

# THE BUGLE



## Brandon Elks Lodge #2383

800 CENTENNIAL LODGE DRIVE, BRANDON, FL 33510

ALL AMERICAN LODGE 1999-2000

PHONE 813-685-6469

FAX 813-643-5652

JANUARY 2025

[www.brandonelks.org](http://www.brandonelks.org)

Volume 25 Issue 1



### MESSAGE FROM YOUR EXALTED RULER, DONALD A HARRISON

Happy New Year! We reflect on this past year with joy and sadness. We lost 14 members this year and we keep their memories with us. Membership continues to grow, the RV park is full and 2024 proved to be a very good year.

We start this year with 52 new members and our continued renewal to make a difference. In 2024 our members provided more than 7400 hours valued at more than \$200,000 and traveled 14,600 miles. This labor produced a significant amount of revenue and changes in the lives of our members and those in the community. I thank all that gave students; time and energy to our programs.

2025 will be just as busy and exciting as last year. We will continue to operate weekly bingo, Tuesday and Thursday snack bar, Wednesday and Friday dinners, and community assistance programs. Scholarships are available for students; Willis Peters' will have its end of the year prom, Volunteers are needed to put together a Hoop Shoot this summer and the Americanism contest needs help. We continue to build and expand out membership and seek additional people to join this and other committees. Our kitchen floors need to be stripped and waxed and the equipment cleaned. This task is scheduled on March 8<sup>th</sup> at 9 am. Your assistance is requested. On Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, there is a FREE dinner for Sustaining and Fidelity members. The dinner is to thank those members that give a monthly donation to either The Elks National Foundation or to Harry Anna Trust. The \$19 a month supports both the National and State Elks organizations in their annual projects. The dinner is open to all lodge members at a cost of \$25. The meal menu should be outstanding. The first course of appetizers will be mini-Maryland style crab cakes, escargot, and 4 cheese chicken dip. The salad will be a spinach /berry salad, a layer of spinach topped with blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, avocado, egg, goat cheese, bacon, trail mix, dressed elk's a raspberry vinaigrette. The entrees will be filet mignon, lemon dill salmon, or bacon wrapped scallops and lobster tail. The sides will be roasted parm asparagus and honey glazed carrots. We will finish with flan and cheesecake. I invite all members to become a donor by going to the national or state Elk's website or contact me at [elks2383sharing@yahoo.com](mailto:elks2383sharing@yahoo.com) In closing, you can communicate your desire to assist this lodge in our activities by emailing [Elks2383sharing@yahoo.com](mailto:Elks2383sharing@yahoo.com).

WE ARE ELKS! WHAT DO WE DO? WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE. HOW? WE HELP!

WE SHARE, WE ARE SEEN.



Fraternally Yours, Don Harrison, Exalted Ruler

### ELK OF THE MONTH

Membership has its privileges. It also comes with requests. The requests may be to assist with a snack bar, help with a dinner, setting up the hall for functions, assist with children's programs, or many of the events/tasks our lodge partakes in. This member is always doing something. Raising funds with breakfast, putting on Thursday night dinner, catering with our rental hall, and so much more.

She has so much energy and provides so much to our lodge. I thank you, **Nancy Price**, for all you do and continue to do for the ELKS. When you see Nancy, thank her, she deserves this recognition.

### OFFICER OF THE QUARTER

Selecting an officer of the Quarter is always a challenge.

Our lodge has a great cadre of officers and each brings in their own level of service.

This quarter's officer is a lady that has my back.

As Lodge Secretary, she has reminded me, directed me, and pushed me to get my stuff done.

She works to keep me focused and on track. I have frustrated her, I have disappointed her, and I have even made her laugh. I want to thank **Mary Lou Schreck** and announce her as the Officer of the Quarter.

## Brandon Lodge Officers for 2024-2025 Elk Year

Donald Harrison  
Exalter Ruler  
813-376-8949



Lou Valencia  
Leading Knight  
813-376-9863



Robin Rutzke  
Loyal Knight  
305-498-5654



Wendy Smith  
Lecturing  
Knight  
813-862-8573



Christina  
Puhalla  
Lodge Esquire  
609-217-5782



Michael Fultz  
Tiler  
813-205-5885



Beverly Laundry  
Inner Guard  
813-446-0150



Mark Fox  
Lodge Chaplain  
813-785-5353



Mary Lou Schreck  
Secretary  
813-458-5872

**Member Illness/  
Convalescence:  
Notify Lodge  
Secretary**



Nancy Price  
Treasurer  
813-756-9341

Rick Weigand  
1 Year Trustee  
813-748-  
2678



Mark Vargo  
2 Year Trustee  
813-376-8855



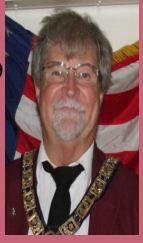
Nickie Wells  
3 Year Trustee  
813-716-8051



Marionette  
Garvey  
4 Year Trustee  
813-956-3776



Ed Ciesla  
5 Year Trustee  
813-679-7699



## Committee Chairs 2024-2025

Accident Prevention - Rick Weigand 813-748-2678

Annual Calendar Updates - Mark Vargo 813-376-8855

Bugle Editor - Lara McCleary 203-988-5089

Community Activities - Lou Valencia or Mark Vargo

Drug Awareness - Don Harrison 813-935-9040

Grants Coordinator - Robin Rutzke 305-498-5654

Fraternal Committee -

Fraternal Sub Committees:

Americanism: Nickie Wells 813-716-8056

Flag Day: Robin Rutzke 305-498-5654

Lodge Activities: Mark Vargo 813-376-8855

Orientation: Jerrilyn Pietro 813-493-0425

State Associations: TBD (Could be You!)

Elks Memorial Day: Don Harrison 813-935-9040

ENF: Nickie Wells 813-716-8056

Veterans Services: Robin Rutzke 305-498-5654

Hall Rental - Jan Czajkowski 518-312-9891

Hoop Shoot - Don Harrison 813-935-9040

House Committee - Mark Vargo 813-376-8855

Kitchen Manager - COULD BE YOU

Lodge Advisors - Henry Poage 813-480-6272

Lodge Maintenance - Rick Weigand 813-748-2678 & Lou Valencia 813-376-9863

Lodge Purchasing Food - Stephen Blackman 813-378-1597

Public Relations - Mike Highfill 813-812-2727

Youth Activity - Don Harrison 813-935-9040

Web Master : Ray Bilinski -  
webmasterbrandoneelks@gmail.com

# BLOE BITS

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Next Meeting is  
**JANUARY 6<sup>TH</sup> @ 7:00 PM**  
 Hoping to See You There!

Here is to the start of another great and healthy year to all. Hope you all had a good holiday and time with families. January will be a little more down to earth and quiet compared to December.

First off, Congratulations to Lara McCleary & Judi Eade for being the winners of the Ultimate Tailgate Raffle. This fundraiser raised \$1,120 for the BLOE.

BLOE Tribute to Elvis night was a great success, BLOE raised \$2,056! The ladies had a nice Christmas party, and I do believe fun was had by all. The 8th of December was the BLOE Sunday breakfast and Santa showed up to have breakfast with the kids. HO HO HO!

We need a volunteer to chair the Horse Races on 1/18/25 please let me know if you would like to chair this event. If not, it will be cancelled!

The only other two things for this month will be our meeting and Bunco night on the 27th . Hope to see all the regulars there and some new ones too!!

In February we have the upcoming Masquerade Ball. Please help Melinda make this a great time for all as we had to cancel the Halloween party due to Milton.

It has been an eventful past year. The new officers will be taking over in March so if any one of you are wanting to hold a position on the board PLEASE STEP UP AND LET US KNOW !!

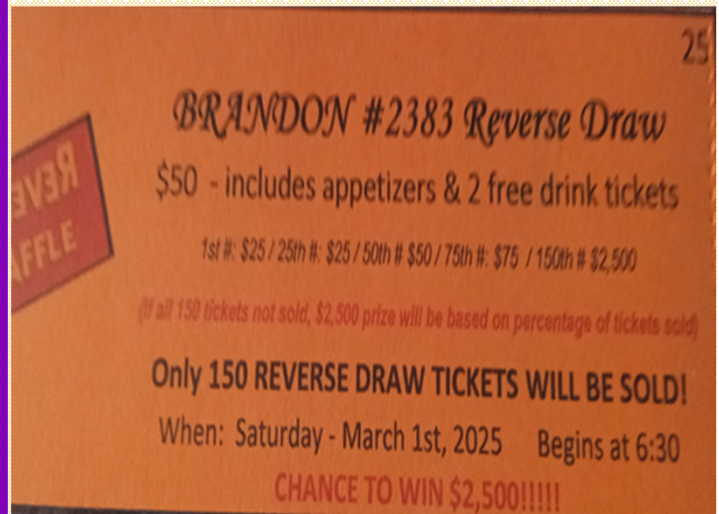
Surround yourself with only people who are going to lift you higher ~  
 Oprah Winfrey ~



Thank you,  
 Becky Cresswell  
 President

## Brandon Ladies of Elks Lady of Distinction DECEMBER

LOD WAS NOT CHOSEN FOR DECEMBER



**Cyndi Buchanan**

**Yellowfin Realty**  
**813.391.7231**

**CyndiBuchanan.YFR@gmail.com**

*“Our focus is serving you, it’s what we do”*



Community • Friendship • Charity  
 join.elks.org



10510 Riverview Drive  
 (813) 671-3121



Riverview, Florida 33578  
 (813) 671-3730 Fax

**Kevin Talbert**  
 Director / Owner

**Linda Hinkle**  
 Office Manager

**Mark C. Vargo, Sr.**  
 Director / Owner

**Mary Lou Schreck**  
**LODGE SECRETARY**  
Office Hours  
 MONDAY: 3pm – 5pm  
 WEDNESDAY: 3pm – 5pm  
 Or call for appointment

**Nancy Price**  
**LODGE TREASURER**  
Office Hours  
 MONDAY: 12pm – 3pm  
 THURSDAY: 12pm – 3pm  
 Or call for appointment

# JANUARY

**EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT**  
**Dinner \* Dancing \* Music**  
 Weekly 50/50 Raffles  
 \$500 Club Drawing

**To All Lodge Members:**  
 To clarify an apparent misunderstanding regarding our lounge being reserved by one of our members. Our lounge is always open to our members, and their guests, during normal operating hours. If there is a private event also happening during those hours, members/guests are not allowed to freely partake of any food and/or beverages supplied by the member that reserved the use of our lounge unless you were invited to the event, or the member grants you permission to partake of their food/beverage.  
 Thank you.  
 Mark C. Vargo, Sr., PER  
 Board of Directors Chair













**Brandon Lodge supports our Veterans**  
 Lodge Veterans please come out every 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month to enjoy free dinner and visit with other local Vets!  
 Prepared by Nancy and friends.

**BLOE BREAKFAST**  
**ALL YOU CAN EAT \$10**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday**  
**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

**Lounge Rental**  
 Lounge usage will be restricted to members, spouses or widows/widowers for their own specific purpose, and they must be always present during the rental

**Lodge Meetings Are Open To Members In Good Standing and is the Place to Discuss any Lodge issues. 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month, May-January! February-April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of the month!**

**Dress code for meetings is long pants and collared shirt for men. Skirt, Dress, or long slacks for women.**  
 PER Meeting – 1<sup>st</sup> Monday, 7pm  
 Lodge Meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of month, 7pm  
 Governing Board mtg – 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 7pm  
 BLOE Ladies Meetings – 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of month at 6:30pm

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2  IN THE HALL 6:30pm	3 FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER SEE PAGE 5 FOR DETAILS	4 6:30PM MEMBER'S BIRTHDAY DINNER LOUNGE
5 SOCIAL & SPORTS LOUNGE 1PM 	6 6:30PM BLOE MEETING - HALL PER MEETING 7PM ANTE ROOM	7 5PM -7PM CARDS 	8	9  IN THE HALL 6:30pm	10 FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER SEE PAGE 5 FOR DETAILS	11 DD CLINIC ARCADIA
12 8AM -11AM BLOE BREAKFAST HALL SOCIAL & SPORTS LOUNGE 1PM	13  Lodge Meeting 7PM	14 5PM -7PM CARDS 5PM -7PM CARDS 	15 6:30PM BLOE DINNER HALL	16  IN THE HALL 6:30pm 6:30PM BRANDON BOYS LOUNGE	17 FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER SEE PAGE 5 FOR DETAILS	18 BLOE HORSE RACE
19 SOCIAL & SPORTS LOUNGE 1PM 4:30PM-9:30PM LOUNGE RENTAL	20 7 PM BOARD MEETING - HALL	21 5PM -7PM CARDS 	22 6:30PM VETERAN'S DINNER HALL	23  IN THE HALL 6:30pm	24 FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER SEE PAGE 5 FOR DETAILS	25 1PM DISTRICT OLYMPICS LAKELAND LODGE
26 SOCIAL & SPORTS LOUNGE 1PM 	27 6PM BUNCO HALL	28 5PM -7PM CARDS 	29	30  IN THE HALL 6:30pm	31 FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER SEE PAGE 5 FOR DETAILS	

**Save the Date**  
**BLOE MEETING, JAN 6<sup>TH</sup>**  
**PER MEETING, JAN 6<sup>TH</sup>**  
**LODGE MEETING, JAN 13<sup>TH</sup>**  
**BOARD MEETING JAN 20<sup>TH</sup>**

**LOUNGE HOURS**  
 Sunday: 1pm – 7pm  
 Monday - Thursday 4pm – 9pm  
 Friday 4pm – 10pm  
 Saturday 4pm – 9pm  
 Memorial, 4th of July and Labor Day 11AM – 6PM  
 Manager: WENDY SMITH

# JANUARY MENU ITEMS

THE ONLY WAY TO BE ASSURED OF A MEAL IS TO RSVP [RSVPBRANDONELKS@YAHOO.COM](mailto:RSVPBRANDONELKS@YAHOO.COM)

**BY 12 NOON THE DAY BEFORE FOR ALL MEALS!**

THIS HELPS US MAXIMIZE RESOURCES AND MINIMIZE WASTE  
 TEXTING OR CALLING THE LODGE IS NOT CONSIDERED AN RSVP!  
 DINNER IS FROM 6:30PM – 8PM

JANUARY 3<sup>RD</sup>

Let's start the year off together!!  
**Phil, RJ, and Crew's**  
**Friday Night Dinner**  
**January 3rd**  
 6:30 pm  
**\$12**  
**Philly Cheesesteak**  
**Chicken or Steak**  
 Served with French Fries or Onion Rings  
 Strawberry Shortcake For dessert  
 Live Music by: **BEN MENY**

JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>

**B.L.O.E**  
**TRACY, BEV, AND TERRIE**  
**Wednesday**  
**Night Dinner**  
**JANUARY 15TH**  
 6:30PM  
**\$10**  
 Coleslaw **PORK SLIDERS** Dessert

JANUARY 24<sup>TH</sup>

**Friday Night Dinner**  
**JANUARY 24TH**  
**Bev Laundry and Friends**  
**\$15**  
**PORK CHOPS**  
**MASHED POTATOES & GRAVY**  
**VEGGIE, SALAD**  
**AND DESSERT** **\$15**  
 Live Music!!!  
**Mike Albright**  
 PLEASE RSVPBRANDONELKS@YAHOO  
 THANK YOU!!!

JANUARY 10<sup>TH</sup>

Pat and Jeff Presents...  
**Friday Night Dinner**  
**January 10th**  
 6:30PM  
**\$15**  
**BAKED HAM**  
**POTATO CASSEROLE**  
**VEGGIES AND DESSERT**  
 Live Music: **Loosey Wound Band!!!**

JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>

**Nickie and Friends**  
**Friday Steak Night**  
 Join us for the best steak in town!!  
**January 17th**  
 Dinner @ 6:30  
 Steak, fish, or shrimp with Potato, veggie, salad And dessert  
**\$13** **\$15** **\$13**  
 Rock out with.... **SKIP FRYE**  
**THEY'RE BACK!!!**

JANUARY 31<sup>ST</sup>

**FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER**  
**Larry Oliver**  
**Mark Fox and Crew**  
**January 31st**  
 Dinner starts at 6:30  
**\$15**  
**Steve Sawdey's Famous Roasted Chicken**  
**OR Crab Cake Dinner**  
 Potatoes, gravy, veggie, and dessert  
 Live Music!!!  
**Taylor & Taylor**  
 \*\*PLEASE RSVP WITH YOUR DINNER SELECTION CHICKEN (WHITE OR DARK) OR CRAB CAKES\*\*

JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>

Best Breakfast in Town  
**Brandon Elks BLOE Breakfast**  
**sunday breakfast**  
**SUNDAY JANUARY 12TH**  
**8AM-11AM**  
**\$10**  
 Open to the public  
**ALL YOU CAN EAT**

JANUARY 22<sup>ND</sup>

**Wednesday Night**  
**VETERANS**  
**\$10 Non-Vets Dinner** **VETS EAT FREE**  
**January 22nd**  
 6:30pm  
**Nancy's Meatloaf**

## TO OUR ELKS RV GUESTS

Welcome to our RV Park  
**ELKS MEMBERS ONLY**

OUR RATES ARE:

- ▶ \$25 per night; 7<sup>th</sup> night FREE
- ▶ RV Storage is \$60 per month

**THANKS FOR STAYING**  
**IN OUR PARK**

Don Cress 207-703-5574

Mark Vargo- 813-376-8855

LODGE PHONE - 813-685-6469



## BUGLE BOOSTERS:

- Pat & Jeff LaVoie
- Kim Martinez
- Lynda & Frank Craft
- Carolyn & George Thomas
- Ron & Ester Cantrell
- Julie & Henry Ebert
- Charlene Hart
- Donald Harrison
- Kenneth League
- Diane League
- Richard Clark
- Jackie Florentino
- Gerri Mann

## BE A BUGLE BOOSTER !!!

Please help defray the cost of printing and mailing out our Bugle. Donations help a great deal!!!

- Karen McArthur
- Angela Sweeney
- Joseph Zebrak
- David Zilka
- Mary Lou & George Scribner
- Pat & Bernie Hiskey

**JOIN THE**  
**BOOSTER CLUB**

# Happy Birthday

TO OUR JANUARY BIRTHDAY MEMBERS

WAYMON SEBER, DANA NELSON, NELLO FAULK, ALVIN CIBULA, EDWARD SCANLAN, CAROLE DIADDEZIO, SANDIE LEE PELKEY, LONNIE KREGELKA, JAN CZAJKOWSKI, ALAN ECKE, BARRY SIMS, CHRISTOPHER BARTOLOMEO, TERRY COOK, STEPHEN WORL, VINCENT ESPISITO, EDWARD CAPBELL, EDWARD AHRENS, STEPHANIE BYERLEY, LAWRENCE HRDINA, KEVIN MERSCHDORF, JERRILYN PIETRO, SAMI SAHAB, ROBERT OLIVER, DIANA JONES, JOHN WICK, ROBERT BOOKER, RONALD ASHER, ROBERT FLORENTINO, WILLIS HAM, MARK SIMS, SEYMOUR ELDRIDGE, BRUCE YOUNGGREN, LARRY LANE, ENRIQUE VALASCO, BEVERLY LAUNDY, MARGARET MANTZEL, DAVID WYLY

DON'T FORGET TO COME OUT ON 1/4/25 FOR YOUR FREE BIRTHDAY DINNER



HAPPY NEW YEAR'S PER'S and to the membership.  
Our PER luncheon will be at Jesse's on Thursday January 9th at 11:30. I hope you can attend. You know the food will be great. I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and a safe New Year and have a great 2025.  
Your Restaurant Hunter  
Kim Martinez PER

## Christmas at Brandon Lodge #2383

Christmas officially began at the Brandon Lodge #2383 on Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup> when members (Elks and Ladies of Elks) brought in their donated toys for the annual "Adopt a Family" Christmas event. Fifteen members, along with some of their grandchildren, arrived ready to sort and wrap any unwrapped gifts. This is a long-standing tradition of the Brandon Lodge. PER Marionette Garvey chairs this event, and it has been a passion of hers for many years. The purpose is And and help families in the community who need a little assistance in making a Merry Christmas for their family. And it also provides members the opportunity to be involved in the community and to make a difference in a child's life at Christmas time. It's an event that members look forward to each year.

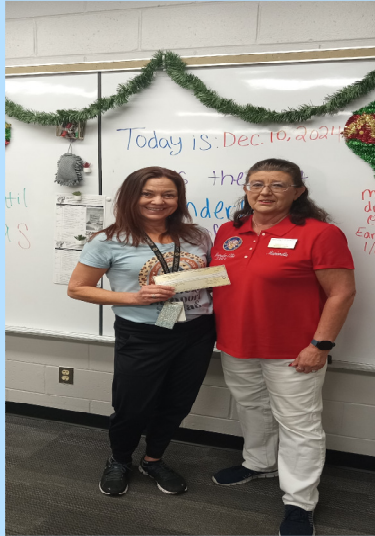
This year the lodge sponsored 17 families. Toys were provided for forty-one children. Christmas Dinner Baskets were given to each of the 17 families.

You can ask any member that participates in this festive event, and they will tell you just how rewarding and fun it is. This is a tradition that PER Marionette is dedicated to and will ensure it continues for years to come.



## Brandon Lodge #2383 Supports Three Local Schools

Brandon Lodge #2383 has a history of supporting their local community. And for many of the past years the lodge has been instrumental in supporting their local Title I schools. Happy to report that this year the Brandon Lodge was again awarded the Beacon Grant. This money was used to support the local schools in their community. On December 9<sup>th</sup>, PER Marionette Garvey awarded a \$2,500 check to three Title I schools in the Brandon area: Seffner Elementary School, Yates Elementary School and Lopez Elementary School. She reached out met with a representative of each school to identify specific needs of the school that the money awarded will be spent on. Each school received a check for \$2,500. These three schools will use this money to purchase books, PE equipment, supplies for special education classes as well as jackets and clothes for some of their children in need.



## Brandon Elks #2383

"Every day provides a new beginning and an opportunity for change. Make the most of it."

The magic in new beginnings is truly the most powerful of them all.

JOSIYAH MARTIN

## What are your hopes for

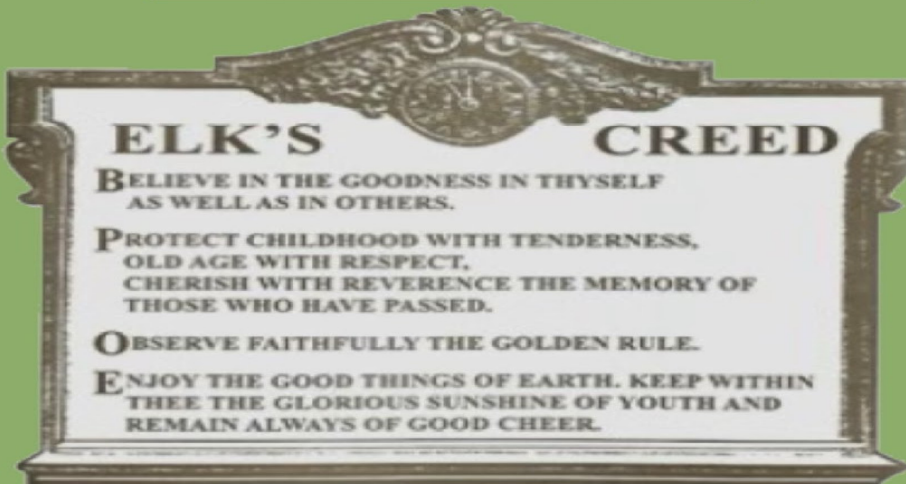
# 2025 ?

If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude.

  
Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud

"Nothing in the universe can stop you from letting go and starting over."

*Gay Finley*



### ELK'S CREED

BELIEVE IN THE GOODNESS IN THYSELF AS WELL AS IN OTHERS.  
PROTECT CHILDHOOD WITH TENDERNESS, OLD AGE WITH RESPECT, CHERISH WITH REVERENCE THE MEMORY OF THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED.  
OBSERVE FAITHFULLY THE GOLDEN RULE.  
ENJOY THE GOOD THINGS OF EARTH. KEEP WITHIN THEE THE GLORIOUS SUNSHINE OF YOUTH AND REMAIN ALWAYS OF GOOD CHEER.

WE RISE  
BY LIFTING  
OTHERS

# Florida Elks Honor Veterans at 2024 Parade of Heroes

Once again, the Florida State Elks Association partnered with the Virginia State Elks Association to honor veterans from World War II through the War on Terror at the 2024 Parade of Heroes in Washington, D.C. The group met in Tampa Nov. 9 for medical checkups and a get-to-know-you dinner at P.F. Chang's. They departed Nov. 10 and returned Nov. 12. A total of 51 Florida Elks and caretakers attended the event, including 34 members who are veterans. The Florida State Elks Association paid the expenses of 25 veterans, and donations from lodges and individuals covered the costs of the remaining veterans and medical team. Several attendees could not make it due to the hurricanes, so veterans from the waiting list were able to take their place.

For the second year, Florida and Virginia Elks veterans presented the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Florida's veterans were Korea War veteran MASH nurse Sarah Graf, of Ocala #286, and World War II veteran Stearns Poor, of Brandon #2383. They, along with Vietnam veteran Hector Rodriguez, of Miami #948, and one Virginia Elk veteran from the War on Terror gave speeches during the Parade of Heroes about their war experiences.

Dr. Sonia Lopez Perdilla, of New Port Richey #2284, was scheduled to be the team doctor, but unfortunately she lost her home in Hurricane Helene and fell in her home, breaking several bones, so she could not serve this year. Dr Kuni Amin, of St. Petersburg #1224, is still healing from injuries incurred in Normandy, so he could not serve this year either. Fortunately, nurse practitioner Becky Long, PSP-FLOE, of Ocala #286, and emergency room nurse Arlene Keys, joining St. Petersburg #1224, stepped up as the medical team and did a wonderful job, exceeding all expectations with their care of the veterans and the rest of the group. The first aid medical backpack was lost in Hurricane Helene, which had been donated by Helinger Advertising in St. Petersburg, but thankfully they donated a new backpack.

To grow relationships and community awareness, the director of Tampa International Airport, the director of Transportation Security Administration and the Southwest Airlines station manager were invited to attend the dinner at P.F. Chang's. Tampa International Airport; Transportation Security Administration; Reagan International Airport Authority; Tampa USO; and Washington, D.C. USO partnered to ensure a patriotic occasion for the veterans at both airports.

Arlington-Fairfax Virginia Elks #2188 and Alexandria Virginia Elks #758 co-hosted the veterans for dinner and special veteran presentation Nov. 11.

The 2024 Parade of Heroes also provided media exposure for the FSEA on local and national broadcasts. Channel 13 Fox News covered

the departure from and return to Tampa. To follow up on the trip, Mark Wilson, News Director at Fox 13, asked PSP Rudy Masi and World War II veterans Hector Hita of Largo #2159, Manny Maldonado of Tampa #708 and Stearns Poor of Brandon #2383 to do a 30-minute program about the Parade of Heroes Dec 4.

Some veterans who attended the event sent letters to PSP Rudy Masi after they returned, sharing how attending the Parade of Heroes made a huge difference in their lives, including healing and receiving honor and recognition they never received upon returning home from their service.

The 2024 Historic Programs team was made up of Grace Hirigoyen, Tampa #708; PDD Michael Schodlbauer and Mary Ducharme, Sebastian #2714; PDD Fred Jaca, Miami #948; PDD Toni Goodrich, Jan Gens, Arlene Keys and PER Dolly Masi, St. Petersburg #1224; Becky Long, PSP-FLOE, Ocala #286; and PDD Jeanne Reinhart and Wayne Roberts, Largo #2159.

**Registrations for the 2025 Parade of Heroes opened on floridaelks.org in the second week of January.**

**To make a donation to the Parade of Heroes, please make your check payable to Florida Elks Charities - Parade of Heroes, and mail to P.O. Box 49, Umatilla, FL 32784.**

**Rudy Masi Sr., PSP  
Historic Programs Liaison  
Florida State Elks Association**



Veterans Sarah Graf of Ocala #286 and Stearns Poor of Brandon #2383

The Elks team walks in the Parade of Heroes while the front two walkers carry the veterans banner

Lou Valencia, Leading Knight and Veterans Rep at Brandon #2383; veteran Manny Maldonado, Tampa #708; Vincent Hita, son of Hector Hita, St. Petersburg #1224; Stearns Poor, Brandon #2383; Rudy Masi, PSP, St. Petersburg #1224; Mark Wilson, Fox 13 News Director; and veteran Hector Hita Sr., Largo #2159



**VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**Committee Chair**  
**Robin Rutzke**

**BPOE Loyal Knight**  
**USAF (ret)**  
**305-498-5654**



Any questions or concerns about the Veterans that the Elks Lodge serves, or other note worthy Veteran events, please address them with Robin.

**God Bless our Veterans!**



**From the Secretary's Desk,**  
 Valued Members,

Our insurance assessment increased by \$3 for the Lodge year 2025-2026. This will be reflected in our dues. **\$140 will be payable by April 1, 2025.** Just a reminder that members and spouses may participate in the 500 Club for the year by paying \$52 for the members or \$104 for the member and their spouse before the first drawing in April. Every Friday Night a name is pulled from a pool of current members and spouses. If you are signed up and not present, you will receive 50% of the pot. If you are signed up and present you will receive 100% of the pot. Please join the fun and get SIGNED UP!!

Fraternally,  
 Mary Lou Schreck,  
 Lodge Secretary

**ATTENTION – ATTENTION – ATTENTION!**

**Parade of Heroes**  
 recognizes and honors veterans from WWII, Korea, Viet Nam, Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Afghanistan Freedom.



**Parade of Heroes**

3-day, all expense paid event in our nation's capital honoring our Military Veterans over Veterans Day

If you are interested in participating in the **Parade of Heroes**

For more details go to our FSEA Historical Programs 2025 Parade of Heroes Website for enrollment and more details.

Registration opens on [www.floridaelks.org](http://www.floridaelks.org) second week in January, 2025

Reach out to Brandon Veteran Chair, Robin Rutzke 305-398-5654 [rrutzke@gmail.com](mailto:rrutzke@gmail.com)

Brandon Lodge has participated in this event each year sending many of Military Veteran Brandon Lodge members to Washington.

If you are a Military Veteran, take advantage of this great opportunity and event!



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