



Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Moorhead

Beyond the Yellow Ribbon is a comprehensive program that creates awareness for the purpose of connecting Servicemembers and their families with community support, training, services and resources.

2015 Activities Report to Moorhead City Council - 22 Feb 2016 and Clay County Commission - 23 Feb 2016

In 2011, Mayor Voxland asked for volunteers to serve on a committee to qualify Moorhead as a Beyond the Yellow Ribbon community. The State of Minnesota created criteria to be met. This informal group became the BTYR Moorhead organization. In 2011, we incorporated as a Minnesota Non-Profit organization. In early 2012, we were awarded 501(c)3 status by the IRS. In 2012, we were certified meeting the requirements by the State and were designated a Beyond the Yellow Ribbon community at a presentation in Detroit Lakes, MN.

BTYR Moorhead formed a partnership with the Dilworth/Moorhead VFW Post 1223 receiving operating funds from VFW gaming. We formed a partnership with the Clay County Veterans Service Office, an office where requests are sent and verified. We cooperate with other local veterans' service organizations, in particular the American Legion, DAV, and Vietnam Veterans of America.

At our April 2015 meeting, we elected the following officers: President Les Bakke, Vice President Vince Dicks, Secretary Gail Brekke and Treasurer Tim Haugen. Officers will serve for one year.

Our BTYR Moorhead committee has representation from all Moorhead/Dilworth service clubs, Moorhead colleges and university, Moorhead businesses, Moorhead City Council, Clay County Commission, Moorhead School District, social service and faith based groups. Our website is www.btyrmoorhead.org.

Listed below are some of the activities the BTYR Moorhead supported in 2015.



Representatives of the BTYR Moorhead presented a check for \$2,766 to the VA Hospital for the recreation fund for the hospital patients. Pictured are Vince Dicks, DAV, Les Forman, Vietnam Veterans, Karinn Davidson, VA Chief of Volunteer Services, Les Bakke, Beyond the Yellow Ribbon, Dennis Beckerleg, American Legion and Gail Brekke, VFW Auxiliary.



At the Minnesota Veterans Home in Fergus Falls, Deanna Monts, Development and Volunteer Coordinator introduced the program by telling us that the residents of the Home were going to play roles of the Christmas story as recorded in Luke. She said the residents volunteered to play roles they had as children or roles they wished they could have played. The oldest player was 92 years old and the youngest was one month old. The one month old played the part of Baby Jesus and played it perfectly. Over the years, I've seen many Christmas programs, usually played by children. This one was truly special because the players were several years beyond being children but they enjoyed their roles. The program was followed by coffee and cookies where we met staff and residents. The program was coordinated by the special group of

volunteers at the Home. Checks were presented to Deanna and were warmly received. Moorhead American Legion gave \$1,800 and several Veterans organization; the American Legion and Auxiliary, Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Moorhead, VFW and Auxiliary, DAV and Vietnam Veterans of America gave \$2,755.

An anonymous donor provided funds for the BTYR Moorhead to help upgrade the exercise room at the Moorhead Armory. Scheels sold us the equipment at half price. The BTYR Moorhead served as the 501(c)3 non-profit, accepted the donation and coordinated the purchase of the equipment.



The BTYR, American Legion, VFW, DAV and Vietnam Veterans of America held a fund raiser in April 2015 for the Honor Flight. We raised \$4,460 and Les Bakke and Dan Hunt presented a check to Jane Matejcek, president of the board of directors of the Honor Flight project.

Each year the Clay County Veterans Service Office holds two events; Commissioner's Day and a Fall Conference. BTYR provides funding and volunteer support for both events.

The BTYR, American Legion and VFW provides funds and space for an annual Christmas party for the children of our guard members.

Based on need as determined by the VSO, BTYR provides funds to help needy Veterans with gas cards, food cards and bus passes.

BTYR provides some of the funding for the annual Veterans Picnic held at Bonanzaville each May. In 2015, former city council member Larry Nicholson and Dave Brunsvold were the event speakers.

BTYR has started on a new project: **Veterans Still Serving America – Legacy and Vision in Clay County**. In conjunction with the 100th birthday of the American Legion, we will research the history of Veterans and Veterans' organizations in Clay County, MN; our Legacy. The coordinating committee will provide a framework for the future; our Vision. Community non-profits, veterans' organizations, businesses and colleges will be presenting programs honoring our Veterans.