

March 3, 2015

Front Royal 2382 Holds “Bowling for Books” at Local VAMC



L to R: Dennis Henline, Rich Crawford,
Paul Stotler, and Ralph West

Front Royal Elks Sponsor “Bowling for Books” at Martinsburg VA Medical Center

Just like the U.S. Postal Service, three Front Royal Elks braved rain and sleet and icy roads in order to get to the Martinsburg VA Medical Center on Sunday, March 1st, to hold their planned “Bowling For Books” program.

The Bowling event had been well advertised within the VAMC campus and fifteen veterans, all current residents at the facility, signed up and were eagerly awaiting the Elks’ arrival. The newly renovated Recreation Center at the medical center has four well-maintained bowling lanes and was in excellent condition for this meeting.

While all of the participating veterans claimed that they were “raw amateurs”, every one of them left with at least several canteen books that were awarded for strikes and spares. Lodge 2382 also provided light snacks and beverages and enthusiastically cheered on each bowler. For their part, the bowlers gave the Elks a hearty round of applause for holding this event on such a dreary and otherwise boring day. That is one of the reasons these Front Royal Elks venture out, even in bad weather, to interface with these enjoyable folks and help add some variety and recreation to their stay at the VAMC.

One note of interest: While there is, of course, frequent turn-over of residents at the medical center, these veterans, true to their military culture, are close knit and very supportive of each other. This was evidenced by a small event that occurred as one veteran, who had an injured hand and had to drop out of the bowling without yet having won anything. As he was preparing to leave, one of the other vets, who had already won several canteen books, quietly handed his fellow veteran a couple of canteen books. This little transaction was a simple thing, with no fan-fare, but it represents the unity that these veterans have and strength of their group relationships. (Note: Typically, at games such as this, the Elks always make certain that every participant goes home with something).

At the end of the afternoon, everyone had had a great time and were asking when the Elks were going to return. The answer to that is: Since Elks want to do their best to honor and support our veterans, we will be back very soon, you can be sure.