

### Front Royal 2382 Hosts VAMC Veterans to Scenic Ride and Lunch

During the month of April 2016 Front Royal 2382 once again hosted over 100 veterans from the Martinsburg VA Medical Center as part of the veterans' springtime tour of Skyline Drive and Shenandoah National Park. This program, initiated some seventeen years ago by the Front Royal VFW Post, is offered to the Medical Center veterans each Thursday in April (when



Veterans who visited on April 28th.

the Spring green-up is in full bloom) and again every Thursday in October (when the leaves are typically at their most brilliant color).

Unfortunately, the VFW Post home was destroyed by fire back in 2015 and since then the Front Royal Elks Veterans Service Committee, aided by numerous Elk and VFW volunteers, has continued to offer this highly popular program.

During the four Thursdays in April 2106, approximately 110 veterans enjoyed an early morning bus trip to the Front Royal Elks Lodge, where they had



Ralph Hauser and Terry Persons washed every dirty dish for all four visits.

light refreshments and were given free lifetime U.S. Park passes by representatives from the U.S. Park Service. They were then treated to a two hour tour of Skyline Drive prior to returning to the Lodge at midday for a delicious, all-you-can-eat meal. These meals were prepared by what Veterans Service Committee Chair, Rich Crawford, refers to as "some of our most fantastic cooks". Tammy Talton, Joyce Marders, Lisa Sheppard, Evelyn Ricci and Danna Taylor spent numerous hours in the kitchen, making certain that they offered up several of their most delightful recipes). In addition to the veterans, VA Nurses, Aides, and bus drivers, plus many of the volunteers also partook of these hearty noontime offerings. Thus, the total number of meals provided easily exceeded 150. As is an Elk custom, when it comes to serving veterans, seconds, and even thirds, were readily available.

An estimated 200 volunteer hours went into planning and executing these four visits, and each volunteer - from Elks, to the VFW, to the Park Service personnel as well as the Front Royal Police Department (who provided traffic assistance for the VA buses) - was only too happy to have the opportunity to have been of service to those who have served us all so well.



Local Police officers escorted the buses safely to the Interstate as they left the lodge on each visit.

Submitted by Jane Wine

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