Hawaii.

If being the DDGER First Lady isn't enough, Debbie has been part of the Strawberry Festival board for 26 years; she oversees scholarships. They give out \$1,000 scholarships for each of the Garden Grove School District eight high schools. Although the Strawberry Festival is a 4-day event in May, the board meets once a month throughout the year to organize the event to make sure it runs as smoothly as possible. Mark and Debbie are just two of our members that are involved in the Strawberry Festival, many of our members are involved too.

Being Mark's First Lady has forced Debbie to step out of her comfort zone, but she enjoys it and all the work she puts into it is well worth it. It has given her the opportunity to meet members from different areas of the state.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO US!

By Amber Spurlock

Just over one year ago, Paul Escobar asked a few individuals who love Elks history if we'd be interested in reviving the Garden Grove Elks Historian Committee. We enthusiastically accepted and wasted no time in forming our committee, having our first meeting, and choosing the name of our newsletter: *Timeless Tracks*. We've accomplished a lot in one year, and we're proud to say our "New" Historian Committee recently celebrated its first anniversary!

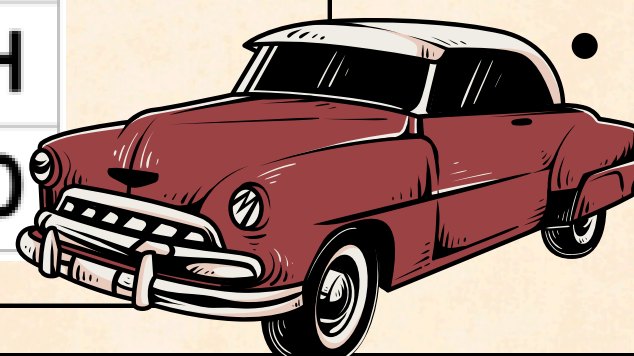
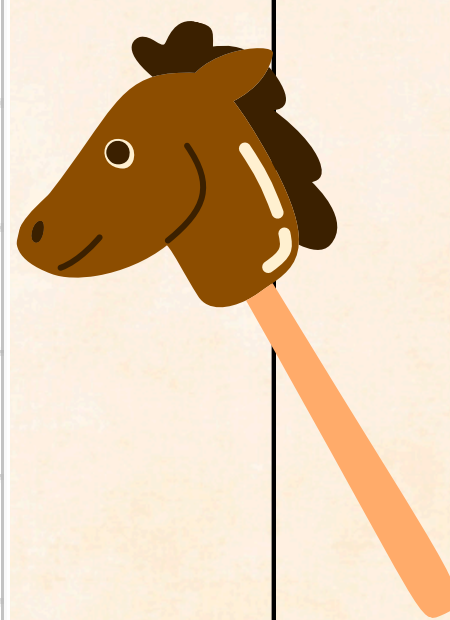
Following the lodge meeting on June 4, we marked the occasion with a beautiful cake and shared display cases featuring vintage officer jewels, celluloid pinback buttons, and BPOE Lodge and Convention medals. The celebration was enjoyed by all who attended!

Please help me thank our team (L-R): Jim Spurlock, Terese Caiazzo (Leading Knight), Kieth Huff (COB), Stephanie Janji (Lecturing Knight), Mark Schuster, Paul Escobar (Inner Guard, Co-Chair), Amber Spurlock (Co-Chair), Sue Sawyer (Asst. Esquire), Matt Cox (Chaplain), Scott Singer (newest member!), Roger Rangel (Asst. Tiler), Maria Cox (Chaplain's Lady), and Jim Hernandez (Loyal Knight).

If you would like to learn more about the Historian Committee, please contact us at historian.bpoe.1952@gmail.com. We meet on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Club Room; we'd love to see you there!



M	A	L	B	O	O	C	A	L	C	T	D	I	H
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R	C	W	L	A	E	N	R	N	Y	E	S	A	T
K	A	A	L	H	R	O	O	N	A	D	T	O	A
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WORD SEARCH

By Maria Cox

- MARK MAHONEY
- BILL WHITMORE
- DISTRICT DEPUTY
- ORANGE COAST
- CONVENTION
- SOUTH COAST
- LAW AND ORDER
- CAR SHOW
- STATE PRESIDENT
- CHICAGO
- LUAU
- HOT AUGUST
- RUDY KAUL
- HORSE RACES
- LYNN GLICK
- VISITS



Visit the History Page
at Elks1952.org
for the answers!

B.P.O.E. Trivia Answer

RED

Garden Grove Trivia Answer

50,000 (our Lodge offered shelter to many displaced residents and pets during the emergency)!

GG Elks Trivia Answer

Randy Eldridge — the park is named in honor of his father, Colonel William W. Eldridge Jr.

PLEASE LOOK FOR OUR NEXT QUARTERLY EDITION - COMING IN OCTOBER 2026

GARDEN GROVE ELKS HISTORIAN COMMITTEE