

Martinsville 1752 News of its Support of Veterans

Martinsville Elks Lodge 1752 held its annual Veterans Appreciation Dinner on Saturday, November 14 at the Lodge on Fairy Street. There were approximately eighty-five in attendance at the event, of which forty were Veterans. The Colors were presented by the Martinsville-Henry County Joint Honor Guard with representatives from the Henry County Sheriff's office, City of Martinsville Sheriff's Office, City of Martinsville Police Department, and Martinsville Fire and EMS participating.

Dinner was served to all who attended. Musical entertainment was provided by Jordan Kyle who sang "Walking After Midnight" by Patsy Cline and "At Last" by Etta James. The speaker for the evening was Philip T. Sparks, U.S. Army retired, and an Elk member. Also in attendance was our District Deputy for Southwest Virginia Bill Mathieu and our Virginia Elks Association State President Geoff Cox.

Gift cards were given to the oldest Veteran present – Earl Simpson, age 91, and a member of the Lodge; Mr. Simpson served in World War II in the Army Infantry; and to the youngest Veteran present – Bill Mathieu from Denver, Colorado, who served in the US Air Force. Bill's father and grandfather were also in attendance so three generations of that family have served as Veterans. Drawings for local restaurant gift cards were also held with Veterans receiving gift cards from Chik-Fil-A and Dixie Pig.

The Martinsville Elks Lodge goes to the VA Hospital in Salem, Virginia each month and plays bingo with all Veterans who are able to attend. Canteen books are given as prizes and refreshments are provided. The Lodge also was awarded a \$2000 Elks National Foundation Gratitude Grant that will be used to hold a Christmas Party for about fifty Veterans at the VA Hospital. At the request of the VA Hospital, the Lodge is using part of the grant to donate combo fishing rods and reels and tackle, canopy tents, coolers, DVD/Blue Ray players, percolator coffee pots, and some other items for use at the VA for their recreational activities for the Veterans there. The Lodge also uses part of this grant to provide fleece jackets to fifty Veterans as well as goodie bags filled with many items.

The motto of the Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks is "as long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks will never forget them." In the last fiscal year, Elk members across the country donated more than 117,000 hours in VA hospitals.



Jordan Kyle



Earl Simpson and Martinsville Lodge Veterans Chair Lynnette Kyle