



August September 2025



The North Carolina State Elks Association will be hosting Grand Exalted Ruler Bryan Klatt and First Lady Susan Klatt at their Fall Conference in Charlotte October 26th-28th, at the DoubleTree by Hilton. All Elks are invited to attend to meet the Grand Exalted Ruler and enjoy a weekend of Brotherhood.

Register at ncelks.org/stateconvention

Elks Be The Difference



Message from State President Mark Couch

Fellow Elks, As the leaves start to turn and there's a crispness in the air, we know that fall is upon us. It's the season of Friday night lights, back-to-school excitement, and that first bowl of chili at a tailgate. While we enjoy all that autumn brings, it's also a great time to reflect on one of the most important missions of the Elks—supporting children in our communities. Elks Lodges across North Carolina do incredible work for kids, from hosting Easter egg hunts in the spring to organizing back-to-school drives in the fall. One of our largest and most impactful programs is our Drug Awareness Program, which educates children and families about the dangers of substance abuse. This initiative is a critical tool in helping young people make smart, healthy choices for their future. The Elk's Hoop Shoot and Soccer Shoot are fun ways to interact with the youth in your community. These events give children the chance to advance up to national level competition. We also take pride in helping students achieve their dreams through our scholarship programs. Every year, the Elks award thousands of dollars in scholarships to deserving students, giving them the opportunity to pursue higher education and build bright futures. If your lodge isn't already involved in promoting these scholarships, I encourage you to spread the word—you never know which young person in your community could benefit from an extra boost. As school is back in session and routines settle in, let's remind our communities that the Elks are here to support their children—not just today, but for years to come. Of course, fall also means football season, and just like a great team, our lodges are strongest when we work together, communicate, and support one another. Make sure to keep your calendars updated, stay in touch with your District Deputies and NCSEA Vice Presidents, and welcome new members to be a part of the great work we do. Our North Carolina State Elks Association Fall Conference is around the corner, October 24-26 in Charlotte. We will be hosting Grand Exalted Ruler Bryan Klatt and his wife Susan. Don't miss your opportunity to meet the Klatts, enjoy fellowship with your brothers and sisters, and learn more about our great organization. If you have a special event coming up—whether it's for the kids, the community, or just some good old-fashioned fellowship—let me know. I'd love to visit when I can (especially if there's BBQ involved!). Enjoy the season, support our youth, and let's keep making a difference together. See you in Charlotte! And, of course... **HOW 'BOUT THEM ELKS?!**

Fraternally, Mark Couch



Message from Grand Exalted Ruler Bryan Klatt

Elks Fundraising, Donations Aid Communities

Can you Be The Difference in the most important program in our Order, the Elks National Foundation? Our goal for the 2025–2026 fraternal year is \$5.15 per Member—the monetary support we provide makes the Foundation’s work possible. This year, the Foundation has an approved budget of \$48.2 million to make a difference in the U.S., including \$18 million for Lodge Community Investments Program grants. This grant program allows our Lodges to do more for your communities. I also encourage all Lodges to seriously consider forming an ENF committee to educate themselves on the various grants to assist their communities. You can make an impact, and when united with our fellow Elks across the nation, we can Be The Difference. Also, make use of the fundraising program through the Foundation’s Fidelity Club. Any Member can sign up at elks.org to make automatic recurring donations for as little as \$5 per month. I encourage you to consider joining. This is once again a way for you to show your communities that “Elks Care— Elks Share.” Another important program we must focus our attention on is Red Ribbon Week. This is our nation’s oldest and largest drug prevention program, held annually from October 23-31. There are many ways to celebrate. Have your local elected officials issue a proclamation declaring Red Ribbon Week. Pass out red ribbons to your local school administrators, government officials, and members of law enforcement. When we wear a red ribbon, it means we are looking to take a stand against the horrible ramifications that drugs can have on our communities. Standing together will have a positive impact on the citizens where you live. The Elks will always lead the charge against the devastation that drugs have on families. By now, school is in full swing. It’s a good time to introduce the Americanism Essay Contest to your local schools. The deadline for submissions is mid-December. There is complete essay information on the Elks website in the GL Fraternal Committee section under Forms and Contests. It’s time to let our youth express themselves about respecting patriotism and our country’s heritage. Students who win the essay contest should be recognized by your Local Lodge. Hold an event for them and give these students recognition certificates to administer to the schools. I am always amazed at the wisdom and knowledge that students can express. All Americans would benefit from reading these essays.

In closing, **Be The Difference by promoting “Elks Care—Elks Share.”**



**NORTH CAROLINA STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION, INC.
2025 FALL CONFERENCE, CHARLOTTE**

Doubletree by Hilton
5624 Westpark Dr.
Charlotte, NC

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

NC Elks Welcome Grand Exalted Ruler Bryan Klatt AND First Lady Susan Klatt

Friday October 24, 2025

8:00 AM	NC Elks Golf Outing
10:00 AM – 7:00 PM	NC Elks & Guests Registration – Foyer outside Charlotte Ballroom
12:00 Noon – 1:00 PM	Long Range Planning - Charlotte Ballroom Eastover
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM	PSP Advisory Board Meeting – Charlotte Ballroom Eastover
2:30 PM– 3:30 PM	NCSEA BOD's Meeting – Charlotte Ballroom Eastover
3:30 PM – 4:30 PM	Charitable Trust BOD's Meeting - Charlotte Ballroom Eastover
3:00 PM – 11:00 PM	District Hospitality Rooms
	East - Room 707
	East Central & West Central – Hornets' Nest Suite (7 th floor)
	West - Room 706
	(Admittance by Convention Badge Only)
6:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Advisory Board Social (by invitation only) Suite 418
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Advisory Board Dinner (by invitation only) Crown Room

Saturday October 25, 2025

7:00 AM – 12:00 Noon	NC Elks & Guests Registration – Foyer outside Charlotte Ballroom
9:00 AM – 11:30 AM	NCSEA Business Meeting – Charlotte Ballroom
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Ladies & Spouses Social – Hornets' Nest Suite (7 th floor)
11:30 AM – 12:00 Noon	Memorial Service – Charlotte Ballroom
12:30 AM – 2:00 PM	NCSEA Luncheon – Charlotte Ballroom
2:30 PM	State Sponsor Frost Meetings – Terrace Parlor
2:30 PM	Educational Breakout Sessions
	- Lodge Budgets
	- Secretary Workshop
	- Membership Retention
3:30 PM	Judiciary Office Hours with David Doherty – Terrace Parlor
4:00 PM – 11:00 PM	District Hospitality Rooms

Sunday October 26, 2025

8:30 AM	NCSEA PER Members & Guests Meeting & Breakfast - Charlotte Ballroom
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Please join me for Brunch!

Saturday, October 25, 2025 · 9:00 AM

Charlotte DoubleTree Hotel Room 418

All Elks spouses and guests are invited to come for a warm autumn morning of friendship, laughter, and a delicious brunch.


**Please bring a cash or check donation to support a charity I love:
Catawba Valley Guardian ad Litem Association (CVGAL)**

CVGAL is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that supports abused and neglected children in our community. They provide educational experiences, summer camp, tutoring, technology, sports, art, music, and band opportunities, plus scholarships for students entering trade schools, community colleges, or universities. For young adults aging out of care, they help with essentials like tires, insurance, and home furnishings. Run entirely by volunteers, CVGAL directs 100% of donations to enriching the lives of the 575 local children currently in foster care in the Catawba Valley.

Hope to see you there,

Julie Couch

1st Lady, NCSEA



NCSEA MEMBERS HELP CAMP CAREFREE

CELEBRATE 40 YEARS OF CARING

This is the herd of Elks from around the state cooked and served those who attended Camp Carefree's 40th Anniversary Celebration on 9/13/2025.

Camp Carefree is North Carolina's State Project. It's a 6 week program designed for children with chronic illnesses, including cancer, Spina Bifida, epilepsy and more traumatic injuries to have some fun at camp. A special week is also available to the siblings of those affected, allowing them some fun away from home.

\$75,000 was raised last year through the Charitable Trust and the yearly Gala.



NEWS FROM THE EAST DISTRICT

CALABASH ELKS AUXILIARY DONATED SCHOOL SUPPLIES TO LOCAL SCHOOLS

The Calabash Elks Auxiliary collected school supplies donated by Lodge and Auxiliary members to be donated to two local schools, Union and Waccamaw school. Robin Knab (Auxiliary) and Joan Tellish (Auxiliary and Elk Member) delivered 2 car loads of needed school supplies for the upcoming school year to aid students from needy families.



CALABASH LODGE PARTICIPATED IN THE ECU SMILES FOR VETERANS DAY

The Calabash Elks Lodge Veterans Affairs Committee recently participated in the **ECU Smiles for Veterans Day** on Friday, August 22nd, that was held in conjunction with the ECU Health Foundation and the East Carolina University (ECU) Dental Clinic in Bolivia, NC. On this special day, there was no charge for pre-qualified low-income veteran's dental treatments. Thirty veterans received over \$10,000 worth of dental procedures on this day thanks to the generous donations of not only VAC, but also other great veteran's organizations in the Brunswick County area.

The ECU Health Foundation was formed to help low-income veterans obtain free or low-cost dental care. Through donations from various veteran's organizations and other money raising efforts, they partner with the ECU Dental Clinic(s), to help cover the cost of veterans' dental treatments.

The Veterans Affairs Committee was proud to donate \$1,000 to the ECU Health Foundation to help pay for the costs of the dental services provided on **ECU Smiles for Veterans Day**. We also donated an **American flag** for their clinic lobby area. We had a team of four Committee members who were present at the ECU Dental Clinic on **ECU Smiles for Veterans Day** to support the veterans who came in for their dental procedures. It was a great day and a true honor to be there and help support this invaluable program.

Pictured L-R, Elk Lodge Members John Zschoche, Melissa Pusch, Robin Johnson, Wendy Harris



CALABASH LODGE HOLDS FUNDRAISER FOR KINSTON VETERANS HOME

The Calabash Elks Lodge recently held an End of Summer Bash with proceeds going to the Kinston Veterans Home. The community wide event which included booths with vendors selling craft items, local fire departments with rescue equipment for display,, the North Carolina Elks drug awareness trailer, lots of food provided by the Elks Lodge, and games including a dunk tank manned by Lodge members.

Shown below is a check for \$3000 and other supplies being delivered to the Kinston Veterans Home.



MOREHEAD CITY LODGE DONATED GRANT TO CARTERET COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Morehead City Lodge gave Domestic Violence a check for \$1,500.00 on Tuesday September 23rd at our Bingo Session. This money was made available to us through NCSEA Charitable Trust Grant.

Pictured left to right: Alice Mouraview, Treasurer and Grant Coordinator, Gail Bryant & Trish Slape, Grant committee members, Rosie Arroy, Domestic Violence representative, and Exalted Ruler Frank Sutton. There were 93 people at this Bingo session. Rosie Arroy also spoke on what Domestic Violence prevention does for our county.



NEWS FROM THE EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT

RALEIGH LODGE DONATES CLOTHING FOR CHILDREN

The Raleigh Elks donated 1287 pounds of clothing from our drive to benefit "Note in the Pocket". Note in the Pocket's mission is to provide quality clothing to homeless and impoverished children and families with dignity and love.

The team: Noel Flanary; Dallas Bonavita, Note in the Pocket Executive Director; Cheryl Howard; Michelle DeLaire, PER,PDDGER; Stephanie Schaben, Note in the Pocket Volunteer Coordinator.



RALEIGH ELKS SUPPORT

ELKS DISABLED VETERANS FISHING PROGRAM

The Raleigh Elks Lodge "Elks Disabled Veterans Fishing Program" hosted 35 disabled veterans for a fishing outing, picnic and fly fishing skills development assistance event. This is a program sponsored by the Raleigh Elks Lodge in partnership with Project Healing Waters to provide disabled veterans in the central North Carolina area with opportunities to fish at least twice monthly throughout the year. Raleigh Elk Chairman, Dan Estrem is pictured on the far left wearing a green shirt and shorts.



RALEIGH HOLDS ANNUAL ARMY OF HOPE SUMMER FUN DAY

Our annual Army of Hope Summer Fun Day for the National Guard families was once again, a huge success! Thank you Raleigh Elks for raising \$7804.00 to provide \$100 gift cards to 78 kids! What to do with the extra \$4?

The Scouts and leaders from Troop 104 made Icees and Cotton Candy, Cheryl Hamm provided paint projects and our members helped set up, serve and clean up.



RALEIGH LODGE RAISES MONEY FOR SERVICE DOG DONATION PROJECT

The Raleigh Lodge held reverse raffle on August 23 to raise support for the Lodge's second Service Dog Donation Project. This event alone raised \$8400! 300 tickets were sold and included a great BBQ dinner, a 50/50 and music by our own Stan Hoffman and his band Airtight Alibi.

The future service dog, named Radio, is being trained and will be ready to be presented by the end of the year! We are partnered with Rebuilding Warriors, a 501[c]3 nonprofit organization that provides service dogs to veterans in need.



RALEIGH ELKS PARTICIPATE IN WELCOME HOME BLOCK PARTY

On September 13th the Durham VA Medical Center ENVSC (Elks National Veteran Service Commission) Representative, District Deputy and members of Raleigh Elks Lodge participated in the 2nd Annual Welcome Home Block Party from 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM.

The event was focused on post 9/11 Veterans and having them use the VA Healthcare System. All VA Departments and other VA Veteran Service Organizations set up booths in the Breezeway of the Hospital offering information on their services.

The Raleigh Elks sponsored the DJ and arts and crafts for the event. We set up the NCSEA Drug Awareness trailer, tent and materials.



RALEIGH ELKS DONATE TO BOYS AND GIRL CLUB

The Raleigh Lodge used a Gratitude Grant to donate a meals program at their local Boys and Girls Club.

Pictured are Boys and Girls Club Vice President Hugh McLean, PER Gary Bush, ER Merle Freeman, and Boys and Girls Club Program Director Madison Reed.



NEWS FROM THE WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT

WINSTON SALEM ELKS DONATE SOCKS TO VETERANS

The Winston Salem Lodge delivered of 250 pairs of socks to VHVH in Winston-Salem. Pictured is Exalted Ruler Pat Russell with Veterans receiving the socks.



WINSTON SALEM HOLDS BLOOD DRIVE WITH 14 UNITS DONATED



SALISBURY ELKS AWARDS ENF GRANTS

The Salisbury Elks Lodge recently awarded \$6,500 in ENF grant funds to local agencies including \$3,000 to Family Crisis Council, \$2,000 to Communities in Schools and \$1,500 to Rowan Helping Ministries.

Rich Penk, grant coordinator for nearly 10 years, and Archie Blythe, Exalter Ruler visited with Kyna Grubb, Executive Director of Rowan Helping Ministries. Grubb is especially grateful for their special commitment to serving veterans.

"With more than a quarter of the people we serve reporting some form of military services, the Elks' compassion and generous support is especially meaningful," said Executive Director, Kyna Grubb. "This sustained partnership makes a real difference in our community. We're grateful to the Salisbury Elks lodge and their commitment to our shared mission of helping our neighbors in need."

In addition to the grant funds, the lodge donated clothing and food items to the pantry. Members also volunteer in Jeannie's Kitchen.



Wanda Huntley (left) and Renard Cuthbertson (middle) from Communities in Schools of Rowan County receive the \$2,000 grant from Salisbury Elks Lodge Exalted Ruler, Archie Blythe.



Executive Director, Angele Chapman-McDavid, receives grant fund check on behalf of Family Crisis Council from Archie Blythe of the Salisbury Elks Lodge.



Rich Penk (left) and Archie Blythe (right) from Salisbury Elks Lodge present grant award to Kyna Grubb (middle), Executive Director of Rowan Helping Ministries.

NEWS FROM THE WEST DISTRICT

SHELBY ELKS PURCHASED SCHOOL SUPPLIES

The Shelby Lodge along with the Cleveland County School Supply Drive purchased and distributed much needed school supplies to 10 Cleveland County schools.

Pictured are Jefferson Elementary School staff member Mikala Mordirzadeh, PDD Tom Jones and Cleveland County School Supply Drive leader Austin Costner.



NORTH WILKESBORO ELKS MAKE DONATION TO SAMARITAN KITCHEN

North Wilkesboro Elks Lodge 1846 recently presented Samaritan Kitchen of Wilkes with a \$10,500 donation to support its pantry and school backpack food programs. The funds were awarded through a grant from the Elks National Foundation.



HICKORY ELKS DONATE ANOTHER WELCOME HOME KIT

The Hickory Elks Veterans Committee donated another Welcome HomeKit to help a formerly homeless veteran in the community get set up in housekeeping. Shout out to the VA-HUD office and all their wonderful people that let us know about veterans in need and to my committee and volunteers. Thank you Lisa and Bee Watts (pictured on right) for taking care of this for Marine Corps veteran Douglas Carta (on the left).



In other news: Members of the Hickory Elks Lodge recently helped pack food bags for the Catawba County Backpack Program. Additionally, Elk member Carole Anderson presented a \$4500 check to Aundrea Hawn, Coordinator for the Backpack Program. The Corner Table, a non-profit organization in our county, directs the Backpack Program. School is in session each week, and over 1400 children receive a bag full of food. Through calculations, it costs \$144 for one child to receive meals each weekend, during the school year.

This publication is produced for and by the North Carolina State Elks Association.

**The NCSEA Communication Committee encourages all member Lodges and
Committee Chairmen to submit articles to be included in future issues.**

All submissions may be forwarded to Ashley Buckwell, Editor at ashbuc@atmc.net