



EDITION 002603

MARCH, 2026

HASTINGS, NE

## LODGE #159 RESTOCKS CASA "SUITCASE PROGRAM" WITH ENF BEACON GRANT

When a child is removed from an unsafe home, they often leave with nothing. The CASA Suitcase Program provides these youth with a bag containing \$200 worth of new clothes and essentials. This February, Hastings Elks Lodge #159 used an Elks National Foundation (ENF) Beacon Grant to ensure this mission continued during a critical shortage.

### Immediate Action

After learning CASA had only one suitcase left for boys aged 10–17, Secretary John Folcik, Brandi Archer, and Jackie Norris visited Walmart on February 6th, filling three carts to



completely restock the young men's clothing inventory. On February 11th, the Lodge followed up by delivering a \$2,600 check to CASA to fund future needs.

### Lodge Night Service

On February 10th, a dedicated team, including Brandi Archer, Trustee John Laird, and Chaplain Peggy Farrell, assembled 35 care



These packs featured drug awareness items procured by ER Julie Rothfuss, along with footballs, journals, and art supplies to provide comfort to children in crisis.

### Making a Difference

By providing three full sets of clothes and pajamas, the Lodge offers foster parents a vital "buffer period" while giving each child something new to call their own. Thanks to the ENF Beacon Grant



and our hardworking members, 35 local young men will face their most difficult moments with the support of the Elks.

## LODGE #159 HONORS NEW EAGLE SCOUTS IN GRAND ISLAND

On February 8th, Hastings Elks Lodge #159 was proud to take part in a dual Eagle Court of Honor at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Grand Island, recognizing the incredible achievements of two local young men.



Representing the Lodge, Dick Freeling presented

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Representing the Lodge, Dick Freeling presented American Flags and Elks Eagle Scout Certificates to:

- **Riley Bishop** (Troop 14): Son of Andy and Kristen Bishop of Grand Island.
- **Preston Sjuts** (Troop 125): Son of Scott and Nikki Sjuts of Trumbull.

Achieving the rank of Eagle Scout is a prestigious milestone that requires years of dedicated service, leadership, and character development. The Elks have a long-standing tradition of supporting the Boy Scouts of America, and we are honored to celebrate the hard work of these two fine gentlemen.

Congratulations to Riley and Preston on your well-deserved honors!

**ELKS**  
*Join us at the Lodge!*

**Installation of officers**  
**March 24, 2026**  
**7:45 PM**

Community • Friendship • Charity  
join.elks.org



HASTINGS ELKS LODGE #159 B.P.O. ELKS  
A FRATERNAL ORGANIZATION  
3050 EAST SOUTH STREET  
HASTINGS, NEBRASKA 68901  
(402) 462-6616-Golf Course

Exalted Ruler.....PER Julie Rothfuss  
Leading Knight.....OPENED  
Loyal Knight.....Joyce Gydesen  
Lecturing Knight.....Beth Sweley  
Esquire.....OPENED  
Chaplain.....Peggy Farrell  
Inner Guard.....PER, PSP Joe Thompson  
Tiler.....Kent Rothfuss  
Secretary.....PDDGER, PSP John Folcik  
Treasurer.....PER Dick Hansen

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Jeremy Hartwell, Head Trustee, Brian Carver, Daria  
Pierorzio-Requath, Interim John Keogh,  
and John Laird

Lodge Secretary  
PER John Folcik  
HastingsElksLodge@gmail.com  
(402) 984-0307

Clubhouse Manager  
Brandy Archer

Course Superintendent  
Rod Ostrander

Newsletter Editor  
Julie Rothfuss  
jewels6964@gmail.com

Lodge Meetings:  
Fourth Tuesday of each month  
Lodge Meeting time: 8:00PM

Trustee Meeting  
Fourth Tuesday of each month  
Trustee Meeting time 6:00 PM  
House Committee Meeting time 7:00 PM



02.....Edward Johnson 17.....Blake Samuelson  
06.....Chris Long 18.....Tom Pokaluk  
07.....Leland Buescher 19.....Brad Norton, PER/PSP  
09.....Richard Giddens 19..Daria Pierorazio-Requath  
10.....Les Seiler 19.....Anthony Wilson  
12.....Rodney Barton 22.....Seth Zecker  
12.....Austin Esch 23.....Virgil Naggatz  
14.....Larry Butler 25.....Fred Hansen  
16.....Glenn Kramer 26.....Ralph Aldinger, PER

Happy Birthday to all our Elks celebrating in March!  
We're excited to invite you and your family to join us for  
a special birthday celebration! Just bring this coupon  
and your paid Membership card, and we'll happily take  
\$5.00 off your evening meal ticket—and your guest's  
too! (excludes fundraising events)  
(This sweet deal is good on any night when food is  
served.) We can't wait to celebrate with you! 🎂🎉

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership : # \_\_\_\_\_

**We are celebrating a landmark year  
with 195 members,  
But our foundation depends on everyone  
staying current.  
Currently, five members are delinquent:**

**Lynn (Bud) Collison, Matt Durham,  
Ivan Hamel, Stanley J Harvey,  
and Brent A Vorderstrasse.**

*Please remit your dues today.*

**We value your membership and don't  
want to lose you during this time of great  
momentum.**

**Contact Secretary John Folcik or visit the  
Lodge to settle your account.**

EXALTED RULER MESSAGE: JULIE ROTHFUSS

A Year of Remarkable Growth

As March brings us to the close of another Elks year, I am filled with gratitude for the dedication and heart shown by our members. This has truly been a turnaround year for Hastings Elks Lodge #159. We began the year with 183 members and are on track to finish with 195—a remarkable achievement following the membership losses of the previous year.

This momentum is a direct result of our members' commitment to growth. We are proud to have initiated 23 new members this year! I want to extend a special thank you to those who personally proposed our newest Elks: Brandi Archer, Peggy Farrell, Milt Kennedy, Joe Novich, Pat Markle, Anthony Wilson, Blake Samuelson, and Dick Freeling.

While our growth is strong, we still have 5 delinquent members. If your name appears on the list elsewhere in this newsletter, please settle your dues soon so you can continue to enjoy the fellowship and benefits of our Lodge.

Building Our Future

As you can see from the roster below, I was re-elected as your Exalted Ruler. While I am truly honored to serve, I want our members to know that we need more of you to step up and help. This will be my final year as Exalted Ruler. While we do have someone in line to fill this position in the future, the task remains the same: we need volunteers to keep our Lodge thriving.

Please join me in welcoming your 2026–2027 leadership team:

- Exalted Ruler: Julie Rothfuss
- Leading Knight: Joyce Gydesen
- Loyal Knight: Beth Sweley
- Chaplain: Peggy Farrell
- Tiler: Kent Rothfuss
- Secretary: John Folcik
- Treasurer: Dick Hansen
- Trustees: Brian Carver (5yr), John Laird (4yr), Kyle Gydesen (3yr), Jeremy Hartwell (2yr), and Daria Pierorzio-Requath (1yr).

We still have Open positions for Lecturing Knight, Esquire, and Inner Guard. If you are looking for a way to give back to the Lodge and gain leadership experience, please reach out to me directly.

Thank you all for your hard work and for making this year such a success.

Fraternally yours, Julie



March Student of the Month



Emilia Uhrmacher, a senior at Adams Central High School, is a member of the National Honor Society and participates in numerous school activities, including FBLA, FFA, Student Council, Cheer, Golf, Tennis, and Madrigal. She has also taken college courses through Central

Community College.

Outside the classroom, Emilia is active in the youth group at First St. Paul's Lutheran Church and attended Nebraska Cornhusker Girls' State. Through FBLA, she has volunteered at area nursing homes and participated in Christmas outreach activities. She has also given her time to Hearts and Hands Against Hunger and Meals on Wheels.

Emilia has earned awards in cheerleading and at the science fair. She works as a program guide at the Prairie Loft Center for Outdoor & Agricultural Learning in Hastings and as a dance assistant at the YWCA School of Dance.

She plans to attend Hastings College, where she will major in exercise therapy and become an occupational therapist.

Emilia is the daughter of Kevin and Carissa Uhrmacher of Hastings.



Ezekiel Vehage, a senior at Hastings High School, is also a member of the National Honor Society and is enrolled in Advanced Placement courses, maintaining a 4.457 weighted GPA. His school activities include Show Choir, Drama Club, Improv Club, and

Community Theatre.

Ezekiel volunteers at the Hastings Museum, the Prairie Loft Center for Outdoor & Agricultural Learning, and Mentoring Works. In addition to his volunteer efforts, he works at Riverside Golf Club and Russ's Market.

He plans to attend a top university to study music and performance arts while also exploring his interests in math and English.

Ezekiel is the son of Travis and Morwenna Limper of Hastings



Join us every Wednesday night Serving from 6pm-8pm

**JOIN US! HELP US HONOR LILIE**

Lilie will be having her 3<sup>rd</sup> Open Heart Surgery on March 18th. In honor of Lilie We will be taking donations for Heart Heroes.

A nonprofit organization based in Omaha, Nebraska, that supports children and families affected by Congenital Heart Disease

Donations will be accepted until April 1st.

Lilie is the daughter of Jamie & Jenny Goc and granddaughter of Lori Gion




Please give your donations to Brandy Archer anytime the clubhouse is open or mail them to Hastings Elks Lodge

**Volunteers Needed: Lounge Flooring Project**

*Help us give our Lodge Lounge a fresh new look!*


We are looking for volunteers to assist with tearing out the old carpet and installing new laminate flooring. The new flooring is scheduled to arrive on March 17th, and we want to get the project moving as quickly as possible once it's on-site.

Whether you're a pro at flooring or just willing to help pull up carpet, we would love to have you on the team.

**Interested in helping?**  
Please contact one of the following to sign up:

- **Exalted Ruler Julie: (402) 984-9163**
- **Clubhouse Manager Brandi Archer**

*Let's work together to keep our Lodge looking great for all our members!*



**ELKS SOCCER SHOOT**

FOR CHILDREN UP TO AGE: Ages 4-15 years  
 COMPETITION DATE: April 11th, 2026  
 TIME: 9:00 am to 12:00 pm  
 LOCATION: Prairie Ridge Park  
 3900 Osborne Dr E. Hastings, NE 68901  
 SPONSORED BY: Hastings Elks Lodge #159




Image: Freepik.com

**Concrete Drive**

We are still taking donations for concrete for the cart paths. In 2026, the plan is to start pouring the Hole 9 cart path. Here is your chance to help!

**FOR A DONATION OF \$250.00**

**YOUR NAME WILL APPEAR ON A PLAQUE ON OR NEAR THE CART PATH**

**APPROXIMATELY 10 YARDS OF CONCRETE (5 WIDE X 4 DEEP)**

**To donate or for more information contact the Clubhouse or one of the Trustees**

