

1 Good Morning

This morning, I'd like to briefly discuss the operation of this year's ENF Most Valuable Student Contest and report the results of District competition. After this, I'd like to briefly mention another very excellent ENF scholarship program that's still accepting applicants.

For about 3 years, the computer platform for the operation of the MVS Contest that was developed in house by the ENF's own IT people has been in operation. It appears this platform is excellent. I feel the IT people really hit a home run with the development of this platform. It allows students and school counselors to enter contest applications electronically, as well as allowing judges at all levels to view and score the applications electronically. Scoring results at all levels are available instantaneously. This new platform makes the MVS Contest run far smoother. It has been a long time coming when, in the not too distant past, the whole Contest was paper driven and manually scored.

Students and counselors were able to enter application data from August 1st thru November 13th. In early December, completed applications were available for retrieval from the platform. The Lodges in West Central District received a total of 178 applications, 51 boys and 127 girls. This represents an increase of 4 over the number received last year. At least one application was received by each of our 10 Lodges .

Based on all scores entered in the platform, up to six winning applications, 3 boys, 3 girls, were selected by each of our 10 Lodges to forward to District judging.

Judging for West Central District took place January 6th at Sunnyvale Lodge. We had a team of 8 outstanding Elks and 1 non-Elk as District judges. On behalf of myself and West Central, I'd like to offer a big thank you and appreciation to these people for volunteering on a Saturday morning to perform this function, which is critical to our district and to Elkdom.

Our Lodge committees submitted 24 boys and 28 girls as district competitors. Based on the scores entered in the platform, our district committee selected 24 winning applications, 12 boys, 12 girls, which is the number of winners allotted by ENF to a district our size.

At this time, I'd like to focus on the top 3 winners & their sponsoring Lodges. Each competitor will receive a monetary award from the CHEA scholarship fund:

Regarding the boys--

Third place was sponsored by Salinas

His award is \$200.00

Second place was sponsored by San Jose

His award is \$400.00

First place was sponsored by San Jose

This young man resides in Los Gatos and attends Los Gatos High School

He plans to study Public Affairs

His award is \$700.00

Regarding the girls--

First, second and third place were all sponsored by San Jose

I'm happy to report that the first place girl had a perfect score - 1000 points out of a possible 1000

This young lady resides in west San Jose and attends Gunderson High School

She plans to study Artificial Intelligence

This young lady is a straight-A student with over 2000 hours of community service and with a definite financial need

Congratulations to these 24 winning applicants and their sponsoring Lodges. These 24 applicants will be among 390 applicants throughout California and Hawaii competing at the CHEA state judging, which will be held February 9th thru 11th in Fresno.

Health permitting, I plan to attend to represent WCD.

The top 73 applicants selected in CHEA judging will be declared state finalists. They will be on track to receive ENF 4-year scholarships of \$1,000/year and will be among 500 competitors competing in the national contest for the top 20 positions, which will each be awarded a higher scholarship of \$30,000 or \$7,500 per year. This represents a change over previous years. Previously, the national judges ranked the 20 finalists. They then received scholarships based on their rank.

I wish to offer a tremendous thank you to our Lodge judging committees for their outstanding dedication and industriousness. SENSATIONAL JOB BY ALL!

I'd also like to thank our Scholarship Vice Chair, Pat Egan, PER, for very graciously filling in for me on several visitations this year when I had health issues or when I was out of town in Tahoe. Also, I'd liked to thank Pat for his excellent efforts in distributing critical fliers, FAQ's and templates to our Lodge Chairs on the 3 ENF, CHEA and CHEMPI scholarships.

Before closing, I'd like to briefly mention another ENF scholarship program that's still accepting applicants. This is the Legacy program. This program offers up to 23 four-year scholarships, \$1,000/year, to children and grandchildren of paid-up CHEA Elks members. As with the MVS Contest, the Legacy applications are available online only and must be completed online no later than Monday, February 5th. Winners will be announced in late April. I have the application website if anyone is interested.

Thank you very much