

# May 2026 Manifest AI Summary

## Reasoning and Approach

To summarize the key convention highlights, I reviewed the relevant sections of the May 2026 ESA newsletter, focusing on International Council (IC) Convention details, special events, service projects, and notable activities from state and regional conventions. The summary below is structured to provide a clear, actionable overview for members, leaders, and attendees.

## Key Convention Highlights (May 2026)

### 1. 2026 International Convention: "Sweet Virginia Breeze"

- **Dates & Location:** July 15–19, 2026, Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel, Norfolk, VA.
- **Theme:** Anchored in ESA, with a focus on service, friendship, and legacy.
- **Registration:** Multiple options for members, non-members, and youth, with early bird rates and special events (e.g., President’s Luncheon, Music Bingo Night).
- **Hotel Group Rate:** \$169 plus tax/fees per night (single to quad occupancy), available until June 23, 2026.

### 2. Convention Program & Special Events

- **Opening Ceremonies:** Featuring dynamic speakers, including representatives from the Tunnel to Towers Foundation and U.S. Representative Jen Kiggans (former Navy pilot and nurse practitioner).
- **Workshops & Activities:**
  - "Mission Possible: Unlock the Future" – An interactive experience supporting ESA’s \$5 million commitment to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital. Members are encouraged to dress in “agent” style and participate in fundraising and team-building missions.
  - 10-Minute Takeaways: Quick sessions on personality testing, self-care, and hands-on friendship bracelet making.
  - Culinary Connections: Wellness-focused culinary demos and smoothie bike activities in partnership with Easterseals PORT Health.
- **Music Bingo Night:** Jointly hosted by the IC Board and ESA Foundation, with opportunities for sponsorship, auctions, and prizes.
- **Golf Outings:** Available on multiple days for interested attendees.

### 3. Service Project: ForKids

- **Project Focus:** Packing backpacks for children served by ForKids, a nonprofit supporting nearly 400 families and 850+ children daily.
- **How to Help:** Donations can be shipped directly to a Virginia address or purchased via an Amazon Wishlist. Gift cards to Walmart, Target, or 5 Below are also welcome.

## 4. Recognition & Awards

- **Easterseals Recognition:** Members are encouraged to submit nominations for outstanding service.
- **Philanthropic Awards:** New forms for Volunteer of the Year and Event Recognition (non-ALSAC events) are available on the ESA website.
- **Service Milestones:** Members will be recognized for years of ESA service in 5-year increments (25–80 years).

## 5. State & Regional Convention Highlights

- **Oregon:** Early state convention with a strong focus on hospitality, themed installations, and a meaningful Celebration of Life.
- **Kansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia:** Each state reported on successful conventions, leadership transitions, and impactful community projects (e.g., St. Jude Dream Home Giveaways, community baby showers, and local philanthropic initiatives).
- **Regional Workshops:** Southeastern Regional Council offered a series of Zoom sessions on personal and professional well-being.

## 6. Logistics & Participation

- **Flexible Schedule:** The IC Convention schedule has been shortened and packed with activities to accommodate members with families and full-time jobs.
- **Online Resources:** Members are encouraged to join the ESA Annual IC Convention Facebook page for updates and information.
- **Registration & Payment:** Multiple payment options, including Zeffy and Zelle, with clear cancellation and transfer policies.

### Example Implementation:

- Members can register for the convention, sign up for workshops, participate in the service project by sending donations, and nominate peers for recognition using the provided links and forms.
- State leaders can use the summary to promote convention attendance and highlight opportunities for engagement and recognition within their chapters.

This summary provides a comprehensive, actionable overview of the 2026 ESA convention highlights, supporting both planning and participation.