

West Virginia Elks Association State Convention

April 28 – May 1, 2011

Vincent Gurrera
State President
WV Elks Association
150 Elk Street
Weirton, WV 26062

President Vince,

So far this year we have experienced some impressive victories at home and across this great country and have reason to celebrate. Of the 124 introduced bills, we have defeated 21 to date, including bills in Idaho, Mississippi, Virginia and here in West Virginia to legalize marijuana under the guise of medicine; in Maryland, Virginia and Rhode Island that sought to decriminalize marijuana; and a bill that sought to legalize; tax and regulate marijuana in Rhode Island.

Since 1992, the U.S. Treatment Episode Data Set reports that drug treatment admissions for marijuana were up over 10%.

In a recent Bluefield Daily Telegraph article regarding Randolph County schools considering drug tests states: “Data from the annual Pride Survey conducted in all Randolph County schools shows that 26.8% of high school seniors have used marijuana in the last year. Other results for marijuana use included: 1.7% of 6th graders; 7.8% of 7th graders; 10.9% of 8th graders; 14% of 9th graders; 27.4% of 10th graders; and 23.5% of 11th graders.

On a good note, the Department of Justice has begun a concerted effort to end medi-pot as we know it. The DOJ has now issued a letter taking a very strong stand that they will prosecute medi-pot programs. This means that those states that have passed medi-pot dispensary laws are now liable for prosecution. This includes: California, Arizona (not yet implemented), Colorado, New Mexico, Montana, Michigan, Maine, Rhode Island, New Jersey (not yet implemented), and Washington, D.C. Prosecutions have begun in California, Montana and Michigan.

Here at home, our Lodges are doing their part in the advancement of the Drug Awareness Program.

Wheeling Lodge #28 held two events this year. A back to school program sponsored by the Ohio County Girl Scouts held at the House of the Carpenter where they handed out

over 500 pieces of literature. In conjunction with their Dictionary Project they handed out over 96 book marks and pencils to the 3rd graders in five schools.

St. Mary's Lodge #1701 held five events. A bike rodeo, government day, a youth banquet, FFA Fair and a skating party where we distributed literature and other items to over 110 participants.

Parkersburg Lodge #198 held a boat ride and homecoming where they informed over 200 individuals about the harmful effects of drug use.

Sistersville Lodge #333 held a marble fest and handed out literature, rulers, pencils, balloons, gum and other material to all that attended.

Lewisburg Lodge #1758 held a teen expo where we demonstrated and let the attendees participate in the use of the vision goggles while attempting to putt on a putting green. This was a great experience for the youth participants.

In Sutton, WV the trailer along with Elroy the Elk attended the Mt. Lakes Festival and hosted a Children's Awareness Fair and Bike Rodeo. The event gave away 30 bike helmets, children had their bikes inspected, a dunking booth for town officials, a bike rodeo and take a chance on winning one of two bikes that were raffled off. The idea was to teach the importance of bike safety and staying away from drugs and alcohol.

Fraternally,

Jackie Barlow, PDDGER
Drug Awareness Chairman

cc: Lester C. (Ted) Hess, PGER
William Lambert, Sec.