

# ALBERTA ELKS NEWSLETTER

March 2025



## AB Elks Association Committee Reports

### Executive

#### The Power of Staying Invested in Volunteering

Volunteering isn't just about showing up—it's about staying invested in the work we do and the people we do it with. Whether it's supporting a cause, mentoring new members, or organizing community events, the impact of our time multiplies when we remain engaged.

When we commit to our volunteer roles, we create lasting change. A single act of service can spark a difference, but consistent effort builds trust, strengthens organizations, and fosters deeper connections within our communities. Staying invested means being present—not just physically, but emotionally and mentally. It means finding purpose in the work and taking ownership of the outcomes.

Equally important is investing in the people we serve alongside. Volunteering brings together individuals from different walks of life, all driven by a shared passion. Strong relationships within service groups lead to better collaboration, increased support, and a sense of belonging. When we uplift one another, we ensure that our organizations don't just survive—they thrive.

The true reward of volunteering isn't in the hours we log, but in the lives we touch and the bonds we build. When we stay invested, we don't just make a difference—we become the difference. Want to help out? Connect with one of our executive members here today or use your impact closer to home by getting involved in your lodge.

### Communications

As we continue to share and reflect on the history of the Alberta Elks, we are reminded of the valuable lessons it provides to our members and lodges. By learning about our past, we gain a deeper appreciation for the traditions, dedication, and community spirit that have shaped our organization for nearly a century.

Through these historical insights, our members are discovering:

1. A Stronger Sense of Identity – Understanding where we came from helps us appreciate the legacy we uphold and the impact we continue to make in our communities.
2. Inspiration from Past Achievements – The dedication of those who came before us serves as motivation to carry on their work and strengthen our lodges.
3. Lessons in Leadership & Growth – By studying past successes and challenges, we can find new ways to improve, innovate, and ensure the future of the Elks remains bright.

We sincerely appreciate all the lodges and members who have taken the time to share historical information, stories, and photos. Your contributions help preserve and celebrate the rich history of the Alberta Elks while also providing valuable knowledge and inspiration for future generations.

Thank you for your continued dedication and participation. Together, we honor our past while building a strong future.

### Did you Know ?

In our last Newsletter we posted some information on Tassels and we found that there are many members unaware of what each colour represents so we decided to share more on the tassels.

#### Elks Purple Fez

Any Member - White Tassel

Exalted Ruler/Past Exalted Ruler - Purple Tassel

District Deputy - Gold Tassel

Provincial President/Past Provincial President- Purple Tassel

#### Elks White Fez

Grand Exalted Ruler/Past Grand Exalted Ruler - Purple Tassel

#### Royal Purple Elks Purple Pill Box Hat

Any Member - White Tassel

Honoured Royal Lady/Past Honoured Royal Lady - Purple/White Tassel

District Deputy - Gold Tassel

Provincial President/Past Provincial President - Purple/Gold Tassel

#### Royal Purple Elks Cream Pill Box Hat

Supreme Honoured Royal Lady/Past Supreme Honoured Royal Lady – Purple Tassel



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## Strathmore Elks



The Strathmore Elks were honored to welcome Sister Margo Ward, AB Elks Raffle Chair, as she presented the prestigious certificate for the highest number of books sold for Raffle #55 (2023-2024) to Brother Sean Duthie and Gus Cammer. Their exceptional dedication and hard work set a new standard in our lodge, earning them well-deserved recognition for achieving top sales.

We also extend our sincere appreciation to Bro. Steve Rafuse, the Strathmore Elks Raffle Organizer, for his invaluable leadership and support throughout this campaign.

Acting Exalted Leader Gerry Stasiuk commended all Strathmore Elks Lodge members for their efforts in making this raffle a resounding success.

## St Albert Elks



The St Albert Elks made a donation to the St. Albert Food Bank in the amount of \$1000.00



The St Albert Elks made a donation to the Veterans Food Bank of Edmonton, in the amount of \$1000.00. Our President Ralph Shockey and member Patty Will

## Trivia

### Answers to last months Trivia

1) Train 2) Voice 3) Ice 4) Columbus 5) Dozen

### New Trivia Questions

- 1) What is full of holes but still holds water?
- 2) What type of music does rabbits listen to?
- 3) What fish only swims at night?
- 4) What is given but kept by the giver?
- 5) What is between Heaven and Earth?

## Strathmore Elks



Acting Exalted Ruler, Gerry Stasiuk was happy to accept the traveling gavel from Bro. Bill Ward representing the Didsbury Elks lodge. Along with handshake and good luck, was a special beverag that will be enjoyed by all!



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# Leslieville Elks



Exalted Ruler Myles Wasik (left) presenting Brother Gerald Skeels(right) with his 50 Years of Elks of Service Pin.

*Congratulations!*

# Hanna Elks

Hanna Elks donated funds to U11 Hanna Colts



# History

The Alberta Elks Association was founded on May 24, 1928, in the city of Lethbridge. From its inception, the Association achieved several key milestones, including:

1. Strengthening connections among Alberta Lodges and their members, fostering a greater sense of unity.
2. Encouraging friendly competition through district and conference-level events.
3. Establishing the tradition of holding annual district meetings.
4. Promoting lodge visitations, which eventually led to the creation of the Traveling Gavel.
5. Launching the Alberta Elks Foundation in 1971, further expanding the Association's impact.

These early accomplishments laid the foundation for a strong and thriving organization dedicated to camaraderie, service, and growth

# ALBERTA ELKS FOUNDATION



## 56<sup>th</sup> 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 - 20<sup>th</sup> St. Didsbury, AB

**TICKETS AVAILABLE**

Local Contact

[www.elksalberta.ca](http://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 000092

**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**

# Letters to the Editor

Thank you very much to the correction of my name spelling on page 4 of the February Newsletter.

Received my metal here in Grande Prairie from GER Shain and a very good edition by Sister Shain

Doug Becotte

Thanks for bringing back history.

Sharen McLean, PSHRL

Stavely Royal Purple Elks Lodge #99



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## **ISTAR Helps Teen Gain Confidence Through Speech - this is her story**

For years, a stutter had made simple interactions a source of anxiety - even tears - for Karise El-Halabi. "I hated talking to people," says the 13-year-old. It wasn't until her parents, Imad and Najwa brought her to the Institute for Stuttering Treatment and Research (ISTAR) that she started to feel more confident. Hear Karise's story of finding her voice, building confidence, and overcoming a challenge that once caused her to avoid social situations.

### **What brought you to ISTAR?**

When I was younger, I had a difficult time talking to family or my classmates at school. I wanted to do something about it because I hated talking to other people because of my stutter. So that's when my mom found a program called ISTAR and we decided to go and try it out.

### **What difference did ISTAR make for you?**

Before I came to ISTAR, it was really hard for me to have the courage to do class presentations, or even smaller things like ordering my food at a restaurant. When I started to go to sessions at ISTAR, I began to notice I had more confidence when I was talking. I was given amazing skills to help me in case I got stuck. And within a few weeks of sessions, I started seeing progress in my voice.

### **What skills have you learned at ISTAR?**

I was taught skills and ways to help with blockages, even the smallest stutters I've had. I also developed a lot of courage whenever I had to speak in larger groups.

### **How has ISTAR impacted your life?**

The impact ISTAR had on me was confidence and patience. I was taught to take my time whenever I was speaking, because when you speak, you're the most important person in the room, so you can take as much time as you need. And after a lot of sessions, I now feel optimistic when I talk.

### **How has ISTAR helped you?**

One of my biggest challenges as a person who stutters is class presentations. This was one of my biggest fears when I was in school. Before I came to ISTAR, I would cry before presentations because I was so scared and hated doing them. But after ISTAR, and even during it, I don't have a problem with presentations anymore. Because the night before I prepared what to say and practice using my skills.

### **How has ISTAR changed your life?**

ISTAR has helped me get through tough times in my life, and now I feel like the best version of myself because I know what to do when I stutter. I have so much confidence voicing my opinion because I know when I do, I'm the most important person in the room, and I take my time and slow down when I'm speaking.

Thank you Karise for your comments, we appreciate hearing how your confidence increased and how you overcame challenges. Karise's family also expressed heartfelt appreciation for the support of the ICAP fund and all of its donors, including the Elks of Canada. Your support has made this transformation possible!



# Stavely Elks RP

January Meeting saw the Stavely Royal Purple Elks Lodge 99 give donations to a number of recipients, presented by HRL Rachelle Graham.



WCCHS Cobras Football



Stavely Community Centre Board, kitchen equipment upgrades



Stavely Elementary School Principal, Jill Coast



Final visit from our DD Ken Lengyel before he steps down



Fun fact: Ken Lengyel with three of his sisters, Terry, Sharen, Julaine.



Our January meeting is chaired by past honoured ladies each year. We are so fortunate to have these ladies not only stand for this meeting but continue to participate and contribute.



## **The Cost of an Opinion: How One Negative Viewpoint Can Impact Your Lodge**

**By Kelly Sanford**

We've all encountered that one member—the one who insists that "young people won't join" and are too busy with their lives to engage in the club's activities. When you challenge this opinion, the response is often predictable: "They're selfish," "They're too wrapped up in their kids' lives," "They're working too much." The list goes on, often accompanied by statements like "The writings on the wall for the Elks." The tone is grumpy, dismissive, and perhaps even a bit cynical.

Spoiler alert: If you can't think of that person right away, chances are, it's you.

So, let's take a moment to discuss the true cost of holding—or voicing—a negative opinion like this. And trust me, the cost is high.

### **The Silent Influence of a Grumpy Member**

Let's be clear—more often than not, the person voicing these opinions is a well-respected member of the club. They've been around for years, maybe even decades, and they've earned their place in the lodge. But their views, particularly if they are expressed frequently and with strong conviction, can have a ripple effect that affects the entire group.

This isn't just about one person's viewpoint—it's about the influence that viewpoint carries. In organizations, especially those with long-standing members, the views of the respected veterans often shape the culture. And when a negative opinion is voiced regularly, it can subtly shift the mood of the entire lodge. Other members, even if they don't share the same opinion, might hesitate to speak up or challenge it. They may feel reluctant to bring fresh ideas to the table or may even begin to embrace the same negativity they've heard repeated over time.

### **The Domino Effect of Negativity**

Here's the tricky part: one opinion—especially a negative one—can have far-reaching consequences, even if it's only voiced by one person. When a member starts dismissing young people as potential members or criticizes the direction the club is heading, the effect is like a chain reaction.

It's not just about one opinion. It starts to chip away at the spirit of the lodge. Other members might stop coming to meetings because they don't want to deal with the constant negativity. They might skip meetings, thinking, "What's the point? The same people will just argue about how it's all going downhill." The lodge becomes a place where ideas go to die, and where the energy to move forward with

new events or attract new members fades away.

And, worst of all, these frustrated or disillusioned members might start thinking twice before inviting new members to join. Who wants to bring someone into a group that feels stuck, discouraged, or focused on the past?

This, my friends, is the domino effect of a negative opinion.

### **The Hidden Cost: Missed Opportunities**

Here's where the true cost lies: missed opportunities. Every time that "young people won't join" statement is repeated, we lose the chance to understand what younger generations truly want. Instead of finding creative ways to engage new members, we're stuck in a cycle of blame and frustration. When we close ourselves off from new ideas, we miss out on the very thing that could breathe new life into our lodge.

Younger generations may have different priorities or ways of contributing, but that doesn't mean they don't care about the community. It's possible that the club just hasn't figured out how to reach them or offer the things that matter most to them. But if we're too focused on the "young people won't join" mindset, we'll never take the steps necessary to adapt and evolve.

We also miss out on the opportunity to learn from younger members. Fresh ideas, new energy, and even the technological skills younger generations bring can transform a lodge, making it more relevant and engaging for everyone involved. But when we dismiss them before we even try, we cut off that potential for growth.

### **Reframing the Narrative**

So, what can we do about it? How do we break free from the cycle of negativity and the high cost of a single opinion?

The first step is to recognize that opinions, while valid, have consequences. It's not just about voicing what's on our minds—it's about considering the impact our words have on the group and on the future of the lodge. If the goal is to build a thriving, forward-thinking community, then it's crucial to reframe the narrative.

Instead of focusing on why younger generations "won't" join, we should ask ourselves: What can we do to make our lodge more appealing and relevant to them? Better yet, take the time and ask young people what would make your lodge more appealing to them!

## The Cost of an Opinion: CONTINUED

It's time to shift the conversation from a place of defeat to one of possibility.

### A Call for Open-Mindedness and Action

It's easy to fall into the trap of assuming the worst, especially when things seem to be changing around us. But the cost of holding onto an outdated or negative opinion is too high. It not only alienates potential members but also limits the growth of the entire group.

We need to encourage open-mindedness within our lodges, where differing opinions can coexist without damaging the collective energy. This means creating a culture where feedback is constructive, where ideas are welcomed, and where everyone feels like they have something valuable to offer. Rather than fostering an atmosphere of cynicism, let's work toward one of optimism and adaptability.

### Conclusion: The True Cost of an Opinion

In the end, the cost of an opinion is far more than the impact it has on a single conversation or a single meeting. If we want our Elks to thrive, we must recognize the power of our words and the influence of our opinions. Let's make the decision to invest in a mindset that encourages new ideas, fresh perspectives, and growth. Only then can we truly build clubs that are dynamic, welcoming, and ready to make a lasting impact for generations to come.

## Okotoks Elks



Donation of \$1500 presented by Don Deakin, Exalted Ruler and Rose Marie Litwin, Secretary to Westmount School Okotoks (Jessie Murray - Learning commons and Brad Skeet, Vice Principal) for their Read A Thon competition. This is their largest fund raising event and enables them to do field trips, have guest speakers and award prizes to the kids for their reading.

Okotoks Elks has had a very successful year with a donation of \$53,250 towards local groups including youth programs. This year we have started off with \$1000 to the Okotoks Food Bank and the school.



## Loser Wears Red?

A bet's a bet, and Brother Dave Carlson learned that the hard way! At the start of the season, he and Brother Brad Biette shook on a classic showdown—Stamps vs. Riders. The stakes? Bragging rights, 50 bucks, and the ultimate humiliation: wearing the rival's jersey at a future meeting.

Well, the football gods had their say, and let's just say Brother Dave found himself in some questionable fashion choices at District 13's meeting. Like a true sport, he took the loss on the chin—though we're pretty sure he was cringing on the inside. Don't worry, Dave—red almost suits you!



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# Alberta Elks Foundation's Mighty Lil' Elk Program Supports Families in Need

The Alberta Elks Foundation's Mighty Lil' Elk program continues to make a meaningful impact on families across the province, with dedicated Elks members working tirelessly to provide comfort and care to children in hospitals.

Recently, members of the Brooks Elks Lodge #77 came together to pack an impressive 350 hospital bags, which will be distributed to hospitals across Alberta. These bags are filled with essential items designed to bring a sense of relief and support to families during challenging times.

This initiative has been made possible thanks to the generosity of community-minded organizations like Torxen and CNRL, whose donations have helped expand the reach of the Mighty Lil' Elk program. With their support, along with the dedication of Elks members, Lodges and the Alberta Elks Foundation, the program has now assisted over 500 families across Alberta.

"The Mighty Lil' Elk program is about making a difference in the lives of families when they need it most," said a representative from the Alberta Elks Foundation. "We are incredibly grateful for our volunteers, donors, and supporters who help bring this program to life."

With the continued efforts of the Alberta Elks Foundation and the unwavering support of local lodges, the Mighty Lil' Elk program is set to grow even further, ensuring that more families receive the care and compassion they deserve.

Bags are available to purchase for \$33.00 a bag plus shipping. Contact the Alberta Elks Foundation to order your bags while supplies last!



## **Grand Prairie Hospital:**

*We would love to receive more bags – we have no cases left. Our catchment area here is so vast – it is common to have families seek medical care at GPRH from many hundreds of KMs away. Families who have received the Elks bags have expressed gratitude. The phone charger keeps parents in contact with their support system, and the hygiene items are so appreciated.*

*Thank you so much for thinking of the patients and their parents in hospitals. We are so grateful.*

## **Red Deer Hospital**

*We are so appreciative of the Elks continued desire to support our families at the RDRHC. The bags make a huge impact to families who are cared for in our hospital. We have gifted the items to families who most often are admitted to the Pediatric unit unexpectedly and need some essential supplies. We have been able to gift the bags to families that have a higher need for support based on their socioeconomic status. I know that was important to the program.*

*Families have been overwhelmingly appreciative of the bags.*



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