

West Virginia Elks Association

Mid-Year Meeting August 13, 2009

State Youth Activities Committee Report

J.B. Phillips, Chairman

Members All,

First I would encourage everyone to visit our committee's table set up outside the meeting room. You'll find information on all of our programs to pick up.

West Virginia schools will be in session in a couple of weeks. Hopefully your Lodge Youth Activities Committee has been meeting and making some plans. If you aren't participating in the **Student of the Month Program** let's give it a try. Once you get this program up and running it gets much easier throughout the year and subsequent years. Our committee has all the information you need to start this program on our Youth Activities table. Papers like how to start the program, sample news releases and certificates are here and ready to be picked up.

We have a relatively new youth program titled "**The Dictionary Project**". The goal is to distribute dictionaries to as many 3rd graders as possible. What a great gift to give to "eager to learn" 3rd graders. For only one dollar and seventy cents apiece your lodge could make a difference in an 8 year olds learning experience, not to mention the great public relations you can get from this program. Currently Wellsburg #1553, Wheeling #28, St. Marys #1701, Charleston #202 and Sistersville #333 have distributed dictionaries and Morgantown #411 and Charleston #482 have ordered sample kits. Information and price lists are again available on our table.

How are you doing with your local **Scout** troops? Are you taking the time to congratulate your local Eagle Scouts and Girl Scout Gold and Silver Award recipients? Elk certificates are free and available on our table. These and a candidate American flag make a great presentation to these deserving youth. Make sure you take a picture and send it in to our magazine. Don't

forget that Grand Exalted Ruler Mike would also love to send a congratulations letter to these youth but, you must let him know. His liaison for this letter is GL Committeeman Tom McKibbon whose address is available on our table.

We also have a great program where we assist **youth to adopt veterans**. They are encouraged to send birthday cards and special occasion cards, invite them to visit their classrooms and speak to students, provide comfort care kits and invite them on outings. Information is available on our table to take with you this weekend.

Elks Junior Golf Program has many avenues to use. Set up a Jr. Golf tournament. Find a club pro that will volunteer his time to give towards a youth lesson day. Sponsor a Youth Golf Camp. Many more ideas, like the Youth Golf Brochure Contest, can be found on our table and in the Grand Lodge pamphlet.

The **Antlers Program** is making a grand comeback. This program is open to youths 12 – 20 years old and is overseen by individual lodges. This youth group meets at your lodge, elects officers and has their own bylaws. They can help your lodge committees out with functions, assist you during special dinners, hold their own fundraisers, and most importantly help us bring the family back to our lodges.

It's not too early to begin planning for **Elks National Youth Week**. This full week starts Sunday May 1, 2011. Unfortunately this is the weekend of our State Convention in Morgantown. Start planning now for a full week of activities. Believe me it takes a lot of planning to pull this full week off right. A brochure contest deals with these activities during this week which Wheeling Lodge #28 won 2nd place this year in their division at Grand Lodge!

Is every lodge assembling their brochure to enter the "**Best Youth Activities Contest**"? Last year I only received 2 brochures from WV Lodges, Wheeling and Weirton. Since announcing these two state winners during our last convention I'm please to inform you that Wheeling Lodge #28 placed 2nd in the nation for their youth program and brochure in their division.

Every lodge received a letter from me this spring describing the new Grand Lodge Youth Activities Award. This "**Best Youth Activity Volunteer Award**" is presented to one member from each GL Area for their dedicated service to helping youth. The candidate must have been active in Lodge Youth Activities but also involved in community youth activities outside our Elks programs. During our Grand Lodge Youth Activities report in Orlando it was announced that Wheeling Lodge #28's member Thomas Burgoyne won the Grand Lodge Area 4 award and was presented with a beautiful plaque.

This year five lodges out of 22 sent youth to the **Elks Youth Invitational Tournament of Champions** at Seven Springs Mountain Resort in Pennsylvania. Sistersville #333, Wheeling #28, Lewisburg #1758, Weirton #1801 and St. Marys #1701 were the only lodges sending participants. These five lodges sent youth to a fun competition where they had the time of their lives, competing in a sport they love, meeting new friends that enjoy the same sport, and eating like a kings and queens. Information packs were sent to each lodge early this year and our hopes were high that we would get better participation from more lodges. You may recall during our Spring Convention that we made a change to our reimbursement promise. Now our association will reimburse each lodge the entire cost of sending their first contestant. I have personalized plaques for our WV winners to handout to lodge representatives after this session concludes. Next year's tournament dates are July 24th -26th, 2011. I'm asking every lodge a small favor. This weekend stop me, Jeff, Ted, Randy Holley or President Gurrera and ask us about this event. Tell us what is holding your lodge back from sending anyone.

We are looking at adopting another Youth Activities program in conjunction with "All Pro Dad". This program will help bridge the gap between dads and their sons in the 4th or 5th grade. The intention is to host a monthly breakfast where the dads and sons can talk, plan events together, enjoy a short program and let the dads tell why they are proud of their son. Details will be coming.

For a relatively small association we proved to the entire Grand Lodge Convention attendees that West Virginia Elks believe in helping our youth thanks in a big part to Wheeling Lodge #28. And for their efforts they have been duly recognized by Grand Lodge with various well deserved awards. While in Orlando, FL Wheeling Lodge representatives were presented the following awards:

Wheeling Lodge #28

2nd place in Division 2 in the Elks National Youth Week contest

2nd Place in Division 2 in the WV Elks Best Youth Program

3rd place in Division 2 in the Junior Golf Brochure contest

I want to remind everyone about our afternoon session. We will be hosting youth winners and their families from around the state who have won our Americanism contests, our Teenagers of the Year, our Legacy Scholarship recipients and our National Foundation Scholarship

recipients. The youth luncheon will be held here starting at 12:00. This Youth Luncheon is by invitation only where we have limited seating. Following lunch we will begin the awards session in this same room where everybody is strongly encouraged to attend. With the exception of our distinguished guests and the presenters, I would like to ask that the Elks please sit near the back so our invited guests may have front row seats.

Please don't forget to stop by our Youth Activities table and pick up information on all the programs I have spoke about today and there is also tons of information on our Elks web site.

Mr. President, this concludes my report.