

Front Royal 2382 Holds Veterans Appreciation Outing

On Thursday, June 18th, Front Royal 2382 teamed up with the local Chapter of the Izaak Walton League (IWLA), a nation-wide conservation group, and together they hosted nearly 40 Veterans from the Martinsburg, WV, VA Medical Center for a full day of outdoor activities.

In the morning the guests arrived at the beautiful 155-acre secluded park that is home to the Warren County IWLA Chapter. This property borders along the Shenandoah National Park. The visitors participated in archery, fishing in a large, well-stocked pond, and some even went on a guided hike along the park trails. Others simply relaxed and enjoyed the peaceful setting. Prizes were awarded (on a somewhat loose basis) for the first, largest, most, and smallest fish. The fishermen and women caught numerous bass, a few trout, and a great many smaller pan fish. The excitement level was high and the competitive nature was very much in evidence throughout the morning. The IWLA Chapter provided fruit, snacks and beverages to the guests. At noon, when the time arrived to depart, there was an obvious reluctance to leave such a serene and relaxing venue.

The buses then made the short trek to the Front Royal Elks Lodge where the House Committee and many volunteers had been busy preparing a hearty cookout luncheon. The Veterans were greeted with loud applause as they debarked from their buses. Lodge 2382 Exalted Ruler Dennis Henline welcomed them and thanked them for sharing their day with us.



After a most filling lunch, the guests were free to participate in several yard games and many engaged in an exciting game of Trivia. The Veterans and Elks, including numerous other volunteers – one of whom was a local 100-year-old lady veteran of WWII, who was warmly applauded by the VAMC veterans – engaged in a lot of interpersonal mingling and discussions.



At the conclusion of the afternoon, Lodge 2382 had arranged for a Front Royal Police escort, consisting of 3 police cruisers, to assist the VA buses in navigating the rush-hour traffic as they headed back to Martinsburg.



Numerous members of both organizations (IWLA and Elks Lodge 2382), as well as many volunteers, including several children, from within the community, were present at both locations and helped make the day a wonderful success and permitted the tired but happy Veterans to take home some tremendous memories.



Of note: One of the veterans who had completed his program at the VAMC the day before this event, wanted so strongly to participate, that he delayed his return to his home in New York by one day, so he could attend. Prior to boarding his bus, he stated that while he was anxious to be reunited with his family, he was extremely happy that he had made this fantastic trip to Front Royal.



The day's activities were scheduled and coordinated by the Front Royal Veterans Service Committee, working closely with the Izaak Walton League and a great many other volunteers.