

## GER Ron and First Lady Nancy Hicks' Visit to MD-DE-DC Event

We left Washington, DC, Thursday morning, March 17, driving north to Dover, Delaware, and the MD-DE-DC Elks Association Spring Workshop. Nancy drove up from Fredericksburg to meet us in DC and PGER Paul Helsel was our driver for this trip.



Ron and Nancy with State Sponsor Paul Helsel and his wife Jane

On the way to Dover, we stopped for lunch at the Association's Major Project, Elks Camp Barrett, in Crownsville, Maryland. The Elks Camp offers young people age nine to thirteen and sponsored by the Lodges the opportunity for outdoor adventure and fun. A popular retreat for many other organizations, it is fully booked from April through September, with the Boy Scouts holding a Camping Jamboree there every



Tour group at Elks Camp Barrett

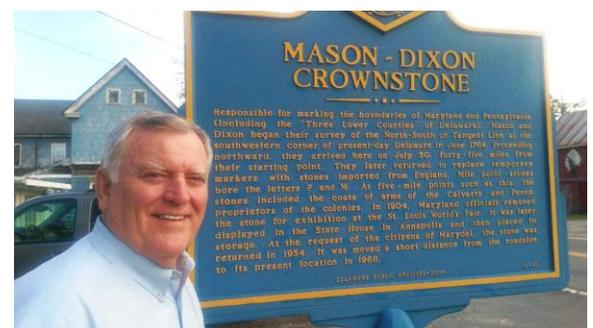


Kent Island Elks in front of their Drug Awareness Trailer

very Irish.

Crossing into Delaware, we stopped at the Mason-Dixon Line, a survey line from the 1760s, surveyed to resolve a Colonial border dispute between Maryland, Pennsylvania and Delaware. Later the line came to symbolize the cultural boundary between the North and the

November. The Association also uses the Camp for special meetings, picnics, adult weekends, and fundraising activities. We were greeted by Camp Director Angela Meyer and a number of Camp and Association Officials, and received a tour of the Camp before lunch. The dining room was decorated for St Patrick's Day with green hats and decorations, and everyone felt



Crossing the Mason-Dixon Line

South (Dixie) and served as a general demarcation line for slavery. Many think the word “Dixie” actually derived from the term “Dixon.”



Ladies sporting green on St. Patrick's Day at the Newark Lodge Dinner. ER Valerie Buoy, First Lady of MD, DC. DE Karen Strong, Nancy, and State Sponsors wife Jane Helsel

We arrived at the Residence Inn in Dover, Delaware, about 4:30 pm, then drove to Newark Lodge 2281, the home Lodge of PGER Helsel, for dinner. Our thanks to Exalted Ruler Valerie Huot and the Lodge for a lovely evening. Friday morning we visited the USO at Dover Air Force Base and its “Dignified Transfer” Terminal. The Base is home to the Dover Port Mortuary, the only Department of Defense Mortuary in the continental U.S. and, upon the

return of every fallen military member, a Color Guard transfers the “travel case” from the aircraft to a waiting vehicle and on to the Mortuary and the Medical Examiner’s Office for opening. This is not a ceremony, but a solemn movement for each fallen hero and their families. The Fisher House, which hosts the families, is also located on the Base.

The USO is one of the nicest in the world, and the only one with the mission of the dignified transfer, the Mortuary and Fisher House, and assisting families to get to and from the facility. Bill Flanders, Operations Supervisor at the USO, gave us a tour of the facility and explained its history and recent renovation. The USO is operated by two paid employees and 177 volunteers. While there, we met Sgt Jared DeYoung, a National Guard member stationed at the Base and son of MD-DE-DC President-Elect Connie De Young, a member of the Dover Lodge. The Dover Lodge offers tremendous support for the USO and during our visit presented it with an Xbox One



Paul Helsel and Ron with USO volunteer Sharon Smith, who arranged our tour, and USO Supervisor Bill Flanders. USO sign in background was made and donated by a local Eagle Scout



Presenting X Box game to the USO

and several games for its game room.

We then went to the Dover Air Mobility Command Museum for a tour of its collection of large cargo planes, which include G-5s and the recently retired Air Force 2 of Vice-President Joe Biden. The Air Mobility Command Base at Dover has four missions: fly cargo, mid-air refueling, Air Force 1 and 2, and the Military Mortuary. We received a tour of the Museum from retired Army Captain Rick Roll, a Vietnam era pilot, and Terry Anderson, a retired C-5 pilot, both long-time volunteers at the Museum.

Lunch was at the Dover Lodge, which was the host for the Workshop. Ron met with the Advisory Committee in the afternoon and Friday night we returned to the Dover Lodge for an informal dinner and evening of karaoke.

Karen Strong hosted the Past State Presidents Wives Luncheon at the Dover Lodge



Ron and Nancy in front of Dover Lodge sign



Ron with prescription drop box placed at local police station in support of the DEA "Take Back" Program

after the tours at Dover Air Force Base. Nancy shared some of the experiences of the travels she and Ron have had during the year. She also shared the story of her pin. She also thanked the ladies for their wonderful warm and welcoming hospitality in Delaware.

Saturday morning, after breakfast at the Lodge, Ron met with the Camp Barrett Board of Directors before the start of the Workshop at 9:00 am. There were eight very good presentations on such topics as: Reasons for Success, Americanism, Veterans, Membership, Understanding Government Relations, How to get the most out of State and GL Conventions, and How to Ask for Help. Lunch was at the Lodge.

Saturday morning Nancy, Jane, and Karen had breakfast at the hotel and were picked up by Linda Conrad. Linda took us out into the Amish area and we visited an Amish quilt shop. We also went to another Amish store, Byler's. Byler's had a little of

everything. There were gifts, candies, groceries, and some clothing. It was really a very interesting business to visit and do a little people watching too. We had a delicious lunch at McGlynns Pub with a lovely view overlooking Silver Lake near the Dover Lodge.



Ron and Nancy with State President Jay Strong and his wife Karen

Lodge Inner Guard and is recovering nicely from recent heart surgery. Saturday night Dinner was at the Dover Lodge with a dance following. Ron spoke about his theme “Elks Pride – Community Focus,” and advised all that our Order has



Ron's Share the Pride Committee

accepted over 66,000 new Members this year, but that we may still not have a gain in Membership, and that we need to change our thinking about Orientation and make it a “process” that does not end until each new Member quickly returns to the Lodge for their very first program or activity, causing each of them feel a sense of belonging and helping to develop a proud, engaged, inspired and active Member for life.

Sunday morning started with a workshop on making “Initiation a Preemptive Strike Against Lapsation” conducted by PSP Priscilla Schwab, Chief Justice of the Grand Forum. This was followed by the Business Session with various reports and the election of next year’s President-Elect, Sandy Bratner, along with the re-election of the Secretary and Treasurer. Ron explained how his GER Pin could serve as a guide to a Member’s Elevator Speech and congratulated the

In the afternoon, Ron met with Paul and the DDs and PSPs, there was also an 11 O’Clock Toast Contest, a breakout session on the Website, a Convention Committee meeting, and a Trustees meeting. On the way back to the hotel, we stopped by the home of PSP Ed and Nancy Willis. Ed is serving as this year’s Grand



Grand Lodge Audit and Accounting Committeeman Warren Johnson, Chief Justice of the Grand Forum Priscilla Schwab, and Ron

Association for its community service and support of Grand Lodge, and thanked them for their hospitality.

The MD-DE-DC Association has thirty-eight Lodges and 19,558 Members and has a good chance for a Plus-One in Membership this year; the Lodges are active in their communities with thirty-four of the Lodges receiving ENF Community Grants last year and the Dover Lodge receiving an Impact Grant this year, and at least thirty-six



State President Jay Strong presenting Ron with a \$500.00 donation to ENF in his name and a special poem written about Ron by Jay

of the Lodges will make the GER Per Capita Goal to ENF this year. The Lodges are also strong supporters of the Soccer Program and host a Regional Soccer Shoot each March in Maryland. During the business session, there was a “Line of Giving” from the Lodges that raised \$6,335 for ENF. The GER Wine Raffle, which was conducted by ENF Chairman Mary Cardinal-Vogt and raised another \$1,000 for ENF, was won by Sherry Donovan of Calvert Lodge 2620.



ENF Chairman Mary Cardinal-Vogt with GER Wine Raffle winner Calvert Lodge ER Dan Williams and Ron

Next, we have a week off for Easter, and to be with family and friends, then on to New Mexico.

Submitted by Ron and Nancy Hicks

Send comments to [webmaster@virginiaelks.org](mailto:webmaster@virginiaelks.org)

Elks Pride  
**Community**  
Focus

