

Pythians Support Double H Ranch programs for children & their families

Albany City Lodge Leads the Way

February 26, 2017

by PACDGC Sir Martin Seaman

Grand Lodge supports a number of special needs charities including the Double H. Ranch in Luzerne, NY founded in 1992 by Paul Newman and businessman Charley Wood, to serve children living with life-threatening and serious illnesses free of charge. Donations from Grand Lodge (Dr. Morris Smoller and Humanitarian Funds), subordinate lodges' charities and individual Pythians will soon surpass \$100,000. Find a Pythian lodge community in New York and find children who have attended or will attend this camp. Children also come from Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and other states throughout the United States.

It all resulted following the advocacy of Albany City Lodge #540 which promoted a resolution at a Grand Lodge Convention years ago to build support in the Order Knights of Pythias for this worthy cause. In the fall of 1997, Brothers from Albany City Lodge began to sell their Giant Story coloring books during the holiday season to support their various charities. The Double H Ranch so impressed the brothers that they not only provide funds, but brothers travel to the camp in Lake Luzerne each fall and spring to perform numerous tasks ranging from domestic building cleaning to raking leaves, planting flowers and weeding the camp's reflection garden.

Knowing what the brothers from Albany City Lodge physically and monetarily do for this organization one needs to know more about Double H. In 1991 two extraordinary men – outstanding actor Paul Newman and Charles Wood, a Lake George entrepreneur in developing tourists' attractions – worked together to develop the Double H Ranch. Their vision: to develop a **year-round** camping program that provides specialized programs for children and their families dealing with life-threatening illnesses including cancer, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, immune disorder, other blood disorders, collagen vascular diseases and Krons and colitis. Double H provides all of its programs free of charge to the children and their families through a recommendation by a hospital or a doctor; this is the only way a child can attend this camp.

The majority of campers attend summer sessions when schools close during the summer months. The campers participate in the same activities as those found in regular summer camps. The only exception involves modifying the activities to allow all children to participate. In the fall, winter and spring months the camp offers various weekend activities – at no charge – for these special children, their siblings and parents. In the spring programs include Braveheart's-Partner Program, Hematology/Oncology Family weekend and Cindy's Comfort Camp. In the fall Double H provides a Family-Memorial Weekend, Diabetes Family Weekend, Mitochondrial/Journey Family Weekend, and Spina Bifida Family Weekend. In the winter Double H winter sports programs include adaptive skiing with lessons, sledding and other winter activities. For each of these seasonal activities the parents and their children usually arrive on a Friday and stay in the cabins through Sunday. Again, there is no charge for the children, their siblings and parents.



Photo

Caption: left to right, PACDGC Sir Martin Seaman and PACDGC Jayson Schner present a check to Max J. Yurenda, CEO/Executive Director of Double H Camp.

For more information about the Double H Ranch please contact Sir Martin Seaman, PACDGC, at mseaman2@nycap.rr.com. If you or your lodge would like to donate support to this camp, please make out a check to “Double H Ranch” and send it to Sir Martin Seaman, 73 Delafield Drive, Albany, NY 12205. Your check will be personally delivered to the camp and the camp will recognize you for your contribution.

The [Order of Knights of Pythias](#) is an international, non-sectarian fraternal order, established in 1864 in Washington, DC, by Justus H. Rathbone and was the first fraternal order to be chartered by an Act of Congress. Its distinguishing [principles](#) are "FRIENDSHIP, CHARITY and BENEVOLENCE". Domains of the Order exist in most states and provinces, and [subordinate lodges](#) are located in many cities and towns across the United States and Canada. New York Grand Lodge supports [charities](#), including the [Pythian Humanitarian Fund](#), [Diabetes Research Association](#), [Pythian Camp](#), [Dr. Morris Smoller Social Service Fund](#) (which supports health and elder care institutions) and the [Special Olympics](#). For [information](#) on becoming a member of the New York State Order of the Knights of Pythias please visit KOPNY.com to be contacted by the Membership Committee (email: GSNYKOP@gmail.com). You may find a lodge near you by visiting the lodge listing [page](#), or by contacting Grand Lodge.