

Front Royal 2382 and Front Royal VFW 1860 Treat Vets to Tour



VA Group Leader Jim Dlhosh (center) with Elks and VFW supporters

For the past 16 years, Front Royal VFW Post 1860 has sponsored trips for veterans from the Martinsburg VA Medical Center to sightsee along Skyline Drive several times each year. Unfortunately, the VFW Post home was destroyed by fire several months ago and these visits were in jeopardy of being discontinued.

However, since the Front Royal Elks Lodge is also in the business of providing services and support to our nation's veterans, the local VFW Post and Elks Lodge 2382 decided to team up to ensure that these very popular trips are continued.

On Thursday morning, October 1, some 35 residents from the Martinsburg VAMC traveled to Front Royal, stopping first at the Elks Lodge for coffee and light refreshments, and were greeted by representatives of both the Elks Lodge and VFW Post 1860. Additionally, several members of the U.S. Park Service

were also on hand to provide each of the visiting veterans a lifetime Park Access pass.

Following their morning stop at the Elks Lodge, the buses, accompanied by Park Service rangers, made a visit to nearby Skyline Drive within the beautiful Shenandoah National Park. With the weather being somewhat uncooperative that morning, visibility was a bit limited but the participants all affirmed that they thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Upon returning to Front Royal at mid-day, these guests were treated to a bountiful, nutritious, and very tasty luncheon at the Elks Lodge prior to returning to the VA hospital. The 'bottomless bowl' of tortellini soup was especially well received.

These trips have been conducted for different groups from the VA Medical Center over each of the first four Thursdays in October and will be again in April - seasons when the view from Skyline Drive and within the park itself is at its most glorious stages.

Working from the theory that "A lot of positive things can be accomplished, if nobody cares who gets the credit", this teaming of the Front Royal Elks and VFW, as well as the support received from the U.S. Park Rangers, and even the traffic escort provided by the Front Royal City Police Department, is an excellent example of the types of activities that can be offered to our veterans. In addition to the aforementioned organizations, these trips enjoyed the support of numerous enthusiastic individual volunteers who stepped up to provide the meals and to heartily welcome the guests.