



Youth Camp Chronicle

October, 2023 Breezy Point, MN

The Camp Board

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Herman Wisneski PSP Brainerd 615

Dick Lyscio Brainerd 615

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South District

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Assistant Treasurer

Gretchen Peterson Hopkins 2221

Maintenance Supervisor

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From the Camp Board

Members All "It's a Beautiful Day"

This summer's camper sessions went very well. There were a few minor issues with a couple of campers. The quotas per sessions were very good this year compared to last year.

In April, IFalls came to camp with about thirty-five guys. There was a lot of tree clean up from the heavy snow that fell at the end of December. A lot of other work got accomplished including plumbing, electrical and many other numerous jobs. Camp Opening brought about ninety members. There was more tree cleanup, pontoons got put in the water, leaves got raked up and a walkway built from the dining hall to the outdoor freezer.

The Winona/Hopkins House is completed inside and it turned out absolutely beautiful. We are going to add a screened in deck which should be done during May Opening. The Winona and Hopkins Lodges are covering the cost of this work.

The Mankato House got all new laminate flooring throughout with the exception of the bathrooms which are ceramic tile. This fall new counter tops will be installed. This coming spring the stairway outside going to the loft will be replaced. The Mankato Lodge is covering the cost of all this work.

The Owatonna House is going to be completed. We are going to install another bathroom. The four bedrooms and hallway are going to get laminate flooring and the trim work will be completed. Owatonna Lodge is going to contribute to the cost – other donations are needed.

In August of this year the Lodge got painted on the outside, in the spring, the ladies are going to paint the trim.

Next spring the dinning hall is going to get twenty-one new windows installed. The new heater/air conditioner for the dining hall got installed at Camp Closing and is up and running.

The Camp Board would like to thank Becky and all the ladies that come to camp in the spring. They get a lot of work done, which helps out a lot.



From the Camp Board – continued

If you get the chance to come to Camp when the session's are going on, give Kim or Joel a call and let them know you are coming. Becky and I got to spend two different days there this summer. You will be very impressed with what you see. Becky and I got to see a lot, the most amazing is watching one hundred children and thirty staff come into the dining room for their noon meal. It is simply a work of art watching how it all falls into place. The food that we had was delicious.

If you haven't been to camp, you need to get there, "IT IS THE BEST PLACE ON EARTH"

Charlie Radika
Board of Directors Chairman

A Message From Sue Foster – MN Elks State President

Happy Fall!

I had the pleasure of visiting St Cloud Elks members recently. During that visit, a family with a young boy and girl happened to be present. The children had attended our Minnesota Elks Youth Camp this summer. They found out that I was State President and came over to share a very special "Thank You" for sending them to the Elks camp! They enjoyed everything from archery to canoeing to s'mores! I could tell from the excitement on their little faces how much the camping experience meant to them! It touched my heart and filled me with immense pride to have these two young individuals take the time to thank our organization for offering something we hold as a true passion project to enrich our communities.



I am personally so very proud and appreciative of what our members do to keep our camp in tiptop shape providing a safe and enjoyable experience for all who attend. I would like to give a special shout-out to Krazy from our International Falls Elks Lodge. During my August visit to International Falls Lodge I finally had the opportunity to meet Krazy in person! For more than 30 years, Krazy has been dedicated to gathering his troop of members and volunteers to head to the Youth Camp where they groom and clear paths, spruce up the camp, collect firewood and so much more. The excitement he displayed when talking about the camp was the same as that of the two children who I met in St. Cloud! I am grateful for all those who keep our camp thriving! Our Youth Camp positively impacts the lives of all who visit, whether campers, members or volunteers!

In our previous camp newsletter, I shared that we would be officially naming our Bull & Cow Elk by the dining hall at the Youth Camp. We are excited to have received so many creative and fun entries! John Miller and I look forward to seeing you all at Mid Year where we will announce the winning entry and find out the new names of our Bull & Cow Elk!

In the spirit of the season, I am truly grateful for your dedication of time and talent as we Foster Elkdom in our Communities!

Fraternally,
Sue Foster
MN Elks Association State President

From Our Youth Camp Directors

Dear Minnesota Elks Members,

August 4, 2023

We would again like to thank all the Elks Members who have contributed to the wonderful Minnesota Elks State Project! It continues to be a life changing experience by having the opportunity to live and work at the "EC" for 23 summers and see such incredible improvements and exciting new ideas each year. It is known as the Best Place On Earth and truly shines when you can see the youth of Minnesota enjoying your efforts!



Seeing all of the staff and campers this summer continues to be truly refreshing. After canceling camp four summers ago, we are grateful to progressed toward a normal plan for the season of 2023. Throughout six weeks of camp this summer we hosted nearly 550 campers and operated near capacity each week. Great job to all of the recruiters for getting all of the campers to Elks Camp to allow our staff to make a difference for these deserving youth!

We would like to thank our staff of 2023 for choosing a meaningful job mentoring these youth and making a real difference in the lives of these children. This is a very challenging job, which requires tremendous skills that many young people either do not have or choose not to share. Our staff goes above and beyond to create connections and a caring environment where all campers feel comfortable and welcome. Because of this unique growth experience, staff members gain life changing skills which will be useful in future occupations. Elks members can be assured that the camp program being provided is high quality and money well spent.

As Camp Directors for the Minnesota Elks Youth Camp and Fellow Elks Members, we would like to humbly express our gratitude to everyone connected with this fine state project. We especially wish to thank John Miller, Charlie Radika and the rest of the Camp Board for the endless hours spent behind the scenes to help us make this a successful season.

The Minnesota Elks Youth Camp is another example of the great deeds that can be accomplished by Elks members. We are very proud of Elks Camp as the Best Program On Earth for helping youth, and we are happy to report the summer of 2023 was again a huge success at EC!

Sincerely,

Joel & Kim Baumgarten

MN Elks Youth Camp Directors



Join the Camper Club!

The Penny A Day Camper Club needs your help! For the price of a fancy coffee or a fast food meal, you can help our Youth Camp. It's easy: Just go to The Camper Club page (<https://www.mnelksyouthcamp.org/pad-camper-club.html>) or ask someone from The Camp Board to put you in the right direction. In less than two years, the club has generated almost \$10,000 in funds that go straight to the camp. Your donation (that can be as low as \$5 per month) will count toward your Lodges Penny A Day totals. Remember, these funds are used to help with upkeep and purchase new items for the children that we as Elks have sworn to help. Set it and forget it!

Join The Penny A Day Camper Club today!

John Jennings, PSP



Camp Opener 2024 – We Need You!

Have you ever attended a camp opener? If not, Camp Opener in 2024 would be a great opportunity for you to see the camp, help update and maintain the camp and meet a great group of Elks from across the state.

We are the only Elks youth camp across the country that is managed and maintained by our members and not paid staff. Those that have worked on the camp over the past 69 years take great pride in the camp and providing a life changing experience for our youth. You don't have to have a trade skill to contribute. We need anyone and everyone willing to lend a hand and contribute to one of the many projects undertaken at Camp Opener. Below is a list of projects that will be considered for 2024:



- Mankato House deck paint
- Maintenance on all yard lights at camp-sensors/ bulbs/switches
- Maintenance on heaters/AC of cabins-Keep current gas heaters
- Locks on Girls Washhouse stalls
- Replace faucets in Girls Wash House
- Continue to Stain/Paint Sheds and Other Buildings
- Thompson sealcoat decks and benches and trailers-natural wood
- Paint all white doors brown
- Fix cabin siding boards on bottoms and door casings
- Continue to fix all split rail fences
- Service all vehicles-carts/truck/mowers/tractor/boat motors
- Have all pontoons and docks ready
- Wire essentials for power outages
- Fix bikes as needed
- Continue maintenance of Wi-Fi
- Change all windows to Plexiglas on Lodge and paint Lodge
- Complete Resource Center, and Winona House
- Repair any loose or missing screws/bolts on mini-golf, treehouse, playground and stage
- Weather stripping on door of Laundry Room
- New tires on both Stevens Lake gates

Camp Opener is May 17-19, 2024. Both men and ladies can attend but the Ladies have their own opener May 31-June 2, 2024 and their list of projects is slightly different. You can stay for free at the camp and three meals a day are provided for a small donation. It's a great time to work on the camp projects and swap stories around the camp fire at night.

If you would like more information or would like to sign up to participate, please contact any of the Camp Board members listed on the front page. We appreciate you and most of the all the 650 campers we host every year appreciate you.

Camper Donation List

- Bug spray
- Money toward archery equipment
- Laundry detergent
- Snacks (qty. of 110 – fruit snacks, juice boxes, pre-packaged snacks, etc.)
- Paper goods (paper towels, toilet paper, paper plates & cups)
- Money for sunscreen (must be a specific kind to prevent swimmer's itch)
- Postcard stamps
- Water bottles for 6 weeks of campers (110/week)
- Clothing
- Swimsuits
- Scholarship donations
- Troops week donations
- Charcoal and lighter fluid
- 10 new bikes \$150 each
- Monetary donations for t-shirts for art class
- Boat Oil
- 5 push brooms annually

Facility Wish List

- **Signs:** At the Pumphouse and Service Entrance by the Office
 - “Welcome to Elks Camp-Best Place On Earth”
 - Minnesota Elks State Project
 - Mission: To provide Minnesota youth with a life-changing experience.”
- Field Lights X 4 (on current posts)
- Court Lights on opposite side of court (east side)
- Washhouse floors / painted-sealed
- Washhouse wall fans for ventilation
- Sliding doors on bike shed
- Build Shirt Storage Shed by Office
- Expand parking lot by garbage area 10+ feet and gravel
- Expand woods deck

Miniature golf course remodel

We need to add 3 new holes to the course and need to replace the greens, add new obstacles, replace some boards, paint etc. We are looking for a lodge or district to take on the project in the spring. Cost will be about \$4000. It is well used by the campers and is due for an upgrade, Contact the camp board if you can help with the labor or a donation.

35,000 and counting...

Congrats to all involved in making the 2023 summer camping session a great success. The number of campers improved, the camper selection improved and the staff was outstanding! The budget looks good at this point. Please take the opportunity to visit the Camp this weekend, it is in great shape and you will be impressed. A few other thoughts:

- Please consider joining the Camper Club – its an easy way to be a contributor to camp.
- We will announce the names of our Elk mascots at the Mid Year Conference
- We will also announce the Camper of the Year and the recruiter of the year



One area we can improve on is attendance at opening and closing. Please consider coming up, taking on a project, enjoy the good company and appreciate the facility, We had 27 people at closing, I know we can do better. Again Thanks to all Minnesota Elks, for owning and operating one of the premier youth camps in the order, the BPOE! Over 35,000 kids sent, 35,000 lives changed, and more to come!

John Miller, PER
Executive Director

2024 Local Lodge Sessions

Session 1: June 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>

Session 2: June 23-28

	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 3: July 7-12

	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 4: July 14-19

	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>

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 opens April 1, 2024.

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.

2024 Schedule

Men's Opening:	May 17-20
Ladies Opening:	May 31-June 2
Senior Staff:	June 4-7
Training Week:	June 10-14
Session 1 – Local Lodges:	June 16-21
Session 2 – Local Lodges:	June 23-28
4th of July Break	
Session 3 – Local Lodges:	July 7-12
Session 4 – Local Lodges:	July 14-19
Session 5 – Elks Kids:	July 21-26
Session 6 – Elks Kids:	July 28-Aug 2
Camp Closing:	September 20-22

Purchasing Memorial Wall Plaques

The memorial area outside the dining hall is now complete. The memorial has the two Elks, flags honoring the 6 branches of service and two wooden walls containing memorial plaques. 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.