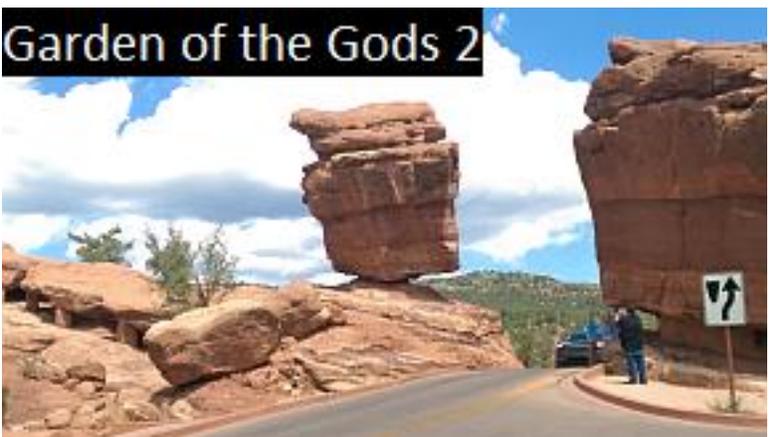
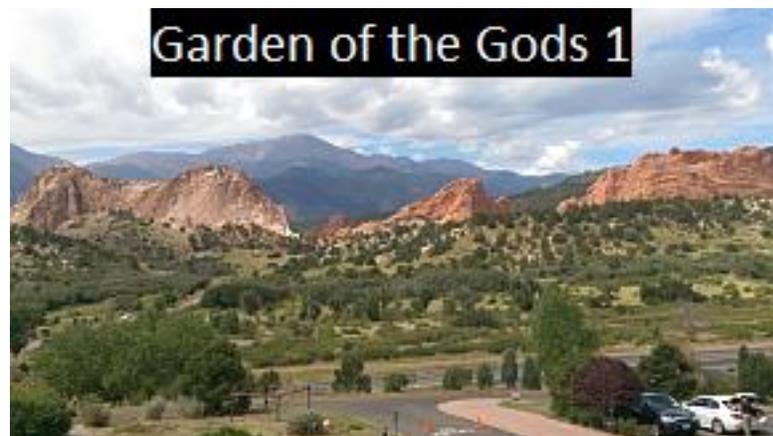


GER Ron and First Lady Nancy Hicks' Trip to Colorado

On Sunday, August 30, we flew from Sitka, Alaska, to Seattle, Washington, to Denver, Colorado, arriving at the Denver Airport around 3:00 pm. Denver would have been our connection back to Virginia. However, since our next State visit was in Denver, we decided to stay in the Denver area until the start of the Convention activities on Wednesday afternoon. To our surprise, we were met at the airport by last year's Grand and the new Colorado State Sponsor John Amen and his wife Marcia.

John and Marcia insisted we stay Sunday night in their lovely home located only twenty minutes from the airport. We spent the evening talking about our time together on Judiciary, what to expect during our year of travels, and all things Elkdom. We enjoyed having dinner Sunday evening in their home, and Monday morning Marcia prepared a delicious breakfast. Then we were off to the Colorado Springs area to tour the Air Force

Academy and visit the Garden of the Gods, a unique garden of red rock formations. We also stopped by the famous Broadmoor Hotel for lunch and walked around the beautiful main building and grounds.



Tuesday was designated a "day of rest" and we spent the entire day "catching up" and relaxing. We only left our hotel for a late lunch/dinner and to ship one of our bags back to Virginia. Wednesday morning Ron had difficulty breathing and eventually sought medical attention. He was suffering from what was described as "altitude sickness," an ailment not uncommon for "flatlanders" visiting the Mile High City. The only remedy is to take a decongestant, drink plenty of water, not get over-exerted, and hope that things improve! We found excellent medical care in Colorado.



Ron and Nancy at the Broadmoor Hotel, Colorado Springs.

Our rental car was returned to the airport by PSP and PSDGER Ray Ross and State President, Tom Fraker, and we were driven to the Convention Hotel by John and Marcia late Wednesday afternoon. Wednesday dinner was at the Fort Restaurant, which was modeled after an old adobe fort and featured exotic delicacies such as rattlesnake, rocky mountain oysters, buffalo tongue, quail and other western fare. We had a brunch at the hotel on Thursday morning, then drove into Denver for a tour of the Denver Mint. The President's Reception and Dinner was held Thursday evening in the hotel, followed at 8 pm by the Convention's Opening Ceremonies. A group of the Colorado Does performed an impressive program saluting our flag with PSP Jerry Hilzer reading a poem saluting our flag.



Ron and Nancy in front of the Welcome to Colorado sign.



Colorado Does saluting our flag.

Colorado had nine teams competing in the Ritual Contest, which was conducted on Thursday and Friday. Ron attended meetings with the District Deputies on Friday morning, and the first of three Business Sessions was held Friday afternoon. The Second Business Session was held Saturday morning, followed by a Memorial Service, and the Third Business Session was held Saturday afternoon, with new State Officers installed during this Session. This Session was followed by Contests for the Salute to the Flag, the Eleven O'Clock Toast and the Jolly Cork Toast. State President, Tom Fraker presided over all of the Business Sessions.

Friday afternoon the ladies luncheon hosted by First Lady of Colorado Deb Fraker was held in the hotel with a Kitchen Theme. For each attendee, Deb made a pot holder, dish



Ron signing membership cards for an ENF donation.



Ron and Nancy with In-coming State President Richard Stolte and his wife, Sandy (left) and out-going State President Tom Frakes and his wife, Deb.



Pineapple appetizer made by Alice Hilzer for Nancy.



L to R: Debbie Beacon, Kim Lenort, Nancy, and Marcia Amen.

rag, scrubby and a place mat with recipes she had used for hospitality rooms during her year at various Colorado Elks State meetings. There were also small kitchen appliances as center pieces on each table which were given as door prizes. Friday evening there was a dinner featuring smoked brisket and hominy cooked by PSP Tom McKibbon, his wife Debbie, and their son. Later in the evening, Nancy joined the PSP ladies to make corsages to sell for the Saturday evening banquet. The money collected for the corsages was to be donated to the winning Ritual Team to help with their expenses.

The Sessions were filled with great, enthusiastic reports on the programs and accomplishments of the Colorado Elks. The Elks of Colorado are strong supporters of ENF with 51 of their 55 Lodges meeting the GER Per-Capita Goal last year, and the State exceeding the goal for the 18th straight year. One new Lodge was instituted last year, and the State just missed a Plus-1 in membership gain for the year. (They are determined to become a Plus-1 State this year.) The State Association offers State Grants to the Lodges for Needy Kids, 46 Lodges received ENF Community Investment Grants last year, the State Website was a 5-Star Winner, and the Lodges are taking advantage of social media, with 46 Lodges being on Facebook.

There were also numerous Awards, Trophies and Certificates handed out to individual Elks and Lodges during the Sessions. Colorado offers several large "traveling" Trophies to their Lodges in recognition of achievements in membership, ENF contributions, and other State and GL programs. One of the most impressive awards was presented to Tom Root in recognition of his



25 years of dedicated and outstanding service as ENF State Chairman. Elections were held for State Officers and Rich Stolte of the Greely Lodge was elected new State President. His theme is "Have Fun Helping Others."

The Convention ended with a Reception for in-coming President Richard Stolte and his wife Sandy in their suite and formal Banquet on Saturday night in the hotel. Ron was the principal speaker, stressing Elks Pride, Community Focus and Membership, and asking each attendee to go back home and become a salesman for success in their Lodge. Individual winners of Ritual and the Contests were announced, and it was announced that the Littleton Lodge had edged out the Leadville



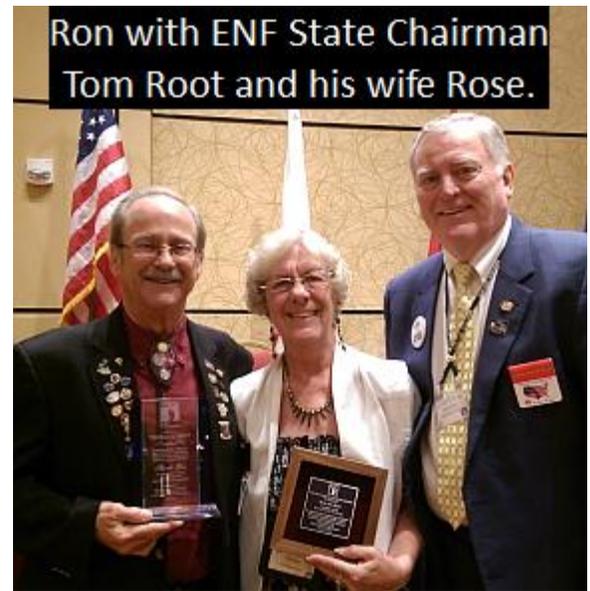
Ron and Nancy with John and Marcia at the Denver Mint.

Lodge to become State Ritual Champions. The night ended with the drawing of the winners for the \$10,000 drawing in support of Laradon, the State Major Project for

children and adults with special needs.

Newly installed President Stolte and his son Rick drove us to the Denver airport early Sunday morning and we headed back to Virginia for a few days home before our next trip to Wisconsin.

Submitted by Ron and Nancy Hicks



Ron with ENF State Chairman Tom Root and his wife Rose.



Ron and Allen Lenort, Member of Grand Lodge Ritual Committee for Area 6.



Ron and Nancy with Cathy McMechen who helped to make the beautiful hand made Santa. A gift from the Colorado Elks Association.

Send comments to webmaster@virginiaelks.org