

Washington State Elks Association Newsletter



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Informing, Educating, and Communicating with WSEA Members

January 2026

Grand Lodge Declares: Thrive with Five! Momentum Builds for Membership Growth

Last year, we achieved our fourth consecutive year of growth—a milestone that speaks not just to effort, but to belief. Belief in our mission. Belief in our Lodges. Belief in the power of Elkdom to strengthen communities and change lives.

That success is our launching pad for this year’s challenge: Thrive with Five in 2025–2026. The bar is higher. The mission is bigger. And the momentum is unmistakable.

As we enter the final stretch of the Lodge year, with official numbers closing on May 31, projections show that we are on pace to welcome 92,000 new Members to our Order — an extraordinary achievement by any measure.

But real, lasting success rests on one essential cornerstone: Retention. Every new and returning Member adds strength to the story we’re writing. A story of resilience, purpose, and pride.

What we do today will shape who we become tomorrow.

Let’s seize this moment, initiate with urgency, and push together toward a future worthy of the Elks. To stay on pace and keep this momentum strong, please remember to initiate all candidates by March 31, 2026. Every candidate initiated is one more spark fueling a thriving and successful year. Famed writer Charles Caleb Colton reminded us, “Nothing is so contagious as enthusiasm.”

Right now, Elkdom needs enthusiasm—your enthusiasm—more than ever. Let’s harness it. Let’s drive the mission forward. And let’s Thrive with Five like never before.

All Gas. No Brakes!

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WSEA President Message



We hope everyone had a joyful Christmas and a bright start to the New Year. Our hearts and prayers go out to all those in our communities who have been affected by the recent

flooding. During this challenging time, let's continue to support one another and stand together.

Local food shelters and donation centers are currently low on supplies and could greatly use your help. Please consider donating your time or resources to assist those in need. Every bit of support makes a difference. Elks Care Elks Share.

As you read this, our WSEA State Convention is either about to begin or is currently underway at the DoubleTree Hotel in SeaTac, WA. This Semi-Annual Convention also serves as our Training Convention, focusing on lodge officer development, discussions on state program initiatives and improvements, and exploring ways to increase community involvement.

If you are unable to attend this convention, consider joining us for our Summer Convention in Pasco, WA, June 18–20, or our Winter Convention next year in SeaTac.

I mentioned this in last month's article, and I feel it's worth repeating: As you participate in events this time of year—whether at the lodge or with friends and family—pause for a moment. Is someone missing? Is there a

member or relative you haven't seen in a while? Reach out to them. Invite them to join you at one of your gatherings. Remember, not everyone has loved ones nearby, and some may feel hesitant about attending alone. Show them that they are valued, remembered, and missed.

Soon, your officers and members will be returning from convention with fresh ideas and renewed energy to revitalize our lodge programs. Support them as much as you can and consider volunteering wherever possible. Trying something new in the Elks isn't always easy but approach it with an open mind and see what unfolds—you never know the positive changes that could happen!

Reminder, February is the time when our lodges hold officer elections—a chance for each of us to step up and make a difference.

Becoming an officer isn't just a title; it's an opportunity to help the lodge grow, support our members, and shape the future of our community.



If you've ever thought about getting more involved, now is the perfect time to consider how you can contribute your skills and energy. Every member has something valuable to offer, and your ideas and leadership could make a real impact!

Fraternally,

Scott Rainey
WSEA President

Elks Care - Elks Share

WSEA President Elect Message

By Ben Braden



Public Relations: Shining the Light of Elkdom

We've talked over the last two months about how Lodge Activities bring energy to our lodges, and how Government Relations turns that energy into

measurable impact. Now it's time to talk about how we *share* that story with each other and even with the world, through **Public Relations**.



Public Relations is more than just posting on Facebook or hanging flyers on a wall. It's about telling the story of who we are proudly, consistently, and creatively. When we communicate the good deeds we do, we build curiosity in those who don't yet know us and pride in those who already belong but maybe didn't realize we did all that.

Your Public Relations Committee has the power to take the reports from Government Relations, that goldmine of member activity, along with the photos and stories from Lodge Activities, and turn them into something powerful: visibility.

A photo of members helping veterans with a caption of how much we help veterans. A short video about your scholarship winners with a report on how many people volunteered and donated to scholarships.

Maybe even a heartfelt post about a lodge cleanup day that includes the hours volunteered, dollars spent, and miles



driven – that is the fuel that can ensure our message travels far and fast.

Visibility leads to engagement. Engagement leads to pride. And pride, as every involved Elk knows, leads directly to *membership retention and growth*.

Next month, we'll bring this trifold together to show fully how working together, how combining our strengths fills the gaps and creates the pinnacle we need to ensure our lodges have the best chance of success, the best opportunity to do good for each other while at the same time helping those in need within our communities for years to come.

We will take the energy, the impact, and the visibility created by these committees and use it to build something lasting. To build a strong, sustainable, and proud membership base.

Remember: The light of Elkdom shines brightest when we all help reflect it.

WSEA Vice President East Message



Happy New Year!

I hope 2026 brings many wonderful things your way.

As I write this article, we are preparing for our

Mid-Winter Convention. If you have not attended one of our state conventions, you are truly missing out. All members are welcome, and it's a fantastic opportunity to learn more about your state association while hearing from committee leaders about ways you can support and strengthen your lodge. We have added a few things this year, including ER to be training. We look forward to feedback on this.

Washington State has had a strong year so far. We have launched new programs, introduced fresh ideas, and are grateful for the positive reception and continued support of our membership—there is still plenty of opportunity ahead.



The start of a new year is the perfect time to continue that same momentum and renewed energy and excitement into our lodges. Let's work together to finish the final quarter of the lodge year on a high note.

Have you reached out to your delinquent members? Now is an ideal time to remind them why they joined and encourage them to reengage. There is also still time to fill your calendars with events, host membership drives, and initiate those who are waiting to join.

Have you reviewed the goals you set for your lodge year? There is still time to do so. Lodge

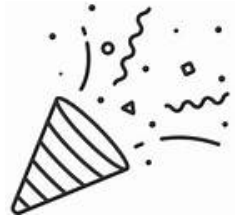
Officers should be assessing where they stand and determining what steps are needed to reach those goals. If you are falling short, make this final push count.

As the lodge year comes to a close, remember to recognize those hardworking members who give so much of their time and energy. End-of-year awards such as Officer of the Year, Elk of the Year, Citizen of the Year, and Polly Garland will be here before you know it. There is no better way to say thank you. Members, if you see someone deserving, please let your lodge officers know.

Remember, we are always here to help and look forward to supporting you as you finish this lodge year strong.

Let's make 2026 GREAT!

Lana Davick
WSEA Vice President – East



SOCIAL CLUB

- Drives Membership
- Great Food
- Great Drinks
- Community Gathering
- Games and Fun

CHARITY

- Raising Money
- Volunteers
- State Major Project
- ENF
- Giving Back

LODGE

RUN IT LIKE A BUSINESS

GIVE TO YOUR ELKS CHARITIES

Your Local Elks Lodge is no longer the "Best kept Secret" in Town, Market & Advertise your Fun Social Lodge & your Charitable Work

at the Same Time!

If you have reduced membership, rising membership age or declining money for charity, your Lodge is "out of balance", we are not just a Social Club or a Charity, WE ARE BOTH.

Two Sides of the Same Coin

WSEA Vice President Central Message



Dear Washington State Elks Members,

I hope you and your families enjoyed a pleasant holiday season. As we begin the new year, let's set clear goals and energize our plans for the lodge. Please review your

upcoming activities and consider effective strategies for recruiting new members. Strong membership is essential as we conclude the lodge year.

Our annual Winter Convention will be held January 15–17 at the Doubletree Hotel in SeaTac. This event is a valuable opportunity to learn, network, and share best practices with fellow lodges across Washington. Special thanks to our State President, Scott Rainey, for organizing an engaging program.



With officer elections approaching, I encourage all members to thoughtfully consider candidates for leadership roles. There are many ways to get involved,

including serving on committees at both the lodge and state levels. If you are interested in contributing, please reach out to a WSEA Executive Board member.



Exalted Rulers (ER) to be should now be planning their calendars and seeking input from members regarding last year's successes and areas for



improvement. Building a strong leadership team and adjusting activities to boost participation will help ensure Elks continued success and uphold our meaningful traditions.

Membership growth remains a priority, with only three months left to achieve our targets. Please welcome new members promptly and involve them in your lodge activities. Valuing their contributions from the outset can inspire fresh ideas and strengthen our organization.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment. Let's work together to make this year productive and rewarding for all Washington State Elks.

Fraternally,

Scott Knight



WSEA Vice President South Message



Happy New Year!

Can you believe it? I'm right there with you wondering where 2025 went—it flew by!

A new year often inspires New Year's resolutions. I'll be honest, I've never been great at sticking to the usual ones: lose 30

pounds, exercise more, stop drinking... you know the list.

But there *is* one resolution I know I can keep—and I bet you can too—with very little pain involved: **being an even better Washington State Elk member.**

So how do we do that?

One easy way is by signing up for a **monthly contribution to our State Major Project**, the *Washington Elks Therapy Program for Children*. Just click and sign up on the Washington State Elks Website. It is a simple step that makes a lasting difference for kids across our state.



Another way to support our mission is by contributing to the **Washington Elks Charitable Trust**, this is another powerful way to help our communities and programs thrive

throughout the year.

Want to be a better lodge member? Try setting a goal of attending **at least one lodge meeting a month** and taking part in **New**

Member Orientation. That's a small commitment with a big impact—and it's a great way to stay connected.

Looking to get more involved at your lodge? There are so many opportunities! Volunteer at a dinner, help with a clean-up day, assist the office as it prepares for the coming year, pitch in after events, support Veterans programs, or help with lodge activities. This is just a small sample of ways to jump in. When you roll up your sleeves and work alongside fellow Elks, you build friendships, fellowship, and pride in your lodge.

Wondering how you can support lodge leadership? Our incoming Exalted Rulers (ER) are currently working on committee appointments, and now is the perfect time to talk with them about your interests and how you'd like to help. They'll be attending ER training in SeaTac on Thursday, January 16, and will return energized and prepared to plan a successful year. This is a great opportunity for members to step up and help ensure a strong, successful lodge year.

And if you've never attended **Winter Convention**, let me tell you—it's a blast! All members are invited, and this year's convention features some excellent training classes along with plenty of fun and fellowship. It's another fantastic way to grow as an Elk and connect with members from across the state.

So, what New Year's resolution are *you* making? Maybe one of these ideas will resonate with you. No matter how you choose to get involved, every step you take helps strengthen our lodges, our communities, and our great organization.

Here's to an exciting and rewarding year ahead! Happy New Year!

Fraternally, Caroline Bradwell
WSEA 3rd Vice President



A Special Lodge Meeting in Astoria Oregon Lodge #180

By Blake Whitson
Oregon State Elks Association President

On November 6th, 2025, St. Helens Oregon Elks Lodge #1999 held their regular Lodge meeting on the road at the Astoria Oregon Elks Lodge #180. A total of 120 Elks attended, representing 21 Lodges from across Oregon and beyond. The furthest-traveled attendee came from Alexandria, Minnesota.



Distinguished guests included Oregon State Elks President Blake Whitson, Past Grand Trustee Joe Basil, and Past Grand Exalted Ruler

and state sponsor Keith Mills with his wife Amy, who traveled in from Idaho state.

Officers from St. Helens performed the full traditional Lodge opening and closing in Astoria's historic Lodge room. An Honor Guard accompanied the American flag, setting a formal and respectful tone for the evening.



Not standard in traditional Lodge opening but, to the surprise of everyone present, member Rachel Armitage stepped forward as vocalist and delivered our National Anthem a



cappella from the balcony. Her performance filled the Lodge room and proved to be an emotional and unforgettable highlight of the night for many in attendance.

WSEA Membership and Marketing Committee



Our purpose for the Membership and Marketing Committees is to use effective internal and external communications to relate to the membership and public our purpose, aims, and goals and publicize the good deeds of our order. We are working hard to meet the needs of the lodges. Should you wish to submit info, ideas, questions, please contact the Committees.

Marketing Committee Chair:

Greg Heimgartner, PSP
Greg@GregHeimgartner.com
509-301-1979

Online Presence Coordinator:

Arnold Ross
arnoldross@msaldj.com
elksonline.org

Membership Committee Chair:

Nancy M Oakes, PER
Nancy@garnettlaw.com
ph. 307-250-3378

Team Members:

Jen Steele
Aaron Reid
Richard Shull
Scott Fylling
JD Smith
Missy Wheat
Lolly Titherington
Beverly Maddox

The evening also included a rare honor for St. Helens' newest Trustee, Kyle Stein. Kyle was installed as Trustee by Past Grand Exalted Ruler Keith Mills and Past Grand Trustee Joe Basil. It is very uncommon for a Lodge officer installation to be conducted by a Grand Exalted Ruler and Grand Trustee, making this a memorable moment for everyone present.



PER Dan McMahon filling in for Treasurer, wearing PGER Keith Mills' hat (not only does it hold ten gallons, but it's also valued at \$5000!)

More than \$5,700 was raised to assist this historic Lodge, whose building and Lodge room are widely regarded as architectural and fraternal treasures.

Two themes stood out from the evening. First, the meeting exemplified exactly what the Astoria Lodge was built for: a full room, formal ritual, visiting Lodges, and genuine fellowship before and after the gavel. For one night, that

original vision was fully realized again. Second, everyone in the room chose to be there. This was not a required DD clinic, Fall Seminar, or Summer Convention. Attendance was voluntary, driven by a desire to support a sister Lodge and share in the fellowship of other Elks.

The Astoria visit demonstrated the strength of inter-Lodge support and the impact that committed, engaged members can have when they come together by choice rather than requirement.



WSEA OFFICER TEAM



The Washington State Elks Association, Founded in 1905, is made up of the state subordinate lodges of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America. It currently has 36 member Lodges within Washington State and more than 20,000 members. Its purpose is to unite all Elks in closer bonds of fraternity, to promote the interests of the Order, exchange items beneficial to member Lodges, foster the virtues of Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love, and Fidelity and to further patriotic devotion to the principles of the United States of America.

President:

Scott Rainey

President Elect:

Benjamin Braden

Vice President/East:

Lana Davick

Vice President/Central:

Scott Knight

Vice President/South

Caroline Bradwell

Secretary:

Steve Scholz

Treasurer:

Robert Finley

Elks Care – Elks Share

District Deputy Teams 2025-2026



Central:

District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler: Scott Knight

Esquire: Peter Schultz

Auditor:

East:

District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler: Richard Shull

Esquire: John Dabney

Auditor: Craig Johnson

Assistant to the Auditor: Patty Wilson

North:

District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler: Arnold Smith

Esquire: Aaron Reid

Auditor: Mike Campbell

Assistant to the Auditor: Sheryl DeMarsh

South:

District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler: Virginia Basil

Esquire: Caroline Bradwell

Auditor: Michele Jenkins

West:

District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler: Heather Beal

Esquire: Brandi Wallace

Auditor: Mike Leavitt

Washington Elks Therapy Program for Children

Since 1954, the Washington Elks Therapy Program for Children, Inc. has provided home-based occupational or physical therapy to children with developmental delays or physical disabilities. Services are provided at no cost to the family served.

Childrens Hospital



The Elks for Children's Hospital partnership between Seattle Children's Hospital and the Washington State Elks Association began in 1926 and continues today. The bond of these two entities and the care of the Elks have given hope to children in our region for more than 99 years.

Happy New Year from the WSEA Calendar Raffle Committee!



It will be good to see all the Lodges represented at Winter Convention as we celebrate the many accomplishments that occurred in our state Lodges throughout the year, including the Calendar Raffle sales!

Earlier than ever before, all Calendars were distributed to Lodges to be sold, thus preventing Forks Lodge #2524 from ordering a few more from the WSEA Office!

Stay tuned for updates on incentives that will be put in place next year for

each lodge selling out raffle calendars FIRST in each District to help motivate lodges to sell out fast! As the calendar committee looks towards next year, we hope to provide support and help each Lodge to do more early on for raffle calendar sales so that more calendars can be ordered and sold.

Many Thanks to each Lodge for your efforts in sales, and in Membership Outreach as we sell to Potential Elks Members!

As we go about supporting WSEA as well as our individual Lodges, may we be prepared to discuss the Elks as we go about our daily lives. For example, early in December I was minding my own business while eating at Spoons Cafe in Forks Community Hospital, and a voice from behind me asked, "Hey Bill, how can I join the Elks?" We had a nice little visit, a friend I had not seen in a while, and they left with an Elks application! Although I currently have nothing to sell, I still pack around Elks applications just to be prepared.

Have a safe rest of your winter, and it is always good to see any and all of you at WSEA Conventions, DD Clinics, WSEA Quarterlies, and as we cross paths in various Lodges throughout the year, with or without Calendars to sell.

WSEA had a great year with our Calendar Raffle! Kudos to each Lodge for joining in and doing your part! Many Thanks to each Elks Member and to each WSEA Lodge for all you do!

William L. Plumley
PER Forks Elks Lodge #2524; WSEA Calendar Raffle Chair



Important Dates/Lodge Events & Activities:

(more info on WSEA calendar)



January 10

[North District Hoop Shoot Finals @ Kellogg MS Shoreline](#)

[Vancouver Lodge Hoop Shoot @Open House Ministries](#)

January 15-18

[WSEA Winter Convention SeaTac Double Tree](#)

January 17

[Ocean Shores Lodge Tall Elks Coin Box Dinner](#)

February 1

[South District Hoop Shoot Finals @Huntington MS Kelso](#)

February 7

[State Hoop Shoot Finals St. Martin University/Lacey](#)

[Tacoma Lodge WSEA Ritual Day](#)

There is Still Work to be Done: Maintain and Increase Membership as the Year Closes

By Nancy M Oakes, PER
WSEA Membership Committee Chair

Well, 2026 is here and while it may signal the end of one year, the Elk year still has 3 months to go and in terms of Membership, we have a lot to do in a short amount of time to get it all done!

In a couple of weeks, we will gather in SeaTac for our annual Winter Conference. I will once again be holding my Membership Training Session which is on Friday, January 16th from 1:00 pm to 2:20 pm.

On one side of the room, we will have an outdoor booth setup complete with popup canopy. We will show you how to place your tables, what to display on your tables, how to display the appropriate banners we have created specifically for these events, and more.



On the other side of the room, we will have a lodge membership drive set-up. This will show you how to set up your tables, what to display, banner set up, and more. We will be walking you through how to operate both scenarios and provide you with material that details the steps to take for successful membership drive events.

We will also be working on reducing membership delinquency with how to approach the growing problem, how to proceed with attempts to collect delinquent dues, and what to do when all else fails. Our state is higher in our percentage of delinquent membership dues than the rest of the nation. So, let's work together to reduce those numbers.

Another important aspect of membership we will review is Orientation. I personally think this is a critical phase of membership. We will go over how to prepare an Orientation packet for new members and provide samples of information to place in the packet.



While all the above is important, what is critical is what happens in January and February. These are two crucial months to get a lot done! **BOOK YOUR MEMBERSHIP DRIVES NOW! You have two months to make a huge difference in your lodge.** Bringing in new members in these two months gives you the month of March to get everyone initiated.



Not sure where to start? Please set up a meeting with me and let's plan a membership drive for your lodge. I will help you plan details, advertise, and I will even show up and work the event with you. Now is the time to pull out all the stops so you can obtain that 10% increase for your lodge, and we can have a Plus 1 in membership for our state. We have done it before, and we can do it again!

This is also your last opportunity to order those specialty banners for your lodge. I need to know which lodges have the current pop-up banners for Veteran's, Hoop Shoot, Therapy Program, and Scholarship. I know there are many sets of these out there and I must have an update of their whereabouts, so please bring that information to the seminar.

As always, I am here to assist you with any Membership needs. You can reach me at: 307-250-3378. Call or text and I will get right back to you. Let's all make a difference this year and take care of what takes care of our lodges and our Order: MEMBERSHIP!



This will be my last Membership training session, so I hope all the ER's and the incoming Exalted Rulers attend this valuable workshop. I will be the State Membership Committee Chair until June, so remember to contact me for any assistance you may need. It has been my privilege to serve the WA State lodges these past 3+ years and I look forward to continued success in all lodges.

ELKS RITUAL!

Happy New Year!! What an exciting year we had in 2025! Our ERs and Officers will be transitioning to their new roles in no time at all, and we want you to know that the state ritual team members are here to help and support you!



We are pleased to announce that there will be a great training opportunity for all officers at this year's Winter Convention. The training will take place on Friday, January 16th from 2:00 to 2:50PM in the Cascade Room (1 & 2). This will be a back-to-basics session that will include training as well as tips to make ritual performances impressive and engaging for new members.

Please remember that any and all members are welcome to participate in the 11 O'Clock toast and the Flag Charge competition. We invite you to join us in the Cascade Room (3 & 4) at 11:30AM on Friday, January 16th.

We are excited to share some changes in the State Ritual Competition for the upcoming year! The event will take place at the Tacoma Lodge on February 7th at 10:00AM. The winning ritual team's lodge will receive \$5000 for their lodge to put toward ritual or membership, or \$10,000 toward travel expenses to Grand Lodge. We're hoping this will encourage more lodges to participate in the RITUAL COMPETITION.

Hope to see you all soon!

Carrie Massey WSEA Ritual Committee Chair



CHICAGO
CHOOSE CHICAGO

EVENT INFORMATION
THINGS TO DO
PLAN YOUR TRIP



choosetchicago.com/meetings/elks



THE WSEA ONLINE PRESENCE CHALLENGE



HELP YOUR LODGE WIN THE CHALLENGE

The Online Presence Committee evaluates every lodge across Washington. Your participation on elksonline.org earns bonus points that could push your lodge to the top.

WHAT THE COMMITTEE EVALUATES



LODGE WEBSITE

Design, content, security & features



EMAIL BLASTS

Frequency, content & engagement



SOCIAL MEDIA

Activity, quality & interaction



ELKS.ORG VIRTUAL PAGE

Completeness & accuracy

BONUS

THIS IS WHERE YOU COME IN

Every Elks member can earn bonus points for their lodge by participating on elksonline.org. Register, check in when you visit lodges, and vote to support lodges across the state.



VOTE FOR LODGES

Support lodges across the state



CHECK IN AT LODGES

Earn points when you visit

CURRENT ONLINE ACTIVITY POINTS (PORTION OF TOTAL SCORE)

1	Ballard #827	189 votes, 2 check-ins
2	Long Beach #1937	63 votes, 0 check-ins
3	Aberdeen #593	43 votes, 2 check-ins

Your votes and check-ins can help your lodge climb the ranks.



CASH AWARD AT SUMMER CONVENTION 2026

The top lodge receives funds for technology improvements. Micro-grants also in development.

GET STARTED IN 3 MINUTES

- 1 Register
- 2 Check In
- 3 Vote



elksonline.org

Scan or visit to join

News of the Lodges:

It's the News that's Exciting for ALL Washington Elks Lodges!

This isn't just a spotlight; it's an invitation. We want *your lodge* to be part of it! Submit clear, timely, and impactful stories that answer the who, what, where, when, and why. Especially those highlighting who benefited from your events, such as students, veterans, or families. And don't forget a great high-quality photo featuring people in action, those serving, giving, and Being the Difference. Let's see your lodge featured in an upcoming state newsletter!

Raymond Lodge #1292

Members of Raymond Lodge #1292 and Ladies of the Elks (LOE) had the privilege of participating in Shop with a Cop at the Raymond Elks Lodge on Saturday, December 13th. Before the children were taken to shop for gifts, volunteers gathered to provide them with breakfast and a warm send-off.



There truly aren't words that can fully capture what it feels like to witness the pure joy on these children's faces as they live fully in the moment. Shop with a Cop is funded entirely through donations, and each participating child receives a \$100 Dennis Company gift card to purchase gifts for their family. After all of the gift cards are purchased, any remaining funds are used for a small raffle. This year, seven gifts were raffled off—but as always, there is never quite enough money to ensure that every child receives something.

Last year, the LOE decided that every child deserved a gift. A plan was set in motion. Karen Flemetis generously prepared a fabulous Greek dinner for Valentine's Day, with all proceeds benefiting Shop with a Cop. Throughout the year, the LOE also hosted several dinners, donating all profits to this special cause.

After breakfast and the raffle, the children were told that they had all won a prize. The room erupted—excited voices, anxious little feet moving about, eyes searching everywhere. Then the club doors opened.

Inside were bikes—one for every child—each labeled with their name and paired with their own helmet.



It was an unforgettable moment.

That is what Christmas is all about: the joy, the laughter, and the happiness shining on the faces of these sweet children. Thank you to the members who helped put together 23 bikes for the children, making it happen.

News of the Lodges continued...

Long Beach Lodge #1937

On a cold November morning, local volunteers served hundreds of hot meals to anyone hungry for fellowship and delicious food. Roast turkey, mashed potatoes, dressing, green beans, candied yams, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie rounded out the menu during the annual free community meal on Thanksgiving Day at the Long Beach Elks Lodge No. 1937.



Becky Silcox, ENF Chair, Grant Writer, Bookkeeper; Joshua Latham, Lodge Member; Loretta Breedlove, Exalted Ruler; Erika Jewett, Community Volunteer ; Teresa Stamper, Spouse; Calvin Stamper, Lodge Member

A longtime tradition, organizers estimated that the free community dinner drew around 300 people, with another 150 meals being delivered to those who couldn't physically attend. Meal preparation started a day before, with more than a dozen individual roaster ovens used in preparing 18 Butterball turkeys, with each bird providing about 25 servings.

Club members and local volunteers — about 25 total — prepared enough food to serve about 400 people, with approximately 300 typically attending in previous years. “I’m counting on 400,” said club leader Loretta Breedlove. “Along with about 150 deliveries.” Breedlove was grateful for the teams of more than 20 members and volunteers that made the event possible, particularly for those who

wouldn't otherwise have a Thanksgiving meal. “We have 146 people that cannot come in, so we're making sure they have Thanksgiving,” she said.

The free community meal was made possible by a generous grant. “We applied for a grant from our Grand Lodge, and we received \$4,000 to put this on,” Breedlove said, adding that a care package containing a hat, neck gaiter, gloves, socks and some personal care items went out with each delivery.

Seattle Lodge #92

Seattle #92's Holiday Giving Tree collected items for the Tate Mason House residents (75+ tags!) and from the Queen Anne Helpline's wish list. Member Gena Dolan spearheaded this effort, and we filled her car to the brim with holiday gifts, bringing joy to 55+ seniors and neighbors in need. Thank you Gena!



News of the Lodges Continued...

New #92 transfer members Erin and Taylor Wright were the big winners for our Pot Of Gold Raffle, with a value of over \$3,500 – all items procured by members. The raffle raised \$2,000 for Seattle Children's Hospital and was led by Chair Kat Cirar and Trustee Lisa Peterson.



Seattle #92's annual Christmas Ships Party filled the lodge with 200 members and guests, who enjoyed the parade of fabulously decorated boats, good food, caroling, and holiday cheer! It was a beautiful sight to see so many volunteers pitching in, and to have one of our biggest money makers so well attended. Thank you all!



Elks Care - Elks Share

Oak Harbor Lodge #2362

The Oak Harbor Elks Lodge 2362 held its annual children's Christmas party on December 7, 2025. We raised \$400 for the event, had eight volunteers, and hosted twenty children. Activities included cookie decorating, coloring, "Pin the Nose on Frosty," a bounce house, and the opportunity for each child to choose a gift from the present table. Everyone had a fantastic time, and we look forward to doing it again next year!



Pictured are PER Jim Schurr and PER Gwen Schurr

News of the Lodges Continued...

Ballard Lodge #827

Ballard Elks 827 delivered 104 loads of groceries, fresh produce and meat to families whose kids are on free and reduced lunch at four local schools and to a local women's shelter. This year the need was greater due to increased food costs locally. All of the items were paid for by donations and organized and delivered by volunteers. Thank you Jonathan Frodge and team for organizing and delivering over 100 Christmas Baskets.



Everett Lodge #479



On December 11, 2025, local Army Reserve members picked up 50 Christmas hams from the Everett Elks lodge. Everett was able to purchase holiday hams for military families with ENF Focus grant funds. An additional 60 hams were delivered to additional military families the following week, also purchased with ENF grant funds.



Port Townsend Elks Support Local Marching Band Invited to Washington DC for America's Birthday Celebration!

Dear Fellow Washington State Elks,

Just 15 minutes outside of Port Townsend lies the small rural community of Chimacum, home to Chimacum High School. This year, their band has received an extraordinary honor, they have been selected as the only high school in Washington State chosen to represent us in Washington D.C., on July 4th, 2026, for America's 250th birthday celebration.



To make this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity possible, the students must raise a total of \$100,000. These funds will support updated uniforms, travel expenses, lodging, meals, and the various costs associated with such a monumental trip.

The Port Townsend Elks Lodge is fully committed to helping this incredible group of students succeed. We are planning an outdoor BBQ fundraiser in early spring, and we are exploring additional fundraising efforts within the next several months.

But we cannot do it alone.

We are asking all 35 lodges across Washington State to join us supporting the Chimacum High School Band. If each lodge raised \$3,000, we would reach the needed goal and ensure these students can proudly represent Washington and the Elks on the national stage.

Supporting youth has always been the heart of Elks' values-Americanism, Charity, Brotherly Love, Fidelity, and Justice. This effort reflects all of them.

To make a donation you may access the website Chimacum Marching Band has established at: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/chime-in-with-the-band>

You may also submit a check to Port Townsend Elks Lodge, and we will issue a final payment on behalf of all contributors to Chimacum High School.

At Winter Convention, we will have this information posted within our hospitality suite, wishing/hoping that you help support the marching band.

Together we can help these hardworking students achieve something truly extraordinary.

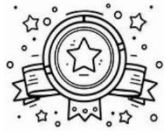
Thank you for your support and dedication to our youth and our communities.

Fraternally,

Port Townsend
Elks Lodge



Refocusing for Lodge Success: Year-End Awards Move to the Executive Board



The Washington State Elks Association has made an important organizational change designed to strengthen both our statewide operations and the support we provide to local lodges. Beginning this year, responsibility for the **Year-End Awards**, including *Exalted Ruler of the Year*, *Officer of the Year*, *Elk of the Year*, and *Citizen of the Year*, will shift from the **Lodge Activities Committee** to the **WSEA Executive Board**.

This adjustment reflects us recognizing that the activities of a lodge are paramount to its ultimate success. Lodge Activities are where Elks spirit comes alive, in the events, programs, and moments that engage our members, build pride, and connect us to each other and our communities. With that in mind, we want the **Lodge Activities Committee** to focus 100% of its energy and creativity on what it does best: helping lodges do *more* and *better* activities.

By removing the administrative duties associated with the Year-End Awards, we're freeing the Lodge Activities Committee to provide more hands-on support and guidance to lodges across Washington, encouraging innovation, boosting participation, and helping lodges turn great ideas into great member experiences.



Our goal is simple: **stronger lodges, thriving membership, and deeper community impact.**

As part of this renewed focus, the **State Lodge Activities Committee** will continue to spearhead the **All American Lodge Contest** sponsored by the Grand Lodge. This program

recognizes lodges that excel in every aspect of Elkdom - from membership involvement and community service to effective communication and leadership development. The WSEA has set an ambitious goal of achieving **100% participation by all Washington lodges by March 2027.**

The All American Lodge contest mirrors the direction and goals of our State Lodge Activities Committee. Its emphasis on active, engaged, and proud lodges aligns perfectly with our mission to help every lodge across Washington become more dynamic, visible, and successful in their communities.



The Washington State Elks Association knows that lodge pride and activity are the foundation for growth. Together with the **Government Relations** and **Public Relations** committees, the Lodge Activities Committee will focus its efforts on helping build a strong foundation that fosters visibility, engagement, and the community presence that keep our lodges vibrant for generations to come.

The WSEA Executive Board is honored to take on the responsibility of managing and presenting the Year-End Awards. This move ensures that these prestigious recognitions remain consistent and celebrated at the highest level of our Association while allowing our committees to stay laser-focused on helping lodges succeed.



More support for lodges. More engagement for members. More pride in being an Elk.

That's what this change is all about.

Recognize Excellence — Submit Your Nominations Today!



Spring is near and now is the perfect time to look around your Lodge and ask: *Who among us has gone above and beyond this year?* The WSEA gives us four outstanding awards - Exalted Ruler of the Year, Officer of the Year, Elk of the Year, and Citizen of the Year - to spotlight the individuals whose service, leadership and commitment make our Lodges stronger.

Why these awards matter

- ✓ **Celebrate outstanding service:** Each of these awards recognizes someone who has exemplified the ideals of our Order: charity, justice, brotherhood, and fidelity.
- ✓ **Strengthen the Lodge culture:** When you nominate someone, you're saying "we see you, we appreciate you, and we honor you and your efforts." That builds morale, inspires others, and fosters a culture of recognition.
- ✓ **Elevate our Association:** Strong nominations from your Lodge bring visibility not just to the individual, but to your Lodge's spirit and involvement. It matters.
- ✓ **It's simple, do it!** The nomination forms and guidelines are on the WSEA website; the deadline is March 15 for submission.

Which award is right for the nominee?

Exalted Ruler of the Year

This award honors a Lodge's Exalted Ruler who has made significant accomplishments during the Lodge year (April 1 to March 31). Key points:

- The nomination should reflect major leadership, growth, committee engagement, membership efforts, program participation.
 - Following the All American Lodge contest form will help with this nomination.
- It's your Lodge's opportunity to acknowledge the top leader who set the tone, advanced your mission, and achieved measurable results.

Officer of the Year

This award recognizes a current Lodge officer (other than Exalted Ruler) who has excelled.

- Must be a current officer.
- Demonstrated leadership, committee participation, promptness in duties, support of the Lodge's mission.
- Example: attending training, helping other officers, spearheading a project.

Elk of the Year

This is for a Lodge member (who is *not* a current officer) whose service shines.

- The nominee should be a member who volunteers, supports committees, lifts the Lodge, fosters a positive culture.
- This is your behind-the-scenes (or maybe front and center) hero award.

Citizen of the Year

This award extends outside just Elks membership, it honors a citizen (Elk or not) who has made a meaningful contribution to your community in alignment with Elk values (charity, service).

- Does *not* have to be an Elk.
- The nomination should focus on their service to your community, their alignment with Elks mission, and the positive impact they've made.

How to submit — Your action checklist

1. **Review the criteria now:** The WSEA's State Yearly Awards sets the deadlines, format (online submission), and required content. waelks.org/policies/
2. **Select your nominee(s):** Gather your Lodge leadership (Exalted Ruler, Leading Knight, Secretary, etc) to identify one strong candidate per category.
3. **Document their accomplishments:** For each nominee, write out clear examples of what they did: leadership, initiative, service, results.
4. **Complete the nomination form(s):** Use the online forms on the WSEA website. Entries must be submitted by March 15.
5. **Promote the nomination within your Lodge:** Let your members know you're submitting. Announce the nominee, thank them publicly, build excitement.
6. **Prepare for recognition:** State winners will be announced at the WSEA Convention. Your Lodge's nominee may be requested to attend.



Make it count

- Choose **specific and measurable achievements** rather than vague praise. (“Led membership growth by X%”, “spearheaded program Y”, “organized fundraising campaign”).
- Highlight how the work aligns with the Elks values: *Care – Share*.
- Remember the judging process is confidential, you are submitting your best case for your nominee to represent your Lodge.
- Submit early. Don't wait until the last minute, give yourself time to polish the nomination.

Set the example

- Identify the Exalted Ruler, Officer, Elk and Citizen who represent the best of our Mission.
- Recognize them. Nominate them. Celebrate them.
Your Lodge's future will be stronger for it.



By submitting strong nominations, you show that your Lodge **values its members** and **takes Elksdom seriously**. You honor leadership, initiative and service. You elevate your entire lodge.

Thank you for your dedication, your leadership and your commitment to moving Elksdom forward.

WSEA Winter Convention Announcement

The Washington State Elks Association will hold its Winter Convention at the Double Tree by Hilton, Seattle Airport, starting Thursday, January 15th, 2026.

The hotel is going to set up a Breakfast Buffet as well as a Soup and Sandwich Luncheon Special to help expedite eating times. You can also order directly off the menu.

Friday entertainment this year is going to be a cribbage tournament. This is not a tournament for beginners so please be advised there is no time for teaching how to play the game.

ATTENDEE REGISTRATION: Full registration refund through Jan 2nd 4:00pm, no refunds after.

When you register on Zeffy, please understand that they provide their services AND credit card processing completely free to all Non-Profit Organizations. They are able to do this because they ask for donations during the registration process. If you feel that you would like to donate please do so. WSEA does not retain any of these donations.

HOTEL GUESTROOM RESERVATIONS: Hotel refund policy: 48-hour advance notice of your scheduled arrival date is required for a refund. After 4pm Monday Jan 12th, contact the hotel directly for changes or cancellations.

Bed options are 1 bed or 2 beds in the room. Need for ADA/Handicap accessible rooms are given priority. You can request a specific room however there is no guarantee that you will receive it. There is a \$25 charge per night if you request a mini refrigerator in your guest room. The total will be added to your bill at checkout.

Hospitality room reservations: If additional items are needed for the hospitality rooms, they must be ordered through the Convention Chairman 2 weeks prior to arrival and will be added to the charges for the Hosts guestroom bill. Each hospitality room host will have a guestroom assigned to the same area as their hospitality room.

Please understand: After December 5th, there is no guarantee hotel rooms will be available so please register promptly and accurately.

ADVANCE MEAL TICKET PURCHASE: Full refund through Jan 2nd 4:00pm, no refunds after.

Tickets need to be purchased in advance so we can properly report plate counts by the required contract date. If no meal choice is made for Friday dinner it will be entered as Steak.

Please understand: You do not have the ability to purchase these tickets at convention.

FRIDAY NIGHT ENTERTAINMENT:

This year our Friday night entertainment will be a Cribbage Tournament! All proceeds will benefit the State Major Project - Washington Elks Therapy Program for Children, Inc. entries will be available on site. If you have the ability to register in advance it will help so we can set up the room properly.

We look forward to seeing you at the Convention!

Fraternally and Sincerely,



Noel "Sandy" Barber, Convention Chairman
Washington State Elks Association

**WSEA West District Vice President Candidate
Heather L. Beal**

My fellow Elks, I humbly ask for your support for the upcoming WSEA West District Vice President election. Since retiring from the Navy, I've followed in my father's footsteps and joined the Elks. I've taken on numerous challenges and positions and have loved the opportunities for growth and collaboration they have all brought. The great work our Lodges do for the community is not as well known in our communities as it could be, and I want to be part of the solution to fix this.



I'm a Navy veteran with 23 years of active-duty service. One of the greatest honors I have had was to carry the Navy Flag in the Grand Lodge Convention opening.

I've been an active member of WSEA serving as the Membership Services Chair, the Ritual Chair, Lodge Activities Committee West District Chair, and as a member of the Training Committee. I love the opportunities I have helped build and strengthen not just our Lodge programs, but built relationships and helped develop leaders. Every Elk that is encouraged to step forward and get involved is a potential leader, and it's so important to honor that effort and enable their journey.

If elected, my goal is to make our Lodges stronger through building connections between people and resources. We're all one team. Our Lodges deserve an organization and leaders willing to do everything they can to enable their combined success. We must support each other as well as our local communities. We need to work harder at the state level to help you inform your communities about the incredible work you do. Please consider voting for me for WSEA West District Vice President. I'd be honored to have your vote and would work hard to help build a better future for our state. Thank you for your support!

Elks Accomplishments:

- Authored 'All-American Lodge Contest "A" Handbook' for Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee
- Authored 'About Our Flag and Flags in the Lodge' Manual for Grand Lodge Fraternal Committee
- Awarded the Erik K. Mulholland Award as Grand Lodge Flag Charge Competition Winner in 2023
- Proposed two Grand Lodge Statute Amendments that were subsequently passed

Elks Videos/News Features:

- ENF – ENF National Convention Video Report. A Community Force.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqx_O67o0d4 July 2022.
- ENF – Take a CIP: Episode 7. Interview on Great Cascadia Zombie Challenge (Beacon Grant)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i2kDHv6M_pQ Oct 2021.
- Elks National Veterans Services – 3 Questions with an Elk.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnw0JZAhDkE> Nov 2020.
- ENF – CIP News. Bremerton, Wash., Lodge No. 1181 Teaches Scouts How to Zom-Bie Prepared!
<https://www.elks.org/cip/cipcentral/news.cfm?StoryID=120244> Oct 2019.

Remember... "Heather Helps"



To the Lodges, Officers, and Members of the Washington State Elks Association.
I am writing to announce my candidacy for Vice President West and to ask for your support.

Coming from a multi-generation family of Elks, I enthusiastically joined the Forks Elks Lodge #2524 in 1994 and have been active in my Lodge for all 31 years. Once elected to an Officer position, I have progressed through the Chairs, culminating to the position of Exalted Ruler in 2000-2001, which was so much fun that I served again in 2001-2002. Even after the term of Exalted Ruler, I continued to serve the Forks Lodge as a 9-year Secretary, 10-year Trustee, served as Chairman of the Board, House Chair and am currently the Treasurer.

The All American Forks Lodge is 100% volunteer and has a way of putting everyone to work. I have continually served on various Lodge Committees, chaired many activities, been a volunteer cook, a volunteer bartender and a 21-year volunteer bookkeeper. These efforts have rewarded me as the Lodge Elk of the Year, numerous Lodge Officer of the Year awards and the distinguished recognition of the WSEA Officer of the Year in 2021.

In 2022, I joined the Grand Lodge District Deputy team, serving as District Auditor 2022-2023, District Esquire 2023-2024 and District Deputy 2024-2025.

While many of you know me around the Elks, what you may not know is that I've been working for the WA State Department of Corrections for over 30 years, the last 21 years as the Warehouse Manager for a State prison. In my spare time, I enjoy going to baseball games and concerts, but I also enjoy visiting other Elks Lodges. I have been to nearly all the Lodges in Washington State and enjoy the camaraderie and fun exhibited by our Elks family in other Lodges. Although we have the same principles, we each operate uniquely and experience our own challenges. As an officer of the WSEA, I will bring my wealth of experiences to help and work with all Lodges to see them succeed. We can stand together, roll up our sleeves and help our communities, but let's not overlook the opportunity to have fun along the way!

My spirit of serving the Elks and our communities has never diminished. I am proud to be an Elk and that is why I'm running for VP West. I thank you in advance for your support.

Fraternally,

Dean McCoy, PDDGER, West District
Forks Lodge #2524

WSEA Winter Convention!

Want to learn more about the innerworkings of the ELKS? From Veterans, Lodge protocols, membership and the therapy program to activities, rituals, marketing and online presence attending the Convention will answer many of your questions! Not to mention you get to visit with fellow ELks all weekend long. Registration is open!

Double Tree, SeaTac

January 15-18, 2026

Registration Link:

<https://waelks.org/conventions/>



COOKOFF HOSTED BY BALLARD 827

SUPERBOWL SUNDAY CHILI COOKOFF!

FEB 8

CHILI CONTEST
3 pm

Winner will be announced at halftime

KICK OFF
3:30 pm



CHILI COOK OFF!

\$10 entry/tasting fee
Fee will be waived if you
sign up for a minimum of
\$5/month with Fidelity Club
(an ongoing monthly donation
program to support ENF)

HOT DOGS + BURGERS

Available for purchase

DRINK SPECIALS

**ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE
ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION**
Elks National Foundation provides
funds to support programs for veterans,
scholarships, and youth, as well as
providing grants to enable our lodge to
help build a stronger community.

BALLARD ELKS 54TH ANNUAL HOOP SHOOT CONTEST

Ballard Boys & Girls Club
(1767 NW 64th St)

Sat, Jan 3
10a–Noon

CATEGORIES

8-9 year old Boys and 8-9 year old Girls
(shooting from 11 feet instead of foul line)

10-11 year old Boys and 10-11 year old Girls
(shooting a standard Free Throw)

12-13 year old Boys and 12-13 year old Girls
(shooting a standard Free Throw)

The six winners advance to Districts in Seattle at SPU in January, date TBD. If they keep winning in their age group, they continue to advance to the following stages:

State – February 7th, 2026
St. Martin's University Marcus Pavilion in Lacey, WA

Regionals – March TBD
Location TBD

Nationals – April 18, 2026
Chicago, IL

All six National Champions will have their names on digital display at the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Mass. The Finals is an expense paid contest. This is a truly outstanding experience for the kids and families.

FOR MORE INFO, VISIT:
www.elks.org/hoopshoot/about.cfm

OR SCAN ►





Washington State Elks
North District #9280

Hoop Shoot Free Throw Contest

Saturday January 10th, 2026

at Kellogg Middle School

16045 25th Ave NE Shoreline, Wa. 98155

Registration opens at 9:00 AM

- | | | |
|----|---|----------|
| 1. | 8-9 Boys and Girls shoot 1 st at | 10:00 AM |
| 2. | 10-11 Boys and Girls shoot 2 nd at | 11:00 AM |
| 3. | 12-13 Boys and Girls shoot 3 rd at | 12:00 PM |

Welcome to all the winners of our Lodge level contests and their families from around the district. Please be there early before your shooting time and have your birth certificate and parental approval with you at registration. We will check your hard cards from the lodge shoot. We look forward to seeing you all there. We start each round at the time posted so please don't miss your time slot. We will have bottles of water at the gym for everyone.

Awards trophy presentation, pictures, and prizes to follow the Hoop Shoot at 1:30 PM at Shoreline Elks Lodge down the street at 14625 15th Ave NE.

Please visit: www.elks.org/hoopshoot for more information on the program

Call or email with me with any questions: 206-779-6815

North District Hoop Shoot Director, Jim Howes jimelk10@yahoo.com

Thank you to all the lodges, volunteers, families and amazing kids that make this event possible! The Elks Hoop Shoot has been a great program for 55+ years!

Thank you Everyone!!

Bremerton Elks Lodge

Fundraiser!

All You Can Eat



Pancakes!

January 11th
from 10am to 1pm

Join us for pancakes & help the lodge pay to
clean the carpets.

\$15

*Tickets Available
at the Office*

Open to Members and their Guests
4131 Pine Road NE, Bremerton 98310 / 360-479-1181

HOQUIAM ELKS #1082

WINTER

Wonderland

Coin Box Dinner

Saturday, January 24, 2026

With Music by the Randy Band

Social Hour: 5:00 pm
Therapy Presentation: 5:30 pm
Dinner: 6:00 pm
Music - 7:00 pm

Fettuccine Alfredo with Caesar Salad,
Garlic Bread and Dessert

Members and Guests



**FULL COIN
BOX
OR
\$15**

624 K Street, Hoquiam - 360-532-0590

HOQUIAM ELKS LODGE
#1082

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

CRAB DINNER

With Spaghetti and Garlic Bread

\$35.00 PER PERSON

Only 150 Tickets available

\$15.00 for Spaghetti only

Saturday, Feb 7, 2026

Crab Races - 4:30 pm

Dinner - 6:00 pm

Crab Races

Live and Silent Auctions, 50/50 and Raffles

Dinner includes 1 and 1/2 crab, Spaghetti, Cole slaw and Garlic Bread

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Washington State Elks Ritual Competition

Saturday Feb 7 at 10 AM
Tacoma Lodge 2013 S. Cedar Street Tacoma WA
98405

What is new this year?

Winning teams will have the choice of a \$5000 prize
to be used for Ritual or Membership projects
at their lodge

OR

\$10,000 to use towards travel expenses to attend and
compete at Grand Lodge

RSVP Carrie Massey at carriemelks1482@gmail.com if your
lodge will be attending



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**HOQUIAM ELKS
#1082**

30

**BINGO
AND
BRUNCH
WITH
BRANDI**

It's Back....Join us for Brunch before 9 games of Basket Bingo. 10th Game will be a Blackout and the prize will be scratch tickets

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE - OPEN TO PUBLIC 21+

SATURDAY, FEB 21, 2026

\$2 BINGO BOARDS | PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT ENF

**Brunch is \$15 - Includes a
Mimososa Bar**

**BRUNCH STARTS AT 10:00AM
BINGO AT 11:00 AM**

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