

September 6, 2013

Virginia Beach 2268's ENF CIP Project Manager Teri Linardich



Teri Lynn Linardich has been an Elks National Foundation Community Investments Program Volunteer since 2008. Teri helped her Lodge receive \$5,000 in CIP Grants in 2012-13. She's continuing her streak this year and has already received one of the first 500 Promise Grants to continue the Lodge's year-round support program for homeless and disadvantaged youth in the community. The Lodge also uses grants to support military members, host drug-free activities for youth, and hold a community health and safety fair, and blood drive.

Nominated for our 2013 CIP Volunteer of the Year award, Linardich shares some of her expert Project Manager advice in the interview below.

How did you first get involved with CIP Grants? I got involved with the Elks through a friend, a long time ago. Once we found out there was grant money to help fund some of the youth activities we could do as a Lodge, I thought, "We need to use this money." Of course, then the ENF expanded the grant programs and that really helped a lot. Proportionally, we've expanded our outreach in the community through grants. (At right: A local family enjoys the safety day with Elroy and the town fire-clown.)



How does your Lodge generally come up with project ideas? For example, your Lodge is going to use this year's Promise Grant for monthly dinners for Standup for Kids. How did that idea come about? I work with a friend who says

**"Teri makes sure that the Lodge receives grant funds and uses them for the good of the community. She gets all the members of the Lodge involved."
– Virginia Beach Lodge member**

she lives near a lot of homeless kids. She volunteers with the group, and it was word of mouth. I contacted them and started the ball rolling. We started by letting Stand up for Kids tell us what to do. They have certain rules, and restrictions. So we partnered with them, and the ball rolled from a home-cooked meal once a month to making hygiene packets for the kids, and other supplies so they can have that in their knapsack. We help them get food together, we got invited to help serve Christmas dinner, and we were invited to cook for a large party for the kids at a shelter with counselors and food and music.

This partnership led us to a lot of things and it's rewarding. It's blossomed into a conversation with other people trying to serve the community. Instead of just giving money, we feel like we've had an impact on people's lives.