

ALBERTA ELKS NEWSLETTER

February 2025



AB Elks Association Committee Reports

Communications

The Communications Committee of the Alberta Elks Association continues to produce a monthly newsletter and create posters and signage for lodge members. If you haven't taken advantage of our services yet, simply send an email to abelkscommunication@gmail.com. When making a request for signage, please provide the date, event details, cost, and any additional information you would like to include. For newsletter submissions, remember to attach both the photo and the accompanying write-up. Note that photos submitted without relevant information will not be featured in the newsletter. We are always eager for new ideas and feedback! Feel free to email your suggestions to abcommunication@gmail.com.

A Walk Down Memory Lane

Something not widely known is that during World War II, the Elks of Canada played a crucial role in supporting the war effort. They provided aid to soldiers, assisted their families, and contributed to national defense initiatives. Their unwavering dedication to their communities and country had a significant impact on Canada's home front during one of the most challenging periods in history.

One of their key contributions was their involvement in fundraising efforts. The Elks actively promoted and sold Victory Bonds to help finance Canada's war efforts. They organized raffles, dances, auctions, and charity drives, raising substantial funds to support the military, war hospitals, and rehabilitation programs for wounded veterans.

During the war, many Elks members served on the front lines to defend Canada. At the time, membership was exclusively male, with approximately 7,000 members—similar to today's numbers. Following the war, the Elks of Canada saw a sharp increase in membership as returning military personnel sought an organization that embodied ritual, camaraderie, and community service.

Did you Know ?

Golden Book of Memories

Did you know that the Elks of Canada has a special memorial called the Golden Book of Memories? This book serves as a permanent tribute to outstanding members of the Order. Traditionally, these books have been displayed at National Conventions, honoring those who have made a lasting impact.

When a member's name is added to the Golden Book of Memories, their family receives a certificate recognizing this tribute and commemorating their loved one's legacy within the Elks of Canada.

Any lodge can submit a member's name for inclusion by completing the form available on the Elks of Canada [website](http://www.elks.org) and making a \$300 donation.

The Tassels

Many of us have seen the fezzes worn by the Elks and the pill box hats worn by the Royal Purple, but have you ever noticed the different colored tassels? If not, you will now!

Fez tassels come in two different lengths: a shorter one that reaches the bottom of the fez and a longer one that extends past the shoulder. The length is purely a matter of personal preference and does not indicate a member's contributions to the Order. However, the color of the tassel does hold significance, representing different ranks within the organization:

- White tassel – Worn by any member of the Order
- Purple tassel – Worn by a Past Exalted Ruler or Past Honored Royal Lady
- Gold tassel – Worn by a Past Grand Lodge Officer or Past District Deputy

Now that you know, take a closer look next time you see a fez—you might just recognize the achievements of the members wearing them!



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Trenville RP Elks



Trenville Elks Royal Purple Elks #248 Christmas Raffle was a BLAST this year. Ticket sales were well. And we'd like to thank all the Donors for their Donations. And ALL who purchased tickets! Without them this could not be possible

- 1st Prize - Christmas Food Basket, Winner was Henry Momot
- 2nd Prize - Cuisinart Blender & Juicer, Winner was Garry Vincent.
- 3rd Prize - The Merriment Basket, Winner was Bob Long
- 4th Prize - Christmas Basket, Winner was Barry Pennock.

Congratulations to ALL the Winners this year and Merry Christmas to all and Happy New Year!

Stavely RP Elks



The Stavely Royal Purple Elks Lodge #99 presented cheques in December totalling \$6000 to local communities. Here HRL Rochelle Graham is with some of the recipients including Tricia Waddell (Nanton Handi-Van), Ramona Whittingham (Stavely Community Chest), Kinley & Luke Toone (Nanton Skating Club), Chantel Scott (Claresholm Health Foundation) and Brydon Saunders (Claresholm Food Bank). Unavailable for photo were Claresholm Learn-a-Lot Playschool, Claresholm Legion, Nanton Legion and Nanton Food Bank.

Stavely Elks



Exalted Ruler Jordie Bronson presenting a check for \$2000 to Don and Jenn Mackin, for sponsorship of the Claresholm Thunder Alumni Hockey fundraising Tournament.

Trivia

- 1) A long snakes that smokes. What am I?
- 2) I am everywhere but cannot be seen, captured or held. What am I?
- 3) What can't be burned in a fire nor drowned in water?
- 4) Which BUS could cross the ocean?
- 5) What six letter word when you take away one letter leaves you twelve?



The conference is approaching, along with the grant deadline of May 1 for applications exceeding \$2,000! In recent years, applications of all amounts have been on the decline. Make sure to promote your Lodge within the community by undertaking a project, and let the Alberta Elks Foundation assist with some of your funding!

Tabs for Tots

- Used to purchase pediatric items for hospitals that are not provided by Alberta Health Care



General Grant

- Applications up to \$2,000 can be applied for all year
- **Any application up to \$5,000 must be approved by the general membership at Conference**
- The Lodge must at least match the funds being requested
- AGLC have changed their rules and Lodges can apply for funding for their building if it is used by the community as well

Personal Assistance Grant

- The Lodge Charities Chair must conduct a complete investigation
- A letter from a medical professional must be included with the application
- Payment will be made directly to the suppliers or professional people
- Travel and accommodation requests cannot be supported as per AGLC rules
- Forward your completed application form to the Foundation Office prior to committing Lodge dollars



Disaster Assistance Grant

- In the event a family's principal residence had a fire in your community, contact the Foundation Office via telephone
- A cheque in the amount of \$500, made out to the family, will immediately be sent to your Lodge for presentation
- Your Lodge does not have to match this amount, but it is suggested, if possible, that you contribute



Charlie and His Float

Parade season is coming up so get your applications in early as it is first come, first served. Summer rental is \$200.00. A great way to promote your Lodge in your local communities



Fernie Elks



Once again many thanks to our Anniversary Committee made up of Bros. Dave, Tom, Mike, Mike, Mario, Jim and Jim for their efforts and to all our Lodge Brothers who came out. The event was a huge success and we received many accolades for our years of service to the community. Apparently our Mayor Nic Milligan had very nice words for us at the last city council meeting

A big part of our evening was the support given by local groups and merchants! If you know any of the following please thank them:

Fernie Auto Parts; Fernie Canadian Tire; Fernie Brewing; Fernie Golf Club; Resorts of the Canadian Rockies; Fernie Rod & Gun; Three Sisters Spa; ET Hair Salon; Fernie Fox Hotel; Big Bang Bagels; Commit Sports; Rooftop Coffee; Coal Town; Fernie Stationers; No.3 Boutique; Elks Valley Metis Nation.

Also of special note were the contributions made by Bro. Jim Oakden and Don Uphill and the volunteers from Cycling Without Age at the bar... and a big thank you to St. Eugene Casino & Golf for their generous door prize.

Correction

Correction of name in the January Newsletter

On page one, the name should have been Doug Becotte, the missing receiver of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal under the picture.

With a new hall comes new traditions! The Bassano Elks Lodge proudly hosted its first-ever New Year's Eve celebration, ringing in 2025 with a night to remember. Guests of all ages came together to share a delicious meal, take a swing at the piñata, and dance the night away. This milestone event not only brought the community together but also highlighted the lodge's incredible journey and achievements.

ALBERTA ELKS
FOUNDATION



56th ANNUAL RAFFLE

First Prize

\$30,000 CASH

Second Prize

\$10,000 CASH

TICKETS

Third Prize

\$5,000 CASH

\$2.00 each or
3 for \$5.00

PROCEEDS FROM THIS RAFFLE ENABLE US TO
PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO:

ISTAR - Institute for Stuttering Treatment & Research
Training, Research & Treatment of Stuttering in Children and Adults
Local Community Projects
Support Local Minor Sports, Youth Groups, Playgrounds, etc.
Assistance to Underprivileged Children
With Equipment to Live and Learn in Special Schools
Elks & Royal Purple Fund for Children
Supply Hearing Aids and Test for Canadian Children

30% of all ticket sales go directly
back to the selling Lodges to invest
in their communities

Early Bird Draws

March 13, 2025

3 prizes of \$750.00 Each

FINAL DRAW DATE JUNE 26, 2025

All draws to take place at the Didsbury Elks Hall, 1914 - 20th St. Didsbury, AB

TICKETS AVAILABLE

Local Contact

www.elksalberta.ca

78,200 TICKETS PRINTED Tickets may only be purchased or sold within the Province of Alberta. Tickets are not to be sold to anyone under the age of 18 years. LICENSE 698092

Lodges, if you are not able to sell ALL your raffle tickets before the Early Bird deadline, please return your unsold books ASAP to Margo Ward

Bassano Elks



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BROOKS ELKS – BLUE BIN PROJECT

After a lodge meeting one evening, I found myself enjoying a cold beverage with another member of the Brooks Lodge. We began discussing ways to raise awareness about our lodge and the programs we support. As we brainstormed, we repeatedly returned to the Tabs for Tots initiative and potential fundraising ideas.

While driving along country roads in the following days, inspiration struck: Why not ask local businesses to donate the contents of their industrial metal recycling bins for one month, directing the funds to the Elks Foundation through the Tabs for Tots program? During another meeting, while enjoying a drink, I shared this idea with my fellow lodge member, and we quickly started discussing which businesses to approach and how to get the local recycling yard involved to provide their truck, driver, and schedule for pickups and drop-offs.

The next few days were filled with drafting letters to businesses and speaking with the recycling yard's manager. To our delight, the recycling yard embraced the idea wholeheartedly, and we set out to approach local businesses. We were pleasantly surprised to secure participation for 11 out of the 12 months in our first year. It even sparked excitement at the recycling yard, with the pickup crew eagerly asking which business would be featured next month and having fun with the concept.

We named it the "Blue Bin" because that is the color of the bins in our community. It was incredibly rewarding to turn over the raised funds to the Elks Foundation, all achieved with just a small amount of effort to kickstart the project.

Brad Biette,
Brooks Elks Lodge

Bassano Elks



A few years ago, the Bassano Elks faced a major crisis—a massive hole in our lodge's roof put our building, and our future, at risk. In response, we sent out a call for help to Elks Lodges across Alberta.

The response was incredible. Lodges from all over the province stepped up, alongside the Town of Bassano, grant programs, and countless hours of hard work from our dedicated members. Through blood, sweat, and perseverance, we rebuilt—not just our roof, but our lodge's spirit.

Today, we are proud to showcase the finished product. Even more importantly, through this journey, we have welcomed new members and re-established ourselves as a thriving, active lodge at the heart of our community.

Thank you to everyone who answered our call—we couldn't have done it without you!



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Helping Ourselves: A Call to Action for Our Lodges

By Kelly Sanford

We've all heard the saying, "God helps those who help themselves," and it's true in so many aspects of life. You work hard, you earn your paycheck, and you create the life you want. You study, and you may achieve the career you desire. So, I ask: What is your lodge doing to help itself? Too often, over my 14 years of service with the Association, I've heard complaints that the Association doesn't do enough for lodges. But let's flip the question: What are you doing for yourselves?

Think about your lodge and its members. Picture yourself as a new member walking into the lodge for the first time. Maybe you were invited by a friend, coworker, or neighbor. Now, let's say for argument's sake that your grandfather asked you to come to a meeting. Picture yourself at 20 years old, walking through those doors. Got the visual? Let's begin!

What is the meeting like? Are they long and drawn out, filled with tension and arguments? Remember, volunteering is meant to be enjoyable, not a battleground. If you can feel the tension the moment you walk in, why would you return? Are people debating just for the sake of being right? Let's be honest with ourselves. Volunteering should bring joy, not stress.

During my visits as Provincial President, I saw that the most successful lodges had a strict time limit for meetings—just one hour for business. This shows respect for members' time. Life is busy, and no one wants to spend hours in a meeting. A one-hour meeting gives people time to relax and spend the rest of their evening with family. Think about it—anyone can donate an hour. We spend more time scrolling on our phones than that!

Now, consider this: Do people welcome you when you walk through the door? Are they engaging with you or just carrying on with their own conversations? How often do you take the time to explain what's happening

during the meeting, especially to newcomers? I'm guilty of assuming newcomers will figure it out on their own. But we need to slow down and explain the process. If a potential member leaves a meeting not knowing what just happened, chances are they won't come back.

So, let's say you decide to join. That's fantastic! But what if, as a new member, you suggest an idea, like hosting a dance or event to bring the community together? What's the response? Do people dismiss the idea because it didn't work years ago? Or because another group tried something similar? Instead of focusing on why it won't work, let's focus on why it can work! Maybe it's a small event, and you lose a little money, but you gain something even more valuable—new members who feel empowered and motivated. At the end of the day, what have you really lost? A few hundred dollars? But you've gained fresh energy and ideas.

The reality is, if we don't allow new members to get involved and make their mark, they will leave—and that's on us. Let's give them a chance to try something new. Who knows what might come of it?

Ultimately, we need to look at how we present ourselves to the public. We, the lodges, are responsible for our own success. If we don't advertise what we do, the events we host, donations we give, and our volunteers, it's on us. The Alberta Elks Association has been running a newsletter and Facebook page for years. Yet only one-third of lodges in Alberta utilize them! That's a missed opportunity. All you need to do is email a photo or write a brief description of what your lodge is doing. Let us help you promote your efforts!

The Communications Committee has been offering to create posters for events or membership drives for two years. Despite multiple mailouts and reminders, only a handful of lodges have taken advantage of this. Let us help you!

Have you asked your friends, coworkers, or family to join? If not, why

not? Is it because your lodge has internal conflicts, and you don't want them to see the tension? Or do you keep personal life and volunteer life separate? Even if you've asked them before, ask again. People's lives change. Maybe your kids once said no, but now that they have families of their own, they might see the value of community in a new light. The worst they can say is "no," but you'll never know unless you ask.

Do you host events? Many lodges sit back and just donate casino funds, writing checks, but that's not enough. No one wants to attend a meeting about nothing. Time is valuable, and we need to make it worth their while. I know some lodges are tired or lack volunteers, but have you asked for help? You could hire a local youth team to assist with a project and offer them a donation in return. They'll probably ask for a donation anyway, so why not make it a win-win?

At the end of the day, it's on us to take the first step. It is on us to be our own hero. It's not possible for just the few people on the Alberta Elks Executive to support all 98 lodges, but we can help you help yourselves. By making small changes and being proactive, we can not only survive—we can thrive. Whether you're 20 or 90, you have the power to change the environment and welcome new members into the true spirit of Elkdom.

Let's make our lodges places where people want to be—a place that fosters community, respect, and fun.

-30-

some people wait
their whole lives to
meet their heroes...
i already know mine...



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Reflections on My Journey with the Elks and Royal Purple By Sister Barb Shain

I first joined this organization in 1998, when the Elks and Royal Purple still held separate meetings. At the time, I knew little about the organization, but the women of the Royal Purple welcomed me with open arms and made me feel like I belonged. Over time, I learned how meetings were structured, the responsibilities of each role, and, most importantly, the incredible teamwork that made everything possible. It was about more than just meetings—it was about leadership, public speaking, friendship, and the joy of giving back.

As I became more involved, I saw how closely the Elks and Royal Purple worked together. Their shared commitment to serving their communities brought people together—not just women, but also men who were deeply dedicated to supporting families in need, helping youth programs thrive, and assisting local food banks. The work was meaningful, and the impact was real.

My first convention was in 2000 in Edmonton. I still remember how overwhelming it was to see a sea of purple and white. I didn't yet fully understand the scope of the organization, but one thing was clear—we were visible. As we walked through the hotel, people would stop and ask, "What's with all the purple and white?" That simple question sparked conversations about who we were and what we stood for.

In the years that followed, I attended conferences and conventions, but I never participated in the meetings, because I believed we had strong, capable leaders who could guide the organization forward. And, if I'm honest, I lacked the confidence to speak up. I was shy, nervous about public speaking, and often relied on my husband to start conversations.

For years, I stayed in the background, listening to discussions about recruitment, marketing, and lodge support. Then, in 2013/14, the conversation shifted—the Elks and Royal Purple were losing members and struggling to attract new ones. A merger was proposed. By 2015, some Royal Purple lodges officially became Royal Purple Elks.

I don't know if it was the merger, or the times, but I felt something had changed within our membership and the membership numbers across Canada were reflecting my concerns. Had we made too many changes? Were we losing our identity? Had we simply become the best-kept secret? Was it the shift to roundtable meetings? The move away from regalia? Or was it simply the reality of a changing society?

In 2022/23, I had the privilege of traveling across Canada with the Grand Exalted Ruler, visiting lodges, meeting members, and hearing their concerns. Many had never attended a conference or convention. Why? Was it because they felt unheard? Because they were focused only on their local communities? Because they couldn't afford to attend?

Now, in 2024, those same questions remain. Why are we still losing members while struggling to attract new ones? What has changed in the past decade? Are our current efforts making a difference? Have we failed to prepare and support our leaders? Do we have the right people in leadership, or have we simply been filling empty seats out of necessity? It's time to find answers.

Only we as members can rebuild this organization. It starts with us—our commitment, our leadership, and our willingness to adapt while staying true to who we are. The future of the Elks and Royal Purple Elks depends on what we do next.



Bow Island Elks



This year marks the 34th annual Steak Supper and Auction hosted by the Bow Island Elks Lodge. This highly anticipated, sell-out event has become a beloved community tradition, bringing people together for an evening of great food, exciting auctions, and local camaraderie.

The success of this signature event is a testament to the dedication of the members of the Bow Island's Elks Lodge, who work tirelessly to make it happen. From gathering donations and selling tickets to organizing raffles, catching bids, and preparing a delicious supper, there's a role for everyone in making this night unforgettable.

Thanks to the funds raised through this event, the Bow Island Elks have made significant contributions to the community, including donations to the Kale Porteous Splash Park, the Bow Island High School track and gym, and ongoing sponsorship of minor sports teams in Bow Island, providing uniforms. Their generosity has made them one of the largest community supporters in Bow Island and the surrounding areas, solidifying their role as a vital pillar of the community.

Stavelly Elks



Members of the Claresholm Willow Creek Composite High School Cobras football team recently received a generous donation of \$1,000 from Stavelly's Exalted Ruler, Jordie Bronson, to assist with their season expenses. The Cobras football team consistently contributes their time and effort to the annual Royal Purple Lobster Fest.

#Gowns4Grads Coming to Red Deer

Monday, February 17th
to
Thursday, February 20th
10am to 4pm

Elks Hall
6315 Horn Street
Red Deer, AB



+ Food Drive!
Bring a non-perishable
food item



This event is hosted by the Trenville Royal Purple Elks # 248

Elks Canada is dedicated to making sure that no graduate goes without the finery they dream about. Come shop our selection of donated Dresses, Suits and Shoes. You can walk away with a free Graduation ensemble!

Thank you to those whose support and donations have made this incredible program possible!

For general information about this event or to volunteer or make a donation, call Louise at 403-357-8292.



Follow us on Facebook for event updates and future event announcements:



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