



BIOGRAPHY
LESTER C. HESS, JR. PGER
GRAND LODGE SPONSOR
VIRGINIA ELKS ASSOCIATION

Lester C. Hess, Jr. was born on March 3, 1940, in Wheeling, West Virginia. This populous County Seat combines the easy-going rural atmosphere of its home state with the urban tempos of its industrial cousins Ohio and Pennsylvania, located less than a dozen miles to the west and east. Brother Ted wears his hometown's pleasant, soft-spoken manner on top of a "True Grit" spirit of integrity and competence forged through years of hard work and accomplishment. Following graduation from high school in Wheeling as President of his class, Yearbook Editor, Captain of both the school and All-Conference basketball teams, he attended Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, on a Dow-Jones scholarship from 1958 to 1962, graduating with a major in English. Degree in hand, Hess headed north for a year as an English teacher and basketball coach at a Bay City, Michigan high school. He later served as a staff writer for UPI in its Nashville, Knoxville, Memphis, Charleston and Birmingham offices, with his headline stories on the era's racial tensions and civil rights being read throughout North and South America and across the European continent

Hess graduated from West Virginia University's College of Law in 1966, where he served as Associate Editor of the West Virginia Law Review. From that time until the present, Lester C. Hess, Jr. has been recognized in his profession as a conscientious and skilled trial attorney. He is admitted to practice in the United States Supreme Court and was elected a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers. He also served 16 years as Municipal Judge of the City of Wheeling. During the same period he compiled an exemplary record of service to his own

community, serving as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Ohio County Public Library and as a founder and Chairman of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Wheeling, Inc. Inspiring and accompanying him since 1966 has been his lovely wife, Becky, the former Rebecca Sue Eades, noteworthy in her own right as a high school teacher in Virginia, Ohio and West Virginia.

Paralleling his prominence as a jurist and involved citizen has been Brother Ted's quarter-century as an outstanding and dedicated Elk, following his initiation into Wheeling Lodge No. 28 on October 23, 1965 under the sponsorship of his father, PER and Ritual Coach, Lester C. Hess, Sr. In 1968 he was appointed Inner Guard, progressing through all the chairs until election and service as Lodge No. 28's Exalted Ruler in 1974-75. He is a member of the Lodge's Youth Activities Committee, recognized for over a decade as the best program in West Virginia. PER Association President and Editor of the Lodge Newsletter for many years, he still is a member of the Wheeling Elks Basketball and Softball teams. In recognition of his many contributions to the Lodge, State and Order, Wheeling Lodge No. 28 selected him as its 1980-81 Elk of the Year. In Ritual, Ted was All-State Chaplain and All-State Exalted Ruler, and still holds a strong commitment to this beloved area of Elkdom's traditions. In 1976 he was appointed District Deputy, followed by service on the Grand Lodge Committee on Judiciary from 1978-1983, while for three of those same years he was Vice President of the West Virginia Elks Association, ending with Association President for 1982-83. He has been Chairman of numerous State Committees and in 1988 incorporated the West Virginia Elks Major Project. After four years as State Trustee, he served as Chairman in 1988.

Elected in 1983 to fill the last year in an unexpired term as Grand Trustee, he was elected the following year to a four-year term on the Board. He served as its Secretary, Building Application-East Member, Home Member, Approving Member and ultimately Chairman of the Board. Since 1988 Brother Ted has given three years of distinguished service as a Justice on the Grand Forum, the highest Tribunal of the Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks, relinquishing this important position for the good of his Brothers by accepting Elkdom's highest office, Grand Exalted Ruler.

Since his exemplary tenure as Grand Exalted Ruler, Ted has served as the Sponsor of the Elks of Virginia, Kentucky, and West Virginia. He has also served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Elks National Foundation and as Chairman of the Grand Lodge Advisory Committee. Ted recently retired as Chairman of the Board of the Ohio County Public Library in Wheeling, West Virginia and as West Virginia Chair of the American College of Trial Lawyers.

The Virginia Elks Association is thankful and appreciative of the efforts Ted has provided in his years of guidance as Grand Lodge Sponsor and looks forward to many more years of his support.