



Youth Camp Chronicle

June, 2023

Rochester, MN

The Camp Board

Executive Director

John Miller Hopkins 2221

North District

Krazy Thompson Int'l Falls 1599

Charlie Radika PSP Hibbing 1022

Central District

Herman Wisneski PSP Brainerd 615

Dick Lyscio Brainerd 615

Metro District

Pat Wright PSP Hopkins 2221

Bob Arthur Hopkins 2221

South District

Ron Sik Mankato 225

Allen Rahn Winona 327

Camp Treasurer

Bill Schindele PSP Willmar 952

Assistant Treasurer

Gretchen Peterson Hopkins 2221

Maintenance Supervisor

Tom Hoelscher Minneapolis 44

Check out our web site

www.mnelksyouthcamp.org

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[MN Elks Youth Camp](https://www.facebook.com/MN-Elks-Youth-Camp)

Contact Us:

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Nisswa, MN 56468



From the Camp Board

Welcome MN Elks to Rochester—it's a Beautiful Day!

The Camp took a beating in December. Heavy snow made a mess at Camp and on the trails to Markee. Lots of trees down everywhere. Fortunately for the Camp, no trees fell on any roofs.

The week of April 16, Krazy Thompson brought a group of guys from I Falls. They cleaned up many trees and some of the trails at the Markee. Between rain and snow the crew from the Falls got a lot accomplished. Other work got done also.

On May fifteenth a few guys showed up for Camp Opening. As the week progressed more help came in. Lot of work got done. Tree cleanup, leaves, mowing, walkway to the block house, pontoons in the water plus a whole lot more. In all there was about seventy-five guys that came to work. On Friday night a grill your own steak was enjoyed by all.

May thirty-first was the beginning of Ladies Work Week. This is headed up by Becky Radika. There were twenty women that showed up ready to work. The women accomplished a lot, as they always do. The Camp Board is very appreciative of what they do to help.

The Winona/Hopkins House is complete. Lots of time and effort was put into this complete remodel project. A big thank you to Bob Arthur for all his work and time along with the rest of the Elk Members that volunteered their time to complete this project.

The Camp is in beautiful shape and that is why it is the "Best Place On Earth", we as members of The Minnesota Elks Association should all be very proud of our State Project.

Charlie Radika
Chairman, Youth Camp Board of Directors



From Our Youth Camp Directors

Greetings MN Elks Members from Elks Camp!

June 9, 2023

The 2023 Minnesota Elks Camp Staff will be arriving to start training in a couple days and we are excited to begin training of staff this week to be ready for the first campers to arrive on Sunday, June 18th. We are anxious to provide an experience of a lifetime for this season's campers during the following 6 weeks here at the Best Place on Earth! As Elks Members, we are looking forward to getting off to a great start as we enter our 23rd year at EC.



We are excited to train our staff and prepare for the following weeks of campers. The team of staff we have hired are a very talented, hardworking, creative and energetic group of young people. We think you will be impressed as the staff really can give a life changing experience for a child in just a week! It continues to be our belief that the experiences and character growth of our campers in this short time will provide real benefits in the future for each participating community. If you would like to check us out, go to mnelksyouthcamp.org or on Facebook, LIKE our page at MN Elks Youth Camp. We have numerous photos on Facebook and post updates with more photos several times each week. Families have enjoyed the ability to catch a glimpse into their camper's experience.

Each year the camp facilities continue to improve and grow, allowing us to offer new and improved opportunities for youth. The number of Elks committing time and effort to various important projects continues to grow and the camp visibly improves each season. The efforts of the men and women during the opening weekends, along with other individual lodge's projects, have helped prepare the camp for this season. Thanks to everyone involved!

There have been many new projects added to camp by Elks members during the past off-season. A special thanks goes out to the MN Elks Camp Board in helping to guide these improvements and spending so much time and effort for the camp! Some of these projects/improvements include: improvements to the Winona/Hopkins House, loading ramp to the Dining Hall, flooring and painting in the Mankato House, refurbishing the Resource Center, the creation of the new Elks Flags and Memorial Wall, new hydration stations, water softener system as well as many others. The usual wood-cutting, trail maintenance, raking, mowing, cleaning, painting, moving, and fixing are also very appreciated. The camp looks great and is operating because of everyone's efforts.

In addition to the numerous work projects and hours of work, donations from various lodges also help to provide much needed goods for camp operation. Thanks to various individuals and groups who donated items this year including clothing, paper goods, food items, other donations such as water bottles, fruit snacks, cereal to name a few of them. All of these products help to support our camp and allow us to keep costs down.

Thanks again to all Elks members for providing this camp and all it has to offer. This is a team effort, and it cannot be successful without all of you. Thanks to the Executive Director, John Miller, Camp Board Chair, Charlie Radika and the rest of the Elks Camp Board for providing the needed materials and support to make this a successful place. A big thanks goes out to Bob Arthur and all of the talent and work he has provided to building projects at camp. Also, a special thanks goes out to the lodge recruiters who put in numerous hours searching their communities for deserving youth. Hats off to you for getting these campers to camp!

All Elks members should be proud of the service that is provided at the Minnesota Elks Youth Camp because we all truly make a difference! No matter what role you have in supporting this camp, you are important! Keep spreading the word about the Best Place On Earth and our purpose of a life changing experience for deserving youth!

Sincerely, Joel & Kim Baumgarten
Minnesota Elks Youth Camp Directors

Youth Camp Elks Naming Contest

Happy Summer! This year I attended Youth Camp opening weekend and Ladies opening. It warmed my heart to see the passion attendees have for our state project and it is no wonder volunteers come back every year. Thank you!

Each year we hear stories from chaperones who bring the kids to camp and take them back home. Many say the kids are nervous and anxious on the drive up but when it's time to go home they don't want to leave and have made heartfelt friendships with other camp attendees. Campers are given opportunities and experiences they may never have had in their life. Our MN Youth Camp has gifted lifelong memories to every child that attends! We have so much to be proud of. If you have never been to the Youth Camp I challenge each of you to attend the Mid-Year Conference this October so you can experience what the children we send to this amazing camp do.



Talking around the campfire at Ladies Opener, a great idea came up to give names to the Elks that guard the recently dedicated memorial area in front of the dining hall. On Friday of Ladies Opener they were beautifully refinished. The bull and cow have unofficially been known as "Dwayne and Sandy" but it is time they had official names, so we will be having a naming contest with the winners to be announced at the Mid-Year Conference in October. To submit your suggested name(s) for the Elks, go to www.mnelks.org/Elk-Naming-Contest.html and send in your idea. The winner will receive a valuable prize compliments of the Youth Camp Board!

Thank you to the dedicated members of our MN Elks Association that give time to keep our state project one of the best in the Nation.

Fraternally,
Sue Foster, MN Elks Association State President-Elect

From the Executive Director

As of this meeting the first camping session is complete and we are on our way to send 560 kids to Camp. Opening weekends went well but with 26 buildings, 300 acres and 4000 feet of lakeshore, there are always projects to do. We would welcome the support of more Exalted Rulers and Lodge officers at our work weekends.

Our GER wants us to "Promote Elkdom with Enthusiasm" That is what we do at the Best Place On Earth! Enthusiasm means owning and operating one of the premier youth camps in the country. Enthusiasm means investing over 5 million dollars in operations, another 3 million in buildings and improvements, plus thousands of volunteer hours and dollars all donated by Minnesota Elks, enabling us to send over 20,000 kids to Camp since 1991-free of charge. Enthusiasm means the Minnesota Elks own it, operate it and pay for it, to the tune of over \$40.00 per member every year!



Stand tall, be proud of what you have accomplished at your Camp. There is none better than the BPOE and it remains a shining example of Elkdom. Thanks to all for making the Camp the Crown Jewel of Minnesota Elkdom!!

John M Miller PER, Executive Director

Penny-A-Day Camper Club – Celebrate Camper Club Month!

The Penny A Day Camper Club has raised over \$7,000.00 in one year for The Minnesota Elks Youth Camp! We would like to thank all of the supporters. Remember, by donating the same amount as a cup of coffee a month, you can help out our youth camp and kids. It is effortless to sign up. Just go to MNElks.org > Youth Camp > PAD Camper Club > Sign Me Up! Or, scan the QR code and it will take you right to the sign up page. You'll just enter your credit or debit card information, how often you'd like to donate, and that's it! It comes off your card every month and you get a receipt for your tax deductible donation.



Celebrate Camper Club Month - September

There's a new month in town. We are starting a new tradition whereby September will be celebrated as Camper Club Month! The Camper Club is the Minnesota Elks Youth Camp sustaining giving program; donors who establish monthly gifts to the camp will receive special acknowledgement in the coming months. September will be all about sustaining support and how monthly gifts are the easiest and most reliable way to support the Youth Camp programs. Make sure to keep up with the Youth Camp social media channels to learn about sustaining giving throughout the entire month.

What are the perks of being a Camper Club member?

An automatic gift comes with the convenience of a one-time set-up with no need to mail a check or search for a stamp, and staff are just a quick phone call or email away if changes need to be made to a sustaining donation. For some donors, giving a smaller amount each month that still adds up to a large impact is preferred over donating a larger amount at once.

Why Participate?

- You are helping the Youth Camp provide kids with a once in a lifetime camping experience - one they may not have otherwise
- The recurring nature of the donation makes it easy to include in household budgets
- Setting up an automatic donation means you never forget to give - and the kids will never forget their week at camp
- Start building your legacy by becoming a regular contributor

If you have any questions about The Camper Club, reach out to John Jennings at 320-583-5474.



Paul and Babe at Camp – Get Your Plaid On!

Paul and Babe visited our Youth Camp this winter as they traveled across the country. Paul used his mighty axe to chop down the dead trees and fill some of the wood piles for use by the kids and counselors at camp this summer. Legend has it that Paul and Babe return to Minnesota every summer. We have it on good authority that they will be stopping in Minneapolis June 30 – July 5 to welcome all of the delegates from across the country at the Elks National Convention.

The convention logo reflects the many faces of Minnesota from our 10,000 lakes to the north woods to our city skylines. Our motto “Get Your Plaid On!” pays homage to the bigger than life Paul Bunyan, his bovine friend Babe the Blue Ox and all our great Northwoods lumberjacks. We hope you will join us at the convention as we are in need of volunteers for the many roles during the 6 day event. Visit the state web site at www.mnelks.org and click on the volunteer banner on the home page to find out more.

Come and Get Your Plaid On!



Thank you Pat Wright and Bob Arthur of Hopkins Lodge for personifying Paul & Babe

Memorial Wall Completion – Purchasing Memorial Plaques

In a joint effort of the Minnesota Elks Veterans Services and the Minnesota Elks Youth Camp, construction of a Memorial, which will honor both our Military Veterans and our Membership, was completed this spring at the Best Place on Earth headquarters of Minnesota.

A nine-flagpole memorial, consisting of 6 Military Branch flags, 1 Minnesota State Flag, 1 B.P.O.E. Flag, and a Centralized American Flag/POW flag, replaced the existing flagpole area at Camp. This area houses the Bull and Doe Elk statues as well as four signs indicating the pillars of Elkdom: Charity; Justice; Brotherly Love; and Fidelity. Each flagpole will have a plaque describing what each of the Flags represent and will be used as an education tool for the youth (and adults) who attend the Camp.



A kneeling soldier bearing a flag was recently added to the memorial area and the bull and doe Elk were repainted to improve their look and to blend in more consistently with the surrounding memorial.

Members can purchase memorial plaques to be added to the walls by going to the state web site at www.mnelks.org and clicking on Youth Camp from the top menu then Memorial Plaques. There you will find an online form to submit the request and online payment. There is also a form that can be downloaded, completed and then mailed with a check. The cost of a memorial plaque is \$100. Any questions regarding the plaques should be directed to Executive Director John Miller.

2023 Local Lodge Sessions

Session 1: June 18-23

	Boys	Girls	Total
Dakota	2	2	4
Faribault	6	6	12
Hopkins	10	8	18
Minneapolis	8	8	16
Red Wing	8	8	16
St. Cloud	2	2	4
Stillwater	8	6	14
Wadena	4	4	8
	<u>48</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>92</u>

Session 2: June 25-30

	Boys	Girls	Total
Alexandria	10	12	22
Bemidji	8	8	16
Mankato	10	6	16
Willmar	8	6	14
Worthington	5	7	12
Hutchinson	6	5	11
	<u>47</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>91</u>

Session 3: July 9-14

	Boys	Girls	Total
Brainerd	12	12	24
Owatonna	14	16	30
Rochester	10	10	20
Winona	10	6	16
	<u>45</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>90</u>

Session 4: July 16-21

	Boys	Girls	Total
Hibbing	10	8	18
Duluth	12	12	24
Eveleth	10	10	20
Fergus Falls	2	2	4
Int'l Falls	7	7	14
Virginia	6	6	12
	<u>47</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>92</u>

All lodges kids will be in the first four weeks. Troops kids will be worked in the 4 Local Lodge sessions offered and we are asking lodges to make them part of their quotas if they apply. Weeks 5 and 6 will be Elks kids and grand-kids. This year all lodge and troops camper fees will remain at \$75.00. Elks kids and grandkids camper fees will be \$200 for members and \$250 for guests. **Camper Club members will receive a \$25 discount on their Kids Week fees.** More info can be found at: <http://www.mnelksyouthcamp.org>. Online registration will be required again this year. Registration opened April 1, 2023.

Any questions or lodge quota changes should be referred to a Camp Board member listed on the front page. Remember all lodge camper fees are paid by the raffle proceeds and not by the individual lodges.

2023 Schedule

Men's Opening:	May 18-21
Ladies Opening:	June 1-4
Senior Staff:	June 6-9
Training Week:	June 12-16
Session 1 – Local Lodges:	June 18-23
Session 2 – Local Lodges:	June 25-30
4th of July Break	
Session 3 – Local Lodges:	July 9-14
Session 4 – Local Lodges:	July 16-21
Session 5 – Elks Kids:	July 23-28
Session 6 – Elks Kids:	July 30-Aug 4
Camp Closing:	September 21-23

Wish List

- \$ for scholarships, Troops Kids fees & sunscreen
- \$ for archery equipment
- Push brooms
- Laundry soap / dryer sheets
- Snacks servings of 100
- 2 new hydration stations
- 48 new life jackets (\$40 each) - Camp will order
- Plastic water bottles
- Paper towels, plates, cups
- 12 new bikes