

Diversions

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CONVENTION



The 2014 Officers and Trustees of the Faribault Elks. (Photo courtesy of Peter van Sluis)

A GRAND WELCOME

Hundreds of Elks, including grand exalted ruler, to visit Faribault for state convention

By **BRAD PHENOW**
bphenow@northfieldnews.com

Representatives from 26 Elks lodges in Minnesota will make their way into Faribault this weekend for the state convention, which will include guest of honor Millard Pickering, national grand exalted ruler of the organization.

The Faribault Elks will host a banquet dinner Saturday. They also planned to make a VIP visit to the Harley Davidson store, hold a golf outing at Legacy, and receive a tour of Shattuck- St. Mary's.

Peter van Sluis, lecturing knight for the Faribault Elks, said they have also arranged a visit to the Vintage Ballroom, the birthplace of the Faribault Elks.

The Faribault Elks Lodge #1166, which consists of 300 members, emphasize



Pickering

youth activities, and offer scholarships to high school students. Bob Erickson, local exalted ruler, said there is a quite list of youth activities.

"Soccer shoot, the hoop shoot, the ice fishing contest on French Lake, we send 12 kids up to an Elks camp near Brainerd," he said.

The youth participants in these events can make it to local, state, regional, and national levels. Leading Knight Ruth Erickson said the Elks are second to the U.S. government in scholarship awards.

Secretary Lynn Erickson said the state convention is big for the local Elks, but also the community.

"This will bring in 250 people and we

"This is great exposure to show what the Elks do."

Secretary Lynn Erickson

have them in all of the hotels, and we are using local businesses for our event," she said. "This is great exposure to show what the Elks do."

She added that this convention has been in the works for three years.

"It's been a lot of work putting this together," she said. "The members have been of great help, along with some great sponsors, and volunteers."

Each year the convention is held in a different city. van Sluis said the conventions consist of business meetings to look

over annual reports, bylaws, and to elect new state leaders for the next year.

"Part of the reason Faribault is having the event this year is because Neil Johnson, a long time member, is being elected as the state president for Minnesota," he said.

For more information on the Elks, visit their website.

Brad Phenow covers Rice County government, townships and arts & entertainment. Reach him in Faribault at 333-3135 and in Northfield at 645-1122.