

Virginia Elks Association News

September 1, 2015

GER Ron and First Lady Nancy Hicks' Trip to Nebraska

We left on our three week trip to Nebraska, Alaska and Colorado on Wednesday evening, August 19. Steve Ravinsky of the Fredericksburg Lodge Transportation Committee picked us up at 6:30 p.m. and delivered us to a hotel in Sterling, near Dulles Airport. We left by hotel shuttle at 6:30 a.m. for our flight to Kearney, Nebraska, by way of Denver, Colorado.



State President Rich Hurless and his wife Deb with Ron and Nancy

We were met at the Kearney Airport late Thursday morning by Nebraska State Sponsor, PGER Jim McQuillan, Nebraska State President Richard Hurless and his wife Deb, and a host of State Officers and other Nebraska Elks. Karen McQuillan was unable to make the trip because she was recovering from recent hip surgery and doing well. Upon arrival at the Convention hotel, we were

greeted by more Nebraska Elks. We enjoyed a little time to unpack and relax before dinner with the State Officers and Past State Presidents in downtown Kearney. Rich and Deb gave us a brief twilight tour of some of the highlights of the Kearney area, including "The Arch" which Nancy returned to visit on Friday.



PGER and Nebraska State Sponsor Jim McQuillan and Ron playing golf in the State Golf Tournament.



Past Grand Secretary Jack Jensen with Ron and Nancy

Friday was a beautiful day and Ron had the opportunity to play in the State Association Golf Tournament. The team of Hicks, McQuillan, PSP Gary Krajewski and Jackie Norris finished "out of the money," but it was a great morning of fellowship and fun.

In the afternoon, Ron attended the PSP Advisory meeting, chaired by Past Grand Secretary Jack Jenson, and that evening we

attended a Nebraska Luau.

On Friday morning, Nancy and Deb met several Elk ladies in the lobby of the hotel to go to a cute restaurant called “Flip and Sweet” which is in a converted gas station. No gas tanks or grease monkeys were visible. After a great lunch, Nancy, Deb, Marcy Ohren and April Tourek went out to the interstate to visit The Great Platte



Deb Hurless, Marcy Ohren and April Tourek at the "Archway" Museum

River Road Archway Monument. The Archway, which spans the width of Interstate 80 with German style architecture, is a museum of and monument to Nebraska and the Platte River Valley's role in westward expansion. The displays start in the 1840s and cover Americans and immigrants converging on the Mormon, Oregon, and California trails before heading west to the frontier. It also included information about the Lincoln Highway which began in New York City and went across the country to San Francisco, passing through Kearney. The arch was erected 15 years ago and then moved to the current site crossing the highway.



Nancy trying to help push a covered wagon in the "Archway" Museum. What an adventure for the pioneers who made that trip west!



Ron and the other hula contestants.

At the luau, Ron and several other Elks received hula lessons, then competed in a hula contest. Ron won by applause, but the vote appeared to be “rigged” in his favor. Golf awards were handed out after dinner, with the winning Columbus Lodge team donating their prize money to the Lincoln Lodge Ritual Team who are National Ritual Champions for the last two years. The second place team made up of members of the Fall City and Cozad Lodges presented their winnings to Ron for the Elks National Foundation.

The Business Session Saturday morning included a presentation on how to apply for and use ENF Community Investment Grants. Fifteen of the twenty lodges in the state received a total of \$56,000 in CIP Grants last year. The session was followed by a number of informative and well attended “Break Out” workshops on Grand Lodge Programs.

On Saturday morning the ladies again met in the lobby to make a short journey just outside of Kearney to “The Barn” on the farm of Diane Krajewski’s sister. It is a facility used for catering and occasionally local families rent for large family gatherings. We had a delicious lunch of local Nebraska produce and cheese. There was a brief stop at an “interesting” Rest Area created by a local farmer with a sense of humor.

Saturday ended with a banquet in the hotel. State Vice-Chairman of Ritual Richard Todd made a presentation to the repeat National Ritual Champion



Nancy standing by the welcome sign at "The Barn"



Bobby and Suz Clinkenbeard with Ron and Nancy on our way to the Kearney Airport early (o'darkthirty) Sunday morning.

Team from the Lincoln Lodge. State President Rich Hurless presented Ron a certificate issued by Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts proclaiming him an Admiral in the Great Nebraska Navy.

Early Sunday morning, PSP and Past Grand Esteemed Lecturing Knight Bob Clinkenbeard and his wife Suz took us to the Kearney airport, where we boarded a Great Lakes plane for Denver and our connection to Seattle, WA, to meet with PGER

Roger True and begin our travels in Alaska.

Submitted by Ron and Nancy Hicks

Send comments to webmaster@virginiaelks.org