

# VISALIA ELKS

## # 1298 BULLETIN | “The Herd”

Visalia, California – February 2026 Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks



### Lodge Meetings

Wed February 11, 2026 – Business

Wed February 25, 2026 - Initiation

### House Committee Meeting

Wed February 11, 2026

### Trustee Meeting

Wed February 11, 2026

(You must call or e-mail in advance to be on the agenda)

### Bunco Night

No Bunco In February

### Taco Tuesday

No Taco Tuesday in February

### Poker Night

February 5th & 19th - Seat Cards handed out at 6pm - Cards dealt at 6:30pm

**Veteran's Breakfast** – February 8<sup>th</sup> – 8:30-11am

**Cook Your Own Steak Night** – February 20<sup>th</sup>

**Friday Lunches** – Keep an eye on the What's Happening weekly email for dates/menus

### Visalia Elks Lodge Bulletin

Periodical of the;  
Visalia Elks Lodge #1298  
Volume 25/26 Edition #11

### News Submission Deadline

Submissions must be received on the 20th of each month to be included in the next newsletter. Send to:

[kristy@rknstudio.com](mailto:kristy@rknstudio.com)



### “EXALTED RULER’S CORNER”

Dear Members,

I hope everyone has had a great start to the new year. It’s already shaping up to be a busy and exciting time for our lodge, and I’m happy to share some highlights and important updates with you.

First, I’m proud to announce that we initiated and welcomed 13 new members into Visalia Elks Lodge #1298 in January. Please take a moment to introduce yourself and make them feel at home – a strong lodge starts with a welcoming membership.

Membership renewal forms have now been sent out, and you may have noticed a \$25 fee for those who wish to continue receiving the monthly bulletin through the mail. This change was implemented due to the amount of time required to prepare the bulletins and the increasing cost of postage. You will still receive the monthly bulletin via email, and if you still prefer a paper copy, we will be providing them free of charge in the office and in the lounge.

You’ll also notice a suggestion box has been placed in the lounge. We truly want to hear from you – your ideas, opinions, and yes, even complaints. All we ask is that feedback be shared respectfully so we can work together to make our lodge the best it can be.

Looking ahead, don’t forget our annual All-You-Can-Eat Crab Feed on the 27th. There are still approximately 40–50 tickets available, priced at \$85 each. This is always a great night of food, fellowship, and fun, so be sure to grab your tickets before they’re gone.

Lastly, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you and congratulations to our Leading Knight, Scott Nelson, for the hard work and commitment he put into the Leading Knight’s Challenge. A big thank-you as well to our membership for supporting him by volunteering and donating so generously to this wonderful cause. Your dedication truly reflects the spirit of Elkdom.

Thank you all for everything you do for our lodge. I look forward to another great month together.

Fraternally yours,  
Joe Paddock  
Exalted Ruler  
Visalia Elks Lodge #1298

Visit us on Facebook at:  
[facebook.com/visaliaelkslodge](https://facebook.com/visaliaelkslodge)

## Lodge Officers 2025/2026

Exalted Ruler	Joe Paddock
Leading Knight	Scott Nelson
Loyal Knight	Chuck Fishel
Lecturing Knight	Eva Rasmussen
Esquire	Christy Hoff
Chaplain	Charles Cornelius
Inner Guard	Anna Paddock
Tiler	Michelle Nelson
Secretary	Wendy O'Connor
Treasurer	Mike Saulque

## Trustees:

1-Year	Tom O'Connor
2-Year	Ron Marshall
3-Year	Eli Ledesma
4-Year	Rodney Jared
5-Year	Kevin Colopy

## Past Exalted Rulers \*

**Ronald Mathis** - 1976-77  
**Larry Paxton** - 1978-79  
**John Peters** - 1989-90  
**Jim Hay** - 1991-92  
**Robert Casey** - 1992-93  
**Al Hack** - 1995-96  
**Rob Van Wagoner** - 1999-2000  
**Joe Alberti** - 2004-05, 05-06, 05-16  
**Ted Donald** - 2006-07  
**Jan Lee** - 2016-17, 17-18  
**Ray Lewis** - 2018-19, 19-20  
**Ron Marshall** - 2020-21  
**Eli Ledesma** - 2021-22  
**Mike Saulque** - 2022-23  
**Russell McKinney** - 2023-24  
**Kevin Colopy** - 2024-25

*\*Active in Good Standing*

## Past Exalted Rulers from other lodges:

**Ken Bridges** Tulare # 1424  
**Pat Dugan** Tulare #1424  
**Stephen Nelms** Watsonville #1300

## Member News:

### Orientation and Initiation **Next Orientation is February 25th at 5:30pm. Ball Room #2**

Orientation is MANDATORY for all candidates. Because of our current situation, only candidates and sponsors will be allowed to attend.

This is the beginning of the learning process of the BPOE and what we are all about.

Dinner will be served at 6:30pm and candidates will have dinner on us.

Only members and candidates are allowed in the lodge room. The members lounge will be closed during the initiation and lodge meeting. Expect about an hour. No beverages are allowed in the lodge room.

**Note to Sponsors:** Please make reservations for your candidates and notify them of the above listed times. Sponsors should escort their candidates to orientation, dinner and initiation. **Attire is business casual.**

**NO SHORTS, FLIP FLOPS,  
"T-SHIRTS OR JEANS DURING  
THE INITIATION..."**

## Candidates for voting this February 11, 2026

**Richard Andrade** by Shawn Martin  
**T.J. Balhon** by Diamond Staley  
**Jennifer Calhoun** by Devony Smith  
**Carrie Depew** by Cory Brooks  
**Nick Drobot** by Julie Hill  
**Shawn Michael Fox** by Myles Landin  
**David Gonzales** by Benjamin Resa  
**Patricia Johnson** by Donald Ray Smith  
**Sam Lok** by Diamond Stanley  
**Tonya Millsap** by Donald Ray Smith  
**Joe Regalado** by Fred Sotelo  
**Richard Santana** by Jan Lee

Transfer:

**Raymond Tatum** (from Vancouver, WA)

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## LEADING KNIGHT CHALLENGE

Charity has a way of bringing out the best in people, and the Leading Night Challenge was a clear reminder of that. It wasn't just about the funds raised—it was about people choosing benevolence and stepping up to give.

Thank you to the Monday night football crews, the Wednesday night dinner crews, the Friday lunch crews, the Thursday night social club, and our Bloody Mary Sundays crew, or the simple pass the hat challenges, all of which turned ordinary gatherings into opportunities to make a difference.

Each group showed that generosity fits naturally into everyday life. Thank you to all the members who donated cash or prizes to help us raise over \$30,000. Thank you for making this a success.

Respectfully,  
Scott Nelson  
Leading Knight

THANK you

## KNOW SOMEONE WHO'S NOT GETTING THE BULLETIN?

**Help them get the info they need by visiting our website:**  
[www.visaliaelks.org](http://www.visaliaelks.org) - there's a subscription box on the home page where they can enter their name and email address. Subscribing will get them signed up to receive the monthly bulletin as well as the weekly **What's Happening This Week** via their email once it's posted.

## VISALIA ELKS COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Auditing Accounting	Jan Lee PER
Americanism	Richard Grissom
Beqs. & Living Trusts	Melanie McKimmons
Business Practices	Wendy O'Connor
Drug Awareness	Abel Lopez
Government Relations	Jordan Mulrooney
Hoop Shoot	Kathy Ashford/Kelly Elkins
Insurance & Safety	Rodney Jared
Lodge Activities	Wendy O'Connor
Membership Retention	Ron Marshall
National Foundation ENF	Melanie McKimmons
Natl Foundation Grants	Kevin Colopy
Nat Vets Service	Rebecca Peterson
Officers Training	Eli Ledesma PER
Public Relations	Kim Batty
Major Project	Melanie McKimmons
Ritual Training	Ray Lewis PER
Scholarships	Bill Flores
Youth Activities	Cheyenne Carrell

## Kitchen & Event Volunteer Thanks

### 1-7-26 Wednesday Night Dinner

**Team Leader:** Lori Jackson

**Crew:** Pam Nelson, Debbie Gerbig, Lucille Kreps, Peggy Gruber, Greg Todd, Marco Vaca, Heather Cornelius, Laurel Flores

### 1-11-26 Veteran's Breakfast - served 334 guests

**Team Leader:** Tom Hansen

**Saturday Prep Crew:** Ed Shields, Ron Vasquez, Reuel Stevens, Chuck Fishel, Eva Rasmussen, Ryan Samuels, Brian Fishel, Kristy Hoff & Lisa Morehouse

### Sunday Breakfast:

**Hostesses:** Judy Staley, Stephanie Costa, Michelle Nelson

**Front Lounge:** Eric Fishel & Chuck Fishel

**Omelet Cooks:** Ryan Samuels, Janie Donald, Rodney Jared, Mike Saulque, Eli Ledesma, Stacey West and Ernie Alvarado

### Kitchen Cooks:

Scott Reeder & Jeff Turner – Gravy

Phil Fortney – Bacon

Russell McKinney – Sausage, Potatoes

### Servers:

Stacey Jared – Biscuits & Gravy

John Kennedy – Pancakes & French Toast

Amy Gordon, Lisa Morehouse and Kristy Hoff – Sausage, potatoes & bacon

**Dishwashers:** Nick Gordon, Richard Break, Shame Souza and Ted Donald

**Back up Cooks:** Ron Vasquez, Kristy Samuels, Eva Rasmussen and Brian Fishel

**Bussers:** Girl Scouts #7332

### 1-14-26 Wednesday Night Dinner

**Team Leader:** David & Devony Smith

**Crew:** Danny & Lori Carrell (& Paisley), James Plough, Jake Johnson, Jennifer Calhoun, Julie Crenshaw, Monique Mirwald, Ramiro Rubalcava, Cissy Mulrooney, Laurel Flores

### 1-13-26 Taco Tuesday

**Team Leader:** Jamie Duncan

**Crew:** Bill & LaDean Pearce, Laurel Flores

### 1-21-26 Wednesday Night Dinner

**Team Leader:** Becky Kennedy

**Crew:** Holly Derrington, Marco Vaca, Vince Sanchez, Camille Fisher, Jelenia Crenshaw, Denise Palmer, Shannon Clower, Kathleen Bussby, Bill Palmer, Kyndra Glick, Jersey Glick, Cissy Mulrooney, Heather Cornelius

### 1-24-26 Purple Pig Dinner

**Team Leader:** Kim Burchett

**Crew:** Christina Ritchie, DeeDee Rains, Don Smith, Danny Ludlam, Holly Derrington, Laura and Jake Johnson, Danny Ludlam

### 1-28-26 Wednesday Night Dinner

**Team Leader:** Kim Burchett

**Crew:** Christina Ritchie, Gerri Giotta, DeeDee Rains, Rae Crawford, Phil Moreno, Don Smith, Camille Fisher, Laurel Flores

**Please note:** If you'd like your cooking team to get credit in the bulletin, please be sure to fill out the form and turn it into the office. We only publish what we get submitted.

# news

## TACO TUESDAY ANNOUNCEMENT FOR MARCH

(no Taco Tuesday in February due to Ag Show)

Something a little different for March! We will be serving homemade chile verde dinner with rice, beans, tortillas, chips, salsa and something sweet. Price: \$15 a plate.

## SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

Submitted by Bill Flores

I participated in the District scoring event in Tulare on Saturday, January 10th.

I reviewed 69 apps along with 12 members from six other Lodges. Two of our Most Valuable Scholars (one boy and one girl) were selected.

They will advance to the State Judging in February in Atascadero. We hope they will do well and qualify for the Nationals!

## Upcoming Events:



*Veteran's Breakfast  
- 8:30-11:00am*

### **Veteran's Breakfast – February 8<sup>th</sup>**

Eggs/Omelet bar, Potatoes, Bacon, Sausage, French toast, Pancakes, Biscuits and Gravy - 8:30 to 11:00am  
Adults - \$18.00 | Kids under 12yrs - \$15  
Veterans - FREE



### **1298 Cigar Club - February 12<sup>th</sup>**

If you enjoy a good a cigar or you're just curious about cigars, this will give members an opportunity to meet once a month. 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30pm.



### **Sip Happens Sundays February 22<sup>nd</sup>**

More details will be posted in Member's FB Group and in the What's Happening Email!

**ALMOST SOLD OUT!**



February 27, 2026  
Price: \$85 each  
Tickets go on Sale January 20th  
in the Office ONLY  
NO earlybirds or  
reserving with payment.

### **Elks Annual Crab Feed - February 27th**

**Tickets available in the office (only)**

Ticket price is \$85.00 each. There will be no early birds or reserving with payment!

**THIS EVENT WILL SELL OUT**

**SAVE THE DATE**



### **Visalia Elks Lodge #1298**

Presents

**SPRING  
GRAFT BOUTIQUE**

**APRIL 18, 2026**

**9 AM — 2 PM**

**Art & Craft Booths | Food | Drinks  
ADMISSION IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**

Many of your favorite vendors will be here selling their handcrafted and new items.

There will be lunch available for purchase. Drawing at 12:00 pm & Opportunity Drawing Immediately after.

LOCATION: VISALIA ELKS LODGE #1298  
3100 MAIN STREET, VISALIA, CA

For more information contact:  
Holly Derington - gsscience@aol.com



A Coin a Day so they can  
Walk, Talk, See and Play!

**PURPLE PIG THANK YOU'S**  
Major Project/Purple Pig

THANK YOU and a Tip o' the hat from the Purple Pig - "A coin a day so they'll walk, talk, see and play"

Your generosity helps us continue the important work of supporting children in need through the California-Hawaii Elks Major Project.

**A Friendly reminder:**

When you turn your Purple Piggy in to the Office or Social Quarters, be SURE your name is on or in it. Several have come through without knowing who to credit. Even small totals are cumulative towards the Millennium Club recognitions.



**VAGABONDS TRAVELS**



Photo courtesy: Bill 183 1987 1082-810  
Photo: G. Pigg, 1 November 2022

The Vagabonds are off to a good start in 2026 with our first rally Super Bowl Weekend River Run RV Park in Bakersfield February 4-9. 19 rigs are signed up for this weekend and you can be sure there will be lots of cheering going on during game time. Of course, no doubt the snacks and meals will be delicious, as always.

March brings the Vagabonds going to a new location to the Gilroy Garlic USA RV Park March 19-23. Sign ups will be taken at the February RV meeting.

April finds the group going to Orange Grove RV Resort in Bakersfield from April 16-24. Welcome to new member Diana Stuhaan, David Lucero, John and Ione Leland, Tom and Nancy Duffy, Tim and Kim Dougherty and Cory and Lynn Lenz.

Happy and safe travels to those on the road and mark your calendar to attend the February Vagabond meeting, February 18. See you there.

Frank and Kathy Kelly



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These good folks have donated to help keep our monthly newsletter coming to each and every one of our members. We appreciate their consideration. If you are interested in being a sponsor in future bulletins, please contact the office. The cost is \$100 a year and it can be prorated if needed.

## **FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

Members with a birthday this month get a FREE dinner on any dinner of the month, including Friday Steak Night. (Excludes Prime Rib, Rib Nights, Fireside Dinners, Crab and Shrimp Feeds. Get A Free Beverage on your birthday in the lounge.

- 2 Chris Adams  
Charles Cornelius  
Todd McRoberts  
Joanna Rodriguez  
Jacqueline Sa  
Stephen Sobko  
Danny Stewart
- 3 Robert Aguilar  
Sundi Gregory  
Angela Hernandez  
Jim Smith
- 4 Laura Crawford  
Monique Da Costa  
Doenitz Lopez
- 5 Michael Alaniz  
Dario Davalos  
Staci Gallian  
Corrissa Garza  
Joey Mackey
- 6 Steve Clinton  
Lisa Colburn
- 7 Garrick Freitas  
Robert Gentry  
Diane Nichols  
Jason Ritchie
- 8 Julie Burger  
Lisa-Marie Leal  
Elias Ledesma  
Christopher Lewis  
Rebecca Mexicano  
William Swall
- 9 Karen Barnett  
Tyler Burgess  
Juan Camacho  
Vincent Doom  
Chris Hooten  
Robert Scott  
Russell Souza
- 10 John Field  
Briane Gallegos  
Tom Hansen  
Jeff Todd  
Sheila Woolley
- 11 Randy Bloomfield  
Jason Hutton  
Greg Ritchie
- 12 Angelica Morales  
Trini Nava  
Steve Rodriguez
- 13 Greg Davis  
Violeta Garcia  
Teresa Lewis  
Tim Penton
- 14 Tammy Tashjian

- 15 Andy Bryant  
Craig Van Horn
- 16 David Crawford  
Donald Pearson  
Sylvia Pedroncelli  
Fernando Rubalcaba  
Darol Ruffner Jr  
Martin Sanchez  
Ryan Schaefer
- 17 Raylene Burke  
Jeff Gatlin  
Ashley Reyes
- 18 Michael Burchett
- 19 Freddy Avalos  
Ryan Dowling  
Barbara Franco  
Jessica Souza  
Michael West
- 20 Jeremy Allen  
Tom Babb  
Blake Fishel  
David Hofstee  
Scott Lunsford  
Wendy O'Connor  
Darla Rains
- 21 Christopher Mirwald  
Jose Navarro  
Lori Urias
- 22 Jamie Duncan  
Dwayne McGovran  
Phil Mirwald
- 23 Rodney Blaco  
Julie Costa  
Lee Noriega  
Randy Whitlock
- 24 Curtis Hayes  
Sam Sanchez
- 25 John Hull  
Alex Newkirk  
David Renteria
- 26 Myles Landin  
Mark Manro  
James Silva
- 27 Martin Oberle
- 28 Christopher Ludlum  
Edgar Villalobos



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