

## GER Ron and First Lady Nancy Hicks' Visit to South Carolina

After three unexpected days in Chicago following our visit with the Illinois Elks, we arrived home about three pm on Wednesday afternoon, January 27, to twenty inches of snow. We were on the road again the next morning for Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and the South Carolina Elks Mid-Winter Convention, a six and a half hour drive from Fredericksburg. On the way, we stopped at one of our favorite eateries, Ralph's BBQ, in Weldon, North



PGER and State Sponsor Jack Frost and his wife Sharon; Ron and Nancy

Carolina, home to some of the best fried chicken, BBQ, fresh vegetables and banana pudding on the planet!! We arrived in Myrtle Beach at 4:30 pm and were met at the Crown Reef Resort by PGER and State Sponsor Jack Frost and his wife Sharon, State President Bob Cher and his wife Sandy, PSP Skip McDole, VP Vince Wetsell, and SDGER Bob Ressler.



State President Bob Cher and his wife Sandy with Nancy and Ron



Nancy and Ron with SDGER Bob Ressler and his wife Diane

Our room at the hotel was the "Penthouse Suite," with a lovely view up and down the beach, which we shared with Jack and Sharon. After a brief

time to unpack, we went to dinner at the hotel with State Officers and PSPs. All of the activities for the Convention were held across the street from the hotel in the conference facilities. Friday morning, Ron was up at six am for breakfast before an early morning radio appearance on "Hot Talk" Radio with local radio personalities Dave and Liz. The Ritual and Toast Contests also got underway Friday morning. Returning to the hotel, Ron attended the Advisory Board meeting before lunch at the Myrtle Beach Elks Lodge 1771.



View from "The Penthouse" with our morning visitors enjoying the view too!



Ron with Myrtle Beach  
Lodge 1771 Exalted Ruler  
Richard Mentor

At the Lodge, Ron was met by Exalted Ruler Richard Mentor and given a tour of the facility before the buffet lunch. The Myrtle Beach Lodge, with 362 Members, is one of the fastest growing Lodges in South Carolina, always meets its ENF goal, had two ENF grants last year and three this year, including an Impact Grant.

Friday morning,  
Nancy and Sharon Frost

walked across the street for a “Meet and Greet Coffee.” It was a great opportunity for Nancy to meet many of the ladies of the South Carolina Elks. Later, Sharon, Diane Ressler, wife of SDGER Bob Ressler, and Nancy walked next door to Damon’s restaurant for lunch with the wives of the State Officers and Committee Chairmen. We had a private dining room overlooking the beach and were able to watch people walking on the beach, with some collecting shells even though it was sunny but very cool and windy.



Ladies at the Ladies Lunch

Friday afternoon, Ron attended the meeting of the Board of Directors and a couple of special Lodge meetings. Dinner Friday night was with the PSPs at a restaurant within walking distance from the hotel. After dinner, we returned to our suite and spent the rest of the evening talking and catching-up with Jack and Sharon.

The Business Session started at eight am Saturday Morning with a number of great reports about Lodge activities and community service. South Carolina Lodges always make their ENF goal, and this year South Carolina is number nine in the Nation in ENF donations. Pendleton Lodge 2861 is the number one Lodge in the Nation with a per capita of \$133.08, and Greenville Lodge 858 is number five. Each South Carolina Lodge received at least one ENF Community Investment Grant last year, with Florence Lodge 1020 receiving three Grants and the Pendleton Lodge receiving four Grants, including an Impact Grant. This year, Myrtle Beach Lodge 1771 and Little River Lodge 2840 have already been



Ron with Pendleton Lodge 2861 Exalted Ruler Sally Bozeman, "The little lodge that does!!!"

approved for three Grants each, and Pendleton for three Grants, including another Impact Grant. The Pendleton Lodge, led by Exalted Ruler Sally Boseman with only thirty-nine Members, can best be described "As the Little Lodge that Does," and they expect to increase Membership by twenty percent this year. Summerville Lodge 2719 has been the fastest growing Lodge over the last five years, with Little River being number two in growth over that same period.

South Carolina has two VA Hospitals, two VA Nursing Homes and one VA Clinic and the Elks of South

Carolina are very active in their support of Veterans. The relatively new South Carolina Deer Hide Program, which produces leather goods for Veterans, was number five in the Nation this year. Pat Tyler and Jeannie Marangelli,

both of the Little River Lodge, were named South Carolina Veterans Service Volunteers of the Year. And, it was announced at the Session that Gerry Kirkland had been named Grand Lodge "Drug Awareness State Chairman of the Year." The Elks Memorial Service followed the Business Session.



Gerry Kirkland, Grand Lodge "Drug Awareness State Chairman of the Year" and Ron



Sandy Cher pinning Bob's PSP pin on his jacket



Ron and Nancy with newly installed State President Marilyn Adams and "First Dude" Mark Knechtel



Ron presenting Sheriff Jim Matthews the Enrique Camarena Award and State President Bob Cher

At the Association Luncheon, Marilyn Adams was installed as the first female State President of South Carolina, along with all other State Officers. Outgoing President Bob Cher presented Pat Parsely of Georgetown-Pawley Lodge 900 with the President's Achievement Award. The Enrique Camarena Award was presented by Ron, Jack,



Newly installed State President giving her first State Pin to SDGER Bob Ressler, her sponsor into Elkdom

and Drug Awareness Chair Gerry Kirkland to Sergeant Jim Matthews, Sheriff of Kershaw County and a former DEA Agent. Greenville Lodge 858, with ER Bill Borchert and coach David Loudin, won the Ritual Contest and will represent South Carolina in Houston. Charleston Lodge 242 was the runner-up in the Ritual Contest. The Open Toast Contest was won by Gary Higgins and the Flag Tribute was won by Bill Borchert, both of the Greenville Lodge. The Leading Knight Toast Contest was won by Libby Menton of the Charleston Lodge. The State Major Project is the South Carolina support of the



Ron and Toast Winner  
Gary Higgins of the  
Greenville Lodge 858



Ritual Team contest  
winners Greenville  
Lodge 858

State Alzheimer's Association Chapters and at the Luncheon South Carolina Lodges contributed another \$12,450 to the Project. The GER Wine Raffle, which raised \$615 for ENF, was won by Scotty Enzor, Exalted Ruler of Florence Lodge 1020, and the Winners of the State Project Major Fundraiser were announced.



ENF Chairman-Designate  
Jeff Patterson, GER Wine  
Raffle winner Scotty  
Enzor, Ron, and ENF  
Chairman Bill Borchert

Saturday night we enjoyed a quiet dinner with Jack and Sharon and Bob and Diane before attending the formal GER Ball. Sunday morning we headed back to Virginia. When we left Myrtle Beach it was fifty-two degrees and it was seventy degrees by the time we reached Virginia. North bound I-95 was closed for several hours because of a major accident, resulting in a long backup and significant detour, and it took eight and a half hours to get home. Part of the time was taken by another stop at Ralph's!!

Submitted by Ron and Nancy Hicks

Send comments to [webmaster@virginiaelks.org](mailto:webmaster@virginiaelks.org)

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