

## Front Royal 2382 Hosts Veterans for Skyline Drive Tours

For the third time over the past eighteen months, Front Royal 2382 has hosted over one hundred veterans from the Martinsburg Veterans Hospital to a day of sight-seeing along the beautiful Skyline Drive, followed by scrumptious luncheons each Thursday during the month of October.

As reported previously, the local VFW Post had been conducting this program for some eighteen years – veterans visit each Thursday in April (when nature is starting the bloom) and again on each Thursday in October (when the leaves are generally at their brightest and most magnificent colors). Unfortunately, the VFW Post Home was lost to a fire in 2015, and, rather than discontinue this very popular program, VFW representatives asked if the Front Royal Elks Lodge would be willing to assist with the continuation of these trips. Naturally, since service to our Veterans is a top priority for all Elks, the Lodge membership immediately stepped forward and enthusiastically threw their support behind these visits.



A typical day begins with the VAMC bus or buses (depending on the number participating on a given day), arriving at the Elks Lodge about 9:15 where the guests are warmly greeted and given light refreshments. Several U.S. Park Service Rangers are also present and offer each veteran a free lifetime pass to all U.S. Parks. The guests then head off to tour Skyline Drive for several hours prior to returning to the Lodge for a hearty, all-you-can eat luncheon.



In addition to volunteer Elks and VFW Post members, there are sometimes volunteers from the general public who wish to lend their support to this worthwhile effort. All meals are prepared and served by Elks volunteer cooks and usually consist of some of the individual cook's most tasty recipes.

During one of the recent October trips, one veteran was overheard saying that ".....if you've seen Skyline Drive once.....you've pretty much seen it; but those all-you-can eat lunches provided by the Elks are always delicious and never the same." Perhaps that is why these semi-annual trips are such a hit with our Veterans!

