



2025-2026

## End of Fiscal Year Update



Greetings #287 Members!

As we close fiscal year 2025–26, the Trustees and Officers of #287 would like to share a year-in-review and highlight upcoming projects and events for 2026–27.

First, we would like to highlight our accomplishments and events in 2025-26.

### √ **Renovations/Updates to the Club:**

- **Painting:** A BIG thanks to our members Mikk & Holly Mickelson, they repainted the entire upper level of the Club. Mikk & Holly donated ALL their time, spending many hours. The paint was paid for by donations to the Club.
- **Upper Level:** All our Past President's photos have been removed and placed in a photo album which is located by the bar. Bulletin boards have been placed at the Club to post posters; we ask that nothing be taped on the walls. New whiteboards have been hung; thank you to Kris Spreeman for lettering them. A new pull-tab booth was made; thank you to Tony Bachman Construction for building it.
- **Lower Level:** The lower-level big room is now our Aerie/Auxiliary meeting room. All pictures, regalia, podiums, etc. has been moved there. It is a great space for our meetings. The ramp has been cleaned (next step is to hopefully paint it).
- **Upper-Level Women's Bathroom:** The women's bathroom was completely gutted and remodeled; thank you to Tony Bachman Construction for the amazing work.
- **Next Repairs:** The plan is to renovate the men's bathroom in August 2026. We may also have to repair the ice-room floor soon.

- √ **New Year's Eve 2025:** We had a great turnout on New Year's Eve and Hillbilly Rock Show rang in the new year with us. We did something out of the ordinary for a dinner special; Hot Beef & Hot Turkey sandwiches with mashed potatoes and gravy. Everyone seemed to like the change.
- √ **New Year's Day 2026:** We rang in 2026 with an amazing New Year's Day celebration at the Club. Free Tom & Jerry's were served with great music by Hillbilly Rock Show. The Club was rocking, and a great time was had by all.
- √ **Breakfast at the Club:** The Club serves breakfast on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month. We have great home cooking; stop by for breakfast!
- √ **Kitchen:** The kitchen has been very busy; many of you may not know there is a rotation on Friday nights: 1<sup>st</sup> Auxiliary, 2<sup>nd</sup> Aerie, 3<sup>rd</sup> Past Presidents, and 4<sup>th</sup> is open to anyone that would like to serve. When there is a 5<sup>th</sup> Friday, we look to the three teams, and members, to fill in. Also, many of you may not know that kitchen is "owned" by the Auxiliary; this is not an Aerie "area" of the Club. The Aerie continues to volunteer to serve in the kitchen, but all monies are the Auxiliaries and is separate from the Aerie and we do get a portion after expenses.
- √ **Free Poker Network:** We continue to host the Free Network Poker on Tuesdays for 13 weeks; this began in October of 2024 and is still going strong. The kitchen has been open for poker; please let the Auxiliary know if you are interested in volunteering on a Tuesday.
- √ **Volunteers:** Volunteers are greatly in need of people that would like to help; there is no obligation to always work if you volunteer for one shift. Please consider volunteering; it is a great way to meet your fellow Club members and our community.
- √ **Meat Raffle:** There is a meat raffle on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month. Meat is compliments of Emily Meats and it is outstanding. If you are interested in volunteering to help with it, please contact Kim Bachman (it's easy & fun).
- √ **Sunday Viking's Game Day Potluck/Party:** Game Day parties were held on Sundays for the noon games. This was another way to meet and visit with fellow members and cheer on our Vikings. However, our attendance has been very low for this, and we may not continue for the 2026-27 season.
- √ **The "Big" Game Party:** We hosted a "Big" Game party this year; there were many door prizes, drink specials and tons of food, goodies and fellowship.
- √ **Lenten Specials:** We have a fish special on Ash Wednesday and each Friday during Lent.

- √ **Mother-Daughter Banquet:** Each May we host a Mother/Daughter Banquet that is planned by the Auxiliary and is served by the Aerie.
- √ **Crow Wing County Fair:** Once again we had an amazing year at the County Fair, and it is our BIGGEST fundraiser for the Club. We would like to thank the many volunteers, not only that worked at the Fair, but who helped prep the building, order supplies/food, arrange volunteers and clean up after the Fair. This takes a dedicated team, and we definitely have one! Of note we are always in need of volunteers to cook & serve, if you would like to help, even for a few hours, just let one of the Trustees or Officers know. Again, you will get on-the-job training.
- √ **Halloween Events:** Once again, we hosted both a children's Halloween event and an adult event. We gave away 1,000 hot dogs to our little goblins. There was an adult Halloween costume contest with some very creative costumes. Both are well received, and everyone had a great time.
- √ **Children's Christmas Event:** Each year we host a children's Christmas party and had Breakfast with Santa; the children really enjoyed the pancakes, sausage and especially seeing Santa.
- √ **Member Appreciation Dinner:** Our member appreciation dinner was held on Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, celebrating 121 years as a Club! We had an amazing turnout serving 120 meals to our members. Thank you to all that planned, cooked, served, and helped in anyway. A special thank you to the Zion Lutheran Church youth for serving and cleaning up the banquet.
- √ **District 3 Convention:** Brainerd Aerie is part of District 3; we hosted the convention as the incoming President was our own Keith Bachman. We had nearly 100 fellow Eagle members come to the convention, and it was a great weekend for our Club. Thank you to all that planned, worked, cleaned up and served at the Convention.
- √ **Scholarships:** Each year we offer the opportunity to give graduating seniors scholarships. In June of 2025 we gave 16 graduating seniors scholarships totaling \$8,000 and are currently reviewing applications for our 2026 graduating seniors.

### Looking Ahead

- √ **Donations:** Our Club motto is "People Helping People," and thanks to our members and patrons, Gambling donated \$67,588.31 to approximately 60 charities in 2025-26. Unfortunately, we also paid \$208,387.72 in taxes to the State of Minnesota. While this is disappointing, we are proud to have maintained a 3- to 4-star rating, which reflects the percentage of our gross income that we donate to charities. Currently, we are a 4-star rating!
- √ **Aerie & Auxiliary & Joint Meetings:** We highly encourage each member to attend a meeting; this is a where you can find out how the Club runs "in the background". All decisions are discussed by the Trustees & Officers and members attending the meetings. You do not need to be an officer or trustee to attend. Aerie meetings are the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month at 7pm and Auxiliary meetings are the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays at 6pm. We also have Joint Aerie/Auxiliary meetings, they are held when there is a 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 6pm; we highly encourage you to attend. The Joint meetings are a place where both the Aerie & Auxiliary can brainstorm, work together and share information. We also respectfully ask that you bring any issues or questions to a meeting, if you cannot attend a meeting, contact an officer or trustee; many times, we hear those issues are discussed at the bar which brings more angst discernment at the Club.
- √ **Membership:** Our Aerie membership is down considerably; each year it has gone down. The one thing to remember is your membership dues go directly to our Club operations and the community (remember our motto is "People Helping People"). Many do not know that we must pay a "per capita" to the Grand Aerie; unfortunately, that increased last year which, unfortunately meant, we had to increase dues. It was a very hard decision for the Trustees & Officers. Last year's per capita bill was \$5,860 for the Grand Aerie and \$732 to the State Aerie.

Along with our good news and accomplishments, come some unfavorable items. As we all know everything has increased in price, we have shown a loss in revenue and an increase in expenses over the last year. We receive notices approximately twice per month from our vendors stating that supply prices have increased. Our bartenders and Trustees continue to work with our liquor suppliers to ensure we are getting the best price. There may be a price increase at the bar, however analysis is underway. The Auxiliary has increased food prices slightly in the kitchen and the breakfast team has increased our Sunday breakfast prices.

We also want to convey information regarding Club finances. As stated above, almost everything has increased. We receive MANY requests for more bands at the Club. Unfortunately, bands cost an average of \$600; we do charge a door cover charge those evenings (\$2 for members and \$5 non-members). The door cover charge and the bar sales does not cover the cost of the bands.

Currently we have scheduled two bands per month; unfortunately, we are going to decrease to one per month starting in June, finances will be reevaluated in the Fall to determine if we can increase that. We are not attracting enough people or selling enough products (food at the bar, soda, liquor, etc.) to even cover the cost of bands and overhead. We cannot continue with this loss and maintain our Club's financial stability. The Trustees ask if you have any concerns or comments, please discuss with them or better yet, come to a meeting. They would love to hear any suggestions you have. Please do not "beat up" our volunteers at the door or the staff. They are just that, a volunteer or staff person, and do not make the decisions.

The parking lot at the Club is in very poor condition. At a minimum, we need to patch the potholes; ideally, the entire lot needs to be resurfaced. Unfortunately, we do not currently have the funds to complete either project. We are working on a fundraising campaign to help make a full replacement possible. Please stay tuned for more information. If you can contribute or would like to donate, please send it to the Club. Additionally, if you know someone in the paving or construction industry who may be willing to donate some or all the repairs, we would greatly appreciate the connection. Any support would mean a great deal to us. Thank you for your consideration and generosity.

As you have read above, volunteers are what makes this Club run; please consider volunteering at any of the events or in the kitchen. If the kitchen is not in your thing, how about helping with the children's parties, the County Fair, assembling the newsletter, organizing the pantry, setting up for breakfast the night before, decorating the Club for holidays/events, etc.

Your membership dues expire on May 31<sup>st</sup>; we respectfully request that you pay your membership dues early (before the end of June). Paying early helps save the Club money (eliminates mail reminders) and brings money into the Club. Aerie dues are \$50 (\$60 for Benefit membership) and \$10.00 for Golden Eagles. Auxiliary dues are \$30.

Remember, all members are welcome and encouraged to attend Aerie/Auxiliary meetings. This is the best place to share your ideas or thoughts and encourage action. Or you can contact any Officer or Trustee, your opinion matters. Thank you for being part of our Club; many outside patrons or members of other Clubs comment on what an active Club we have. We are an amazing team!!

Sincerely,

**Your 2025-26 Aerie Officers**

Doug Boser, Worthy President  
Dan Witt, Junior Past Worthy President  
Wayne Hanson, Worthy Vice-President  
Christy Lou Heidelberg, Worthy Chaplain  
Larry Paige, Worthy Conductor  
Kim Bachman, Worthy Secretary  
Amanda Bachman, Worthy Treasurer  
Barb Nash, Inside Guard  
Jill Broadmarkle, Auditor  
Kim Bachman, Membership/Newsletter/Web Master  
Christy Lou Heidelberg, Gambling Manager

**Aerie Trustees**

Rod McCulley (Chair), Keith Bachman,  
Dan Bourassa, Dave Kuhn

**Your 2025-26 Auxiliary Officers**

Aubrey Lindsay, Madam President  
Carolyn Hyatt, Jr. Past Madam President  
Lori Heinrich, Madam Vice President  
Anna Vogt, Madam Chaplain  
Lisa Villnow, Madam Conductress  
Laurie Johnston, Madam Secretary  
Cyndi Burnard, Madam Treasurer  
Kay Deist, Madam Inside Guard  
Lisa Villnow, Madam Auditor

**Auxiliary Madam Trustees**

Judi Vopatek, Gloria Leonard,  
Joan Underland

PS: If you have an email can you please let Kim know at [eaglesclub287@hotmail.com](mailto:eaglesclub287@hotmail.com).  
We are still printing over 200 newsletters; if we have your email it will save the Club money. Thanks!