



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2026
YAKIMA CONVENTION & EVENT CENTER

Create
Lasting
Impact

KORI PRIOR
ELF THE MUSICAL



Elf the Musical is coming to the Capitol Theatre. This brand-new Broadway production features the hilarious and heartwarming tale of Buddy the orphan child whose life is changed forever when he mistakenly crawls into Santa’s sack of toys on Christmas Eve. After discovering he is a human being, he embarks on a journey to New York City to find his birth father, and in turn helps the Big Apple rediscover the true meaning of Christmas.

With two performances scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, Executive Producer **KORI PRIOR** will be joining us to share what it takes to make a production like this work. Kori is an accomplished executive with more than 20 years of experience in the global theater and entertainment industry. She has served as the executive producer of *The Phantom of the Opera* international tour as well as multiple Broadway tours, including popular titles such as *Annie*, *Tootsie*, *The Color Purple* and *My Fair Lady*. She was an executive producer for *Elf The Musical* on Broadway and spent more than two decades producing and supervising productions around the world for *Blue Man Group*, where she was instrumental in the development and expansion of the brand on five continents.

Naughty or nice, this is one meeting you won’t want to miss!

FOR THURSDAY’S MEETING

Greeters – Tammy Hanlon, Aryn Masters
Inspiration – Brad Hansen
Sergeant-at-Arms – Quinn Dalan
Program – Charlie Robin
Attendance – Megan Bewley

FUTURE PROGRAMS

November 5th – Sara Watkins, 29029 Challenge
November 12th – Mike Mittelman, Veteran’s Day Program
November 19th – Dr. Lori Alvord, Native American Heritage Month
November 26th – No Meeting, Happy Thanksgiving

SCHOLARSHIP
THANK YOU NOTE

Dear Members of the Vocational Scholarship Committee,

I am very honored to be chosen as a recipient of the Yakima Rotary Vocational Scholarship. This scholarship will help me with any uncertainties between now and graduation. But just as important, it’ll allow me to be able to give my undivided attention to my final quarter and try to finish with the best grades possible. For this peace of mind you’ve provided me, I’d like to say thank you on behalf of me and my family.

Sincerely,
Richard Trujillo

HONORING
UNSUNG HEROES

Each year, the Special Member Recognition Committee recognizes outstanding community volunteers who embrace the Rotary motto of “Service Above Self” with a Rotary Unsung Hero Award. These individuals or groups go above and beyond to make a difference in our community. To qualify for this special recognition, nominees must meet the following criteria (1) they are not paid for what they do and (2) they have not received previous recognition for what they do; they are “worker bees” as opposed to “chiefs” and could be defined as quiet miracle workers.

Do you know someone who would make a good nominee? If yes, please contact Committee Co-Chairs John Adkison at 509-307-1141 or Ken Marble at 509-952-6843.

AUCTION ITEM HIGHLIGHTS

There will be some great dinners to choose from on auction night. Here is a sneak peek of two.

THREE CABINS & A RIVER: A TIETON PROGRESSIVE DINNER

Gather 8-10 of your favorite people for an unforgettable evening along the Tieton River. Your group will be treated to a progressive dinner that takes you to three unique riverfront cabins, each offering a different course and spectacular setting. It's more than dinner -it's an evening of friendship, fun, and unforgettable memories. Includes beer, wine, non-alcoholic beverages, appetizers, main course, and dessert.

Dates to choose from are either September 18 or September 25, 2027, during the annual Flip-Flop, adding an extra splash of excitement watching adventurous rafters brave the rushing waters.

Donors: Erin Black & Monte Knapp, Jim & Dianne Harris, Stacy & Heather Young \$2,500

DUCK, DUCK...DINNER!

Wild duck is delicious when properly prepared. Jim Berg, who has harvested wild duck in the Yakima Valley for 45 years, has prepared and served wild game to hundreds of folks over the years. However, for this dinner, the cooking duties are being turned over to Dan & Mollie Koommoo of Yakima's Crafted Restaurant.

Jim and Anne will prepare the accompanying dishes and dessert and supply and serve all the accompanying spirits. Dan will prepare not less than five different wild duck offerings. The result will be a unique dining opportunity for eight guests with an award-winning chef preparing the centerpiece of a meal not available on any restaurant menu. To be hosted at the Berg home in late Winter or Spring of 2027 on a mutually convenient Tuesday or Wednesday evening.

Donors: Jim & Anne Berg \$2,500

REVIEW

Thursdays at noon are always the best part of the week. We also have the best volunteers who make our meetings fun and engaging. Our greeters at the door were Jake Hambly and Toni Benetti-Flabetich. Amy Maib shared an inspirational message about goodness. With a program about hops we had the perfect musical performance of I Like Beer by Joe Biondi and Doug Rich. Announcements were plentiful. President John shared a "Rotary Moment" video featuring J.R. Martinez created by Yvette Inzunza. Auction Co-Chairs Laura Crooks and Chase Powell talked about our upcoming A Night in Paris auction. Volunteers are needed to help set up the auction the Friday before, during the auction, and after the auction for clean-up. The team is looking for bottles of wine to create a Wall of Wine for the Live Auction. If you have a bottle of wine valued at \$25 or more and would like to donate, please bring it to Rotary or deliver it to the Rotary office. You can also donate \$30 and the committee will purchase a bottle on your behalf. One of the premier auction items is a Costa Rica getaway at four different homes available for purchase now. You can bid on a room or a whole house. Call the Rotary office for details.

Other committees that are hard at work are the Racial Justice and Special Member Recognition/Unsung Hero. Melissa Hill shared an opportunity to participate in Dia de Los Muertos by helping create decorations for an altar to be displayed at the Valley Mall along with sharing photos of family members or friends that you wish to honor. Please contact Melissa for more information. Ken Marble asked for nominations for this year's Rotary Unsung Hero awards. See article above. Quinn Dalan wrapped up Rotary business with a Disney-themed sergeant-at-arms raising money for Yakima Rotary Charities.

If you walked into the Convention Center, saw a table full of hops across from our badges, and guessed that our program was going to be about hops; you were right. Megan Nobbs had the honor of introducing our featured speaker, Tom Davis, the CEO of John I. Haas. John I. Haas was founded in Yakima in 1914. They are part of the BarthHaas Group, which was founded in Nuremberg, Germany three centuries ago in 1794. Why is Haas in Yakima? Yakima is the home of hops. Three quarters of the U.S. hop production is in the Yakima Valley; 2/3 of the hops grown here are exported. BarthHaas is the world's largest hop company. Wherever you find hops in the world, you will find BarthHaas.

The presence of Haas is much more than just hop farms. Haas has 2,000 acres of hops with a big farm in Toppenish and a new farm in the Wenas Valley. They have a Pellet Plant and Warehouse facility on Gordon Road off Highway 12; Advanced Products which makes liquid hops; and the LEED Gold Certified Haas Innovation Center on River Road that features state of

the art research labs, an award winning pilot brewery facility, and outdoor beer garden. They own Yakima Valley Hops; the leading ecommerce hop seller in the world. 4,000 craft brewers buy their hops through Yakima Valley Hops. Innovation drives the work they do as craft brewers are always looking for something different – a certain type of aroma or more efficient type of beer. They are always looking to get hops into beers in a better way, better tasting, better efficiency, and less beer loss. They do it better than anyone.

They also have business beyond brewing through BetaTec and Hop Breeding Company. BetaTec started in the 90's to provide hop growers with a use of their hops, not just for beer but for other industries that include ethanol production, sugar processing, and food manufacturing. Hops possess natural antimicrobial properties that control bacteria growth. Hop Breeding Company is a joint venture with Yakima Chief Ranches. It is the most successful breeding company in the world. Sustainability is key. As a company they adhere to Global G.A.P. standards and through their CO2 recapture system that went live last year they save as much CO2 that would be admitted into the atmosphere as if 50% of Central Park was planted with trees.

How are the U.S. beer and hop industry doing? The beer industry is not doing so good. The U.S. craft beer industry is down 4% in volume for first half of this year from the same period last year. There are a lot of reasons, but the underlying problem now is inflation. Global beers such as Budweiser or Heinken are down 1%; not as bad as U.S. craft beers. The marketplace shift is not a "beer only" story. Spirits are down 4.8% and wine is down 9.2%. One piece of good news is that consumer choices of alcohol are stable. If you ask what they would choose to drink, 64% say beer. The U.S. hop supply has stabilized over the last 2 years with 42,000 acres. In 2022, there were 60,000 acres – it was too much. On the international stage, Germany is home to the second biggest growing region. This year, they experienced an unprecedented crop failure due to drought and extreme heat. Less than 20% of their acreage is irrigated. That might translate to good news for Yakima.

How does it look for next year. 2026-27 is predicted to come with a super El Nino event with warmer temperatures and above average precipitation in the form of rain. If it does snow, it will melt. The hope is to get enough rain to fill the reservoirs to mitigate less snowpack, enough to get through the next crop.

It was a great program. I loved hearing about our own agricultural community and receiving confirmation of something we already knew as true - great beer starts in Yakima.



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