

Elk Call

Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity
June 2025

Navasota Lodge #2888

8949 S Business 6, Navasota, Texas 77868
www.navasotaelks.org




A Fraternal Organization

From our Exalted Ruler...

Greetings Navasota Elks,

Well, it's starting to feel more like summer with each day, I am sure June will be a scorcher! Also starting to heat up is the Navasota Lodge! We inch ever closer to opening with each passing day, and with that comes many opportunities to host events and help our community. The inquiries for rentals keep coming in, and of course there is the August 2nd Interlodge we are to host, so, being prepared will be key to our success. Let's continue to work on the business side of the house so we are ready when the day comes.

Another key to success is maintaining and growing our membership. We still have a few Elks that have yet to renew their membership, so please extend heartfelt communication to each of them, and let them know we miss them and need them to return to the herd. Let's do all we can to introduce the Elks to our friends, family, neighbors and the community. Tell them why you became an Elk and invite them to the Lodge. I know this will be much easier to accomplish once we have a fully functioning Lodge, but please give your best effort.

We do have several events happening in June to be aware of: on Monday the 2nd Membership Call; Ritual Practice for Officers every Monday evening; June 5th thru the 7th, TESA State Convention; on the 11th, PER and House Committee meetings, with special guest speaker Sally Dipalma from Houston 151; regular Lodge meetings on June 12th and 26th; Flag Day Ceremony on the 14th; BOD on the 18th; City of Navasota Sounds of Summer on the 21st; and the Elks National Convention starting on June 29th. That's a pretty full month, plus there are still some needs to be addressed at the Lodge, i.e. yard work and some finish work, etc... As always, we're excited to see everyone being involved in our activities.

We have a lot to look forward to as things develop, and we continue to grow and flourish. Let me just say how absolutely honored I am to be part of this organization, and in particular this Lodge of outstanding Elks! None of what we've achieved would be possible without each and every one of you! THANK YOU ALL!

*"The faults of our members we write upon the sand,
their virtues upon the tablets of love and memory"*

**Darrin L. Van Dell
Exalted Ruler
Navasota Elks #2888**

Fidelity



2025 Texas Elks State Convention Registration



Thursday, June 5th, 2025 thru Saturday, June 7th, 2025

At the Hampton Inn and Suites, Mesquite Convention Center
1700 Rodeo Dr, Mesquite, Texas 75149

For more information and registration:

[Home | Texas Elks State Association, Inc. / TESA Convention Committee](#)

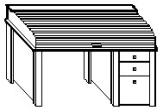
Flag Day Ceremony - June 14, 2025

Our annual Flag Day Ceremony will be held at Navasota Elks Lodge #2888 at 10:00 a.m. on June 14. Brunch will immediately follow at the lodge.

Please plan to attend!



From The



Secretary's Desk

Greetings to all fellow Elks,

We are now in the first quarter of the 2025-2026 Elk Year, and I am happy to report that significant progress has been made at the lodge as we prepare to welcome our membership. We are very close to completing the final few items needed for the Grand Opening we have all been anticipating. I am also looking forward to showcasing our lodge during the Interlodge meeting in August.

During our last meeting, as I observed our group, I was struck by how far our lodge has come. Our officers have dedicated considerable time to mastering their roles, which is evident during our meetings. I am truly proud of our lodge and the strong sense of family we are building together.

Now, I need to address a few housekeeping matters. As a 501(c)8 corporation, it is essential to maintain up-to-date charity reporting. Therefore, when you represent our lodge as an Elk, please submit a report detailing the date, the number of Elk and non-Elk participants, the purpose of the function, along with any associated hours, mileage, and costs. These reports can be sent via email or through our website. Timely submission of this information is crucial for us to maintain our non-profit status and fulfill our reporting obligations to the Grand Lodge. Please note that reports are not required for regular lodge meetings or group meetings.

If you have any questions regarding charity reporting, please do not hesitate to contact me at secretary@navasotaelks.org or by phone at 979-822-4390.

Thank you all for your cooperation in submitting these reports promptly.

Nancy Vidotto
Secretary
Navasota Elks #2888



LODGE MEETINGS

will be held this month on
June 12 and June 26

with Social Hour and Meal (\$10) at 6 p.m.,
followed by meeting at 7 p.m.

Stay active in your Lodge!

Please make every effort to attend!

(OFFICERS, PLEASE NOTE: We will be taking updated photos of 2025-26 Officers at these meetings)



6/02	Darrin Van Dell
6/10	Andrew Cook
6/15	Robert Kilpatrick
6/23	Amy Kilpatrick
6/30	Ryan Cook

From Your Lecturing Knight...

I am Robert Kilpatrick, the Lecturing Knight for Navasota Elks for the 2025-26 year. I became an Elk to help others and my fellow Veterans. After I became a member, I went to the Texas Elks Veterans Retreat in Gonzales, TX, where I felt more relaxed and comfortable being around people. As a plus, I saw other Veterans changed, too. Knowing this was one special way to help others, I decided to stay with the Elks. I plan on going to Gonzales again to help with special needs folks as well.

**Robert Kilpatrick
Esteemed Lecturing Knight
Navasota Elks #2888**

Brotherly Love



Your House Committee Update

We are getting much nearer to opening and there has been a lot of behind-the-scenes work going on! We've conducted an inventory of the items we have available for the bar, the kitchen, and the House part of the Lodge. We voted at the last Lodge meeting for the HC to purchase curtains for the Social Hall. We need to increase the number of white plastic folding chairs. We have almost no bar supplies (non-liquid) other than shakers. If you want to donate an item to the Lodge, please contact either a member of the House Committee (see below) or our Lodge Secretary. There are some items we don't need or have a use for. There is a sheet on the outside of the HC Supply closet door for you to use if you drop off items. Please write the item and your name and place the item on the white shelves. Likewise, if you remove an item, write the item and your name on the sheet on the inside of the door. This will greatly assist us in keeping a current inventory of our assets. Our next meeting will be at 6 pm, Wednesday, June 11 at the Lodge. We are excited to open soon!

HC members: Joel Henenberg, Jo Kelley, Beth Leopold, Calandra Van Dell, and Helen Van Dien.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Beth Leopold
House Committee Chair
hcnelkslodge2888@gmail.com



Hello, Elk Family,

It's been a couple of months since our new year started. I have made the decision to continue my role as Lodge Sweetheart. It was not a light decision, but what helped with that decision the people who have become a TEAM with me made it easier. For those who don't know, I'm Calandra Van Dell, also the wife of our Exalted Ruler Darrin Van Dell. My team (committee) includes the following lovely ladies: Jo Kelley, Helen Van Dien, Evonne Bellis, Christine Gomez, and Tanya Alley Vandiver. Our task is to raise money for our State Major Project, our Texas Elks Children's Camp, a camp for special needs children and foster kids. Because our Lodge is not fully functional at this time, we are unable to raise funds quickly for our cause, but that will soon change. We'll soon be open and able to get back to having our fun Karaoke nights and so much more.

In the mean time there are many other ways you can help, and YES, WE NEED YOUR HELP! Red Pig banks can be filled and brought in every chance you get. If you don't have a Red Pig, ask one of us on the Sweetheart Committee and we will make sure you get one. This past year, Red Pig donations were only 30% of what we did during the year prior. If you don't want to fill a pig, you can always donate to our children by simply writing a check once a month, every other month, etc., and directing that money to go to Sweethearts. In the past, we did a competition for the fundraising, but participation was very low. We will come up with something else in the near future.

Homecoming is right around the corner, and we need to have an item for the Live Auction. We've discussed a fun kitchen package that consists of a rolling island cart with door and drawers. We found bright colored small appliances that would pop, along with other matching items for the theme. So you, as a lodge, can help by donating to purchase some of the items we need to fill the cart. We will prepare a list made up showing specific items. You can get with me at the lodge meetings if you have cash donations, or donations can be made through Cashapp, Venmo and PayPal, making sure you put "Sweetheart Homecoming" in the spot for what it is. We greatly appreciate it!

We still have lodge shirts, in several color options, all kinds of koozies, and a few more hats. We have a new design/logo that we will show soon. We will also have new Texas and American flag hats coming soon. All proceeds go to the Sweetheart Fund to raise money for the kiddos. I know we are a small lodge, but it takes a village to do all that we do. Remember, as Texas Elks, our camp is our State Major Project, meaning it's so important. Navasota stands out in the crowd in many of places. So let's keep up the good work and let not only Texas but others see how strong we are as a family. Thank you all! Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

Blessings,

Calandra Van Dell
Sweetheart
Navasota Lodge #2888
cvandell48@gmail.com



For donations other than cash:
Venmo: @Calandra-VanDell

Cashapp: \$CalandraVanDell

PayPal: @cvandell48@gmail.com
(friends & family only)

Business Square: (will need a phone # to send link)

With Much Appreciation...



Congratulations to Karen Cook who received the 2024-25 East District Elk of the Year award!



Congratulations to Nancy Vidotto who received the 2024-25 Elks Distinguished Citizen Award!



Appreciation and many thanks to Louis and Nancy Vidotto for all their hard work helping to get the Lodge renovated and ready to open!

Welcome New Members!

At the May 8, 2025 Lodge meeting, 3 new members were initiated into Navasota Elks Lodge #2888. We welcome Mac Vaughn, Andrew Davison, and Susan Demontigny.



TEXAS ELKS

Kansas City Grand Lodge Housing Reservations

It's time to get your hotel reservations made for the Grand Lodge Convention to be held 29 June- 2 July. Grand Lodge is open to any Elks member in Good Standing. By Statute, Exalted Rulers or Lodge Alternates are required to attend the convention as Lodge Representatives. They need to make their reservations now.

As of 8 May, about 43% of the Texas Elks State Association Lodges (26 out of 60) have at least one Representative (ER or Alternate) registered. E-mails to the District Area Special Representative and to the District Leaders letting them know which Lodges have not made reservations will be going out shortly.

Hotel reservations **MUST** be made through the Texas Grand Lodge Housing coordinator, Jim Stansbury. The housing reservation form is available on the Texas Elks Website (www.texaselks.org/conventions).

The deadline to register is June 4 th but don't wait until the last minute to register. There are a limited number of rooms with two beds available and they will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. When you e-mail the application, you will receive an e-mail in response stating that the reservation has been received and that a confirmation number will be sent to you when it is received. If you've sent a housing form in and have not received a confirming e-mail, give Jim a call.

ALL RESERVATIONS NEED TO BE MADE THROUGH THE GRAND LODGE HOUSING COORDINATOR. DO NOT CONTACT THE HOTEL DIRECTLY.

For more information or for answers to any questions you may have about Grand Lodge Housing, contact Jim at (325) 374-4541 or TexasGrandLodgeHousing@gmail.com.



Do you contribute to the Elks National Foundation? What if you could donate without having to think about it? Well, you can! Enroll today and become a member of the Fidelity Club—the ENF's monthly giving program. If you have already become a member of the Fidelity Club, please consider an increase in your gift for the 2025-26 year.

Find out more about how your donation will benefit our Lodge by clicking on the link below.

[Secure.elks.org/FidelityClub](https://secure.elks.org/FidelityClub)

Jeff Van Dien
Elks National Foundation (ENF)
Committee Chair

Navasota Elks #2888
jtvandien@gmail.com or (940) 230-1446

John Grey from the Colorado Valley CASI Pod sent along a copy of the Terlingua Trails News Letter with this cool article!

Colorado Valley Chili Pod Cook-off Weekend

NAVASOTA TX— The inaugural Bluebonnet Classic and Colorado Valley Chili Pod cook-offs were held at the Navasota Elks Lodge #2888 on the weekend of March 29-30. This is the first cook-off planned by our new pod officers: Jeff Bauer, Great Pepper; John Gray, Pepper Popper; Terry Durrett, Secretary; and Niki McAdams, Treasurer.

We had a great turn out despite the soggy weather, with 37 cooks on Saturday and 45 cooks on Sunday. John Gray of Navasota, Texas took the win on Saturday's Bluebonnet Classic. "JoMiMi" captained by Jo Quist-Hopson of The Woodlands, Texas took first place show.

Wesley Luckie of Blanco, Texas won the pod cook-off on Sunday and earned the automatic TICC qualification. "Trucker" captained by Paul Hopson of The Woodlands, Texas took first place show. Terry Durrett and Niki McAdams did not score any chili points, *but they got engaged!*

The recipient of the CVCP's fundraising efforts was the Navasota Elks Sweetheart. We were able to present a check for \$1000 to Exalted Ruler Darrin L. Van Dell.

We would like to thank everyone who assisted with the cook-off. We could not have done it without the help of everyone who stepped up to assist with set-up, registration, judging, tallying, donations, raffle, 50/50 and clean up. A special thanks to the Elks for all of their help. We really could not have done this without them. They worked tirelessly to ensure this cook-off was a huge success!

We are looking forward to planning the next cook-off, which will be bigger and better!

Submitted by Niki McAdams



Above: Great Pepper Jeff Bauer presents a donation check of \$1000 to Elks' Exalted Ruler Darrin L. Van Dell.



Above: 2025 Colorado Valley Chili Pod Champion Wesley Luckie of Blanco, Texas



Above: Tally Team hard at work on Saturday.



See page 9 for full results of the **Bluebonnet Classic Cook-off** and the **Colorado Valley Chili Pod Cook-off**



Left: Great Pepper Jeff Bauer and Treasurer Niki McAdams working on the weekend financials in preparation of a donation to the Navasota Elks..

Above right: Terry Durrett surprises Niki McAdams with a marriage proposal.

Below right: Mandy Lindsey sharing a little "fire" with neighboring cooks.

Elks Care - Elks Share

Thank You to our Lodge Sponsors

Sponsors are included each month in our newsletter for the '25-'26 lodge year. Talk to those businesses in your area and invite them to become sponsors. A one year membership and one year advertising in our newsletter is included in sponsorship. To find out how your business or businesses in the area can become a sponsor and be included in the newsletter, contact Louis Vidotto at 512-917-6212 or email secretary@navasotaelks.org.



If you are currently a member of Navasota Lodge #2888, own your own business and your membership dues are in good standing, your business can become a Lodge Sponsor for the 2024-2025 year. Contact Nancy Vidotto, Secretary, at 979-822-4390 or email secretary@navasotaelks.org.



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**2025-2026
Committee Chairs**

Exalted Ruler
Darrin L. Van Dell

Leading Knight
Jeff Hampton

Loyal Knight
Louis Vidotto

Lecturing Knight
Robert Kilpatrick

1 Year Trustee
Karen Cook

2 Year Trustee
Jeff Van Dien

3 Year Trustee
Kaisha Hampton

Secretary
Nancy Vidotto

Treasurer
Helen Van Dien

Esquire
Evonne Bellis

Chaplain
Mary Suzanne Neal

Inner Guard
David D. Tullos

Tiler
Andrew Cook

Accident Prevention
Jeff Van Dien

Activities
Karen Cook

Americanism
Karen Cook

Audit and Accounting
Robert Miller

Community Projects
TBD

Drug Awareness
Jerry Henenberg

Elks Memorial Day
Helen Van Dien

Elks National Foundation
Jeff Van Dien

Flag Day
Karen Cook

Fraternal
TBD

Government Relations
Darrin L. Van Dell

Grant Coordinator
Kaisha Hampton

Hoop Shoot
Evonne Bellis

House Committee
Beth Leopold

Lodge Activities
TBD

Membership
TBD

PER Association
Kaisha Hampton

Public Relations
TBD

Ritualistic
Mike Hobbs

Soccer Shoot
Evonne Bellis

Standing Relief
Christine Gomez

State Major Projects
Calandra Van Dell

Veterans Service
Karen Cook

Youth Activities
Evonne Bellis

Webmaster
Joel Henenberg

Newsletter Editor
Jo Kelley



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Navasota Elks Lodge #2888

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/221595737089774>



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Ritual Training 6pm TESA Monthly Membership Call 7pm	3	4	5	6 Texas Elks State Convention Mesquite, TX	7
8	9 Ritual Training 6pm	10	11 House Comm Meeting 6pm @ Lodge PER Meeting 6:30 @ Lodge	12 Lodge Meeting 6pm Social Hr w/meal 7pm Meeting	13	14  Flag Day Ceremony 10 am-Brunch to follow
15 	16 Ritual Training 6pm	17	18 Board of Directors Meeting 6:30 pm	19	20	21
22	23 Ritual Training 6pm	24	25	26 Lodge Meeting 6pm Social Hr w/meal 7pm Meeting	27	28
29	30 Ritual Training 6pm					



Working for our businesses.
936-825-6600
navasotagrimeschamber.com

Find the Grimes County Chamber calendar of events at their website.