



Newsletter for Members and Friends of the Military Historical Society of Minnesota

ALLIES

Allies

Winter, 2013

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‘Galvanized Yankees’ do their duty in Minnesota

By Stephen E. Osman

The Dakota Conflict of 1862 brought irreversible change to Minnesota, but few know that it also brought significant numbers of former Confederate soldiers, often referred to as “Galvanized Yankees,” into the Army’s new Department of the Northwest. The widely used nickname was a play on zinc-coated galvanized iron—a blue uniform concealing a gray interior. By 1863 the huge demand for soldiers made it harder to justify defensive garrisons on the frontier. Meanwhile, prisoner exchanges were being phased out and conditions in northern POW camps were deteriorating. A solution was to offer Confederate prisoners a chance to enlist in Federal units, ideally for service that would avoid combat in the south. It was a tempting offer to many imprisoned Confederates, and from 1864-66 six regiments of United States Volunteer Infantry and several companies credited to northern states were formed from their ranks.

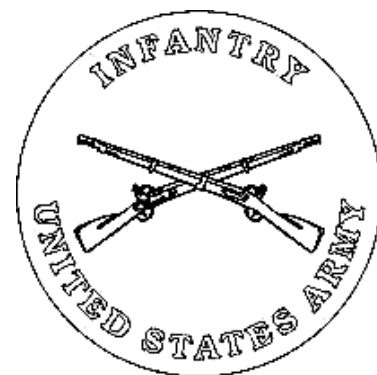
In spring 1864 a detachment of 57 enlisted men of Company G, First Connecticut Cavalry, passed through Fort Snelling on their way to garrison Fort Ridgely. They were all former Confederates, recently prisoners of war at Point Lookout, Maryland. George Doud of the Eighth Minnesota was in St. Paul when, according to his diary, “Some Rebel cavalry who had deserted from the rebel Service Arrived on a boat 9 am. Then they ware sent to Snelling. They ware guarded by a portion of Co. H and K of the 30 Wisconsin.”¹

The new arrivals were destitute of even basic mess equipment; the post quartermaster



Brigadier General Henry Hastings Sibley used hundreds of Galvanized Yankees to help garrison Minnesota forts.

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was ordered to issue them cups, spoons, knives and forks from his stores. On May 11, 1864, troops began leaving Fort Snelling in preparation for Sully's Northwestern Indian Expedition into Dakota Territory. Doud's diary recorded that "Co. H 8th Regt leaves for Sauk Center, With five hundred horses. Some rebel deserters leave with them."² Along the way one of the Galvanized Yankees tried to desert and two others stole some of the Eighth's uniforms to sell to civilians, only to end up in the guardhouse.³

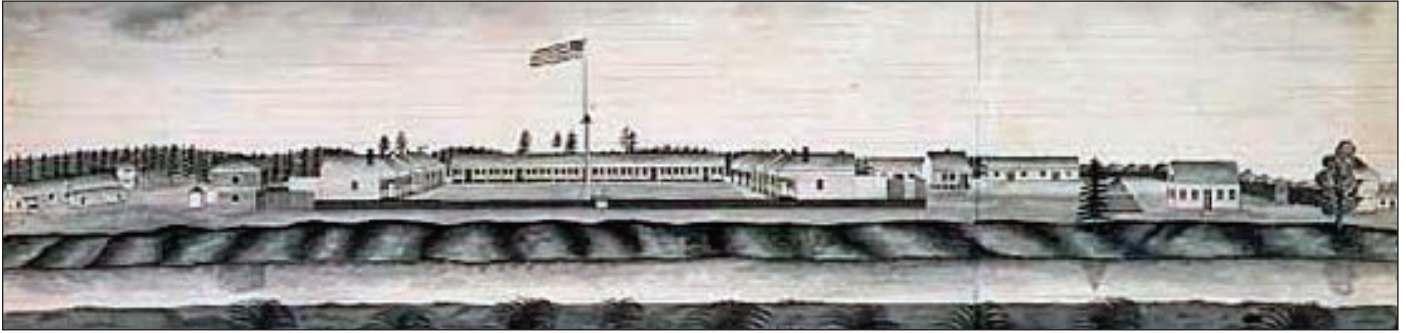


Most Galvanized Yankees were recruited from the massive POW camp at Point Lookout, Maryland.

Over the next year additional detachments of "Confederate deserters" were shipped to the District of Minnesota and caused confusion as to their disposition. The troublesome ex-Confederate and new Connecticut cavalrymen served at Fort Ridgely and along the southern line of stockades until the summer of 1865, when reorganized as part of the First Independent Company, United States Volunteer Infantry, they marched to Fort Ripley to replace its Minnesota volunteer garrison. District Commander Lieutenant Colonel William Pfaender urged that the former Confederates be dispensed with because "with few exception they are a restless, reckless set of men, who exhibit very little interest for the welfare of the country and of the service in which they are employed."⁴

The First Regiment United States Volunteers was also organized at Point Lookout during early summer 1864. Young but experienced eastern officers commanded the new regiment that was reportedly well drilled and disciplined. General of the Armies Ulysses S. Grant ensured that these soldiers should not have to face other Confederates by ordering them to the Department of the Northwest on August 9. A railroad train of 29 cars carried the regiment to Chicago where six companies were sent to St. Louis and four to Milwaukee. Those four companies—A, F, G and I—continued by rail and steamboat to Fort Snelling. There General Sibley augmented them with enlistees, draftees and substitutes before assigning them to the frontier. Over the next year, Co. G manned Fort Ripley, Co. I was posted to Fort Ridgely, and Co. A to Fort Abercrombie. Meanwhile most of the dismounted detachment of Co. G, First Connecticut Cavalry, remained at Ridgely except for 15 men sent to Ripley.

The concept had some merit but Sibley was decidedly opposed and wrote that while *there are some good men in the small detachments of rebel deserters which have been sent to this district during the past season, but there are many desperate characters among them who do not hesitate at the commission of any crime or outrage, and who desert whenever they have the chance. These men could be controlled and made serviceable in large garrisons, but the peculiar nature of the service in this district requires the force to be divided into numerous small parties, and these deserters cannot generally be trusted in such situations. I respectfully request that no more of this class be sent here. I have now between 200 and 300 of them, and it requires about an equal force of other men to guard and keep order among them. Many even of the companies of the U.S. Volunteers are said to be outspoken traitors who do not attempt to conceal their sentiments. Nor do all of these companies appear to be under the proper control of their line officers... These men can only be managed by the exercise of iron determination and discipline... A few of the most refractory shot without hesitation, when they evince insubordination in the slightest degree, in order to produce a proper impression on the remainder.*⁵



Over 200 Galvanized Yankees helped garrison Fort Ripley in 1864 and 1865.

Sibley's letter to the adjutant general had been prompted by a riot in the in the Fort Snelling guard house, instigated in part by several of the former Confederates held there for various infractions. The local Republican Saint Paul Daily Press published a spoof report, characterizing the riot as a political rally.

About the middle of the afternoon, they began to prepare for it by balancing a few canteens on their teeth with the cork out, said canteens having been over to Mendota and brought back full of pure whisky. The meeting was held in the Guard House. It was called to order by knocking down a guard by the name of Wood, Co. K, 2nd Minn. Cavalry, with a spade, then calling for three cheers for Jeff. Davis and McClellan and smashing the windows out of the house, kicking over the stove and breaking up the benches and tables. At this state of affairs, the guards outside fired into the windows. With that the band played the long roll, which brought your humble servant in front of the Guard House where could be heard such phrases as "Hurrah for Jeff Davis and Little Mac," and other language calculated to arouse their drooping spirits. After hearing them speak about ten minutes a squad of soldiers went into the house and all were quiet except one person, a rebellious Rebel who, in his enthusiasm for Jeff and Mac, got in the way of two lead balls.⁶

The riot, which terrorized the garrison's women and children, was quelled only when guards fired through the windows.

A couple of weeks later Co. G of the First Regiment, joining the Connecticut cavalrymen already there, was settling in at Fort Ripley. There they spent the winter doing fatigue duty, guarding annuity payments to the Ojibwa, and scouting. Some were still a problem through election season by openly saying "that they are in favor of the Southern States or any State to go out of the Union if they wish and if they was in the South they would fight for them &c. &c. Now what is the best to do with such men? There is some talk here of hanging them on the flag staff."⁷ The former Confederates continued to garrison Fort Ripley through the summer of 1865 when it was joined by Company A from Fort Abercrombie. A few of these men had earned General Sibley's ire the previous October when they "detailed as part of an escort for a train of supplies from Fort Ridgely to Fort Wadsworth, pillaged one of the wagons, containing commissary stores, during the first night out from the former post, of articles to the value of \$200 or more."⁸

The two companies of the First US Volunteer Infantry eventually marched to Fort Snelling in September 1865 and were then sent west to Fort Laramie after more than a year guarding the Minnesota frontier. The 40 or so remaining Connecticut dismounted cavalrymen were redesignated as the First Independent Company, US Volunteers, in April and then remained in Minnesota until they mustered out in November 1865. The three units left several former Confederate soldiers buried in the Fort Ripley post cemetery along with a mixed legacy of service. But their presence on the Minnesota home front helped dissuade Dakota raiding parties and Ojibwa militancy while freeing up hundreds of Minnesota recruits to head south.

For further information:

Brown, Dee, *The Galvanized Yankees*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963.

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Baker, Robert Orr, *The Muster Roll: A Biography of Fort Ripley, Minnesota*, St. Paul: H. M. Smyth Co., 1970.

Osman, Stephen E., *Fort Snelling and the Civil War*, unpublished book manuscript.

1 The Diaries of George W. Doud, 8th Minnesota Volunteers, Company F, September 13, 1862 – October 15, 1864, typescript, Minnesota Historical Society.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Lieutenant Colonel William Pfaender to Capt. R. C. Olin dated 27 April 1865, Entry 346, Record Group 393, Part 3, National Archives and Records Administration.

5 General H. H. Sibley to Major J. F. Meline, Acting Assistant Adjutant General, dated October 6, 1864, War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XLI part 3, 628.

6 Saint Paul Daily Press, Oct. 30, 1864.

7 W. B. Emons to Ignatius Donnelly dated September 4, 1864, Ignatius Donnelly Papers, Minnesota Historical Society.

8 General H. H. Sibley to Major J. F. Meline, Acting Assistant Adjutant General, dated October 6, 1864, op. cit.

You gave to the max, and we met our match!

Our generous donors put us over the top on Give to the Max Day, Nov. 15, enabling us to garner an \$8000 matching grant from the Katherine B. Andersen Fund of the Saint Paul Foundation. The challenge was to raise \$8000 in new or increased donations in calendar year 2012—and we met the match thanks to you, our generous donors.

MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MINNESOTA - Application for New or Renewed Membership

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

MEMBERSHIP TYPE New member Renewing member

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL Regular - \$30/yr Family - \$55/yr Life - \$350
(Life memberships may be paid in four installments of \$90 each. Tell us if you want this option.)

Additional contribution \$ _____

All memberships are acknowledged in the museum newsletter and in our website's Donor Roll Call. Contributions of \$500 or more in a single year and all Life memberships are also recognized permanently on a plaque in the museum lobby.

How would you like to receive your newsletter? Postal mail Email

Would you like to receive information about volunteering? Yes No

PROCEDURE

Pay by mail: Print this form and mail with your check (payable to the Military Historical Society of Minnesota) to: Minnesota Military Museum, Camp Ripley, 15000 Highway 115, Little Falls, MN 56345. If you prefer, you can mail or fax (320-632-7797) this form without payment and follow up by calling the museum at 320-616-6050 with your credit card information.

Pay online: We also have a simple, secure way for you to become a member or renew your membership online. Go to our website at mmilitarymuseum.com. Click on Support Us>Become a Member and follow the prompts.

Your membership is fully tax deductible. We salute and thank you for your support!

Curator's Notes By Doug Bekke

I am always surprised at the things that come out of attics and garages.

Last fall I received a message that there was an old artillery caisson chest in a garage in Remer, Minnesota. Not sure what I was going to find, I drove up to Remer and visited with Jim Perra, a Cold War veteran of the 151st Field Artillery. His father was Arsini Perra, a well-known member of the Minnesota National Guard artillery from the 1930s to the 1960s. Somewhere in the past, Jim's father had acquired the chest from a Civil War artillery limber or caisson. It was basically intact, having only suffered a few minor and easily reversible alterations over the past 150 years. Two museum volunteers later took a truck to Remer and picked up the chest. It now sits in the museum's workshop waiting for restoration to its Civil War appearance.



The museum has two Civil War-era cannons that have been in the state since the 1850s. Their carriages were rebuilt in the 1970s. Wouldn't it be a great project for some history minded, wood working museum volunteers to build a caisson or limber to carry the original chest so we could exhibit it with the cannons?

Three years ago about 80 Minnesota flagstuffs came out of deep storage in a Camp Ripley warehouse. It was a great relief when they surfaced. I knew they were somewhere on post but their location had been lost over time with changing personnel. I immediately brought the poles to the museum's storage building where about 20 were quickly identified as being of Civil or Spanish American War vintage. Those staffs were sent to the Minnesota Historical Society to be reunited with the flags that had been transferred to MHS in 2007. Another four or five staffs are currently being studied to determine if they too should be transferred to MHS. Unfortunately, when the flagstuffs were retired many years ago, few had been marked with information about the flag or unit that went with the pole. We have been able to link some of the poles to specific units or flags, but most will remain unidentified and their true history lost. Over the past few months one of our museum volunteers, John Deuhs, has worked hard fabricating storage shelves for the poles after a pattern made by Tim Herstein, one of MHS's very talented conservators.

This winter I hope to resume work on the museum's collection of Minnesota military flags. Like the staffs, most of these flags were not marked when retired. In work similar to an archeological dig we want to establish the units and eras of the flags, but many--especially some of the US national flags--will forever remain a mystery, their history unrecoverable. Luckily, though, I'm sure we will have success with some flags by reuniting them with a name, a unit, a photo, a story, or a history. And that will make it all worthwhile.

Volunteers honored at dinner

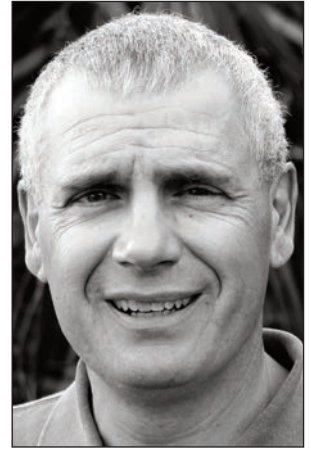
They've become an indispensable part of the museum, and they were hailed at our first annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, held Nov. 16 at the Camp Ripley Town Hall. About 35 people attended. The evening began with a reception hosted by board president Nick Ostapenko, followed by a turkey dinner compliments of the local Jennie-O Turkey Store. Then came a round of door prizes and a series of presentations of national volunteer service awards to our volunteers. Special recognition was given to retired Major General (Bvt) Lyle Doerr, who received the Minnesota Civilian Volunteer Service Award, the military's highest civilian award for distinguished community service. General Doerr is a charter member of the Military Historical Society of Minnesota and has been active on the board of directors since the museum's founding in 1976.



Nick Ostapenko presents award to Lyle Doerr.

Director's Update

By Jeff Thielen



From the staff at the Minnesota Military Museum, I want to wish you a happy, healthy, and blessed 2013 and thank you once again for your continued support. A new year brings new challenges and changes to everyone's lives and the staff of the Military Historical Society of Minnesota is ready to embrace those challenges with gusto.

One of the changes we recently asked some of you to make was the way you are viewing this newsletter.

The Military Historical Society of Minnesota has approximately 250 members. We have e mail addresses for 125 of those members. In December of 2012 we sent a note to members we have e-mail addresses for and asked them to respond if they wanted to continue to receive their copy of Allies in print form. Only six members responded they would prefer their copy to come in print form.

We realize many of you want to receive a printed copy of Allies and we will continue to send your copy of this newsletter in hardcopy for as long as you want to receive it that way.

We also realize we are able to reach a much larger audience with an E newsletter for a fraction of the cost. The long range goal is to send an E newsletter to all members, supporters, volunteers, and anyone else with an interest in the Military Historical Society of Minnesota and the Minnesota Military Museum.

An electronic newsletter allows you to receive your quarterly copy of "Allies" on time and delivered wherever you are. You are also able to share it with friends, family, and coworkers who have an interest in Minnesota military history.

Money saved from printing and mailing will be used to continue to build exhibits and tell the stories of Minnesota Veterans.

If you have not yet provided us with your e-mail address and would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please send a note to connect@mnmilitarymuseum.org and let us know your wishes. We appreciate your e mail contact information even if you are going to continue to receive Allies in print format.

If you are already reading the electronic version of this newsletter, please share it with your friends and relatives and ask them to pass it on so we can continue to spread the word about the great work and the great place the Minnesota Military Museum has become because of supporters like you.



VOLUNTEERS FRONT AND CENTER -- Shown at the appreciation dinner, from left: Jack Johnson, Vic Koosmann, Jerry Ryan, Sandy Erickson, Gary Guida, Roxanne Backowski, Becky Guida, Jeff Bloom, Doug Thompson, Jeff Thielen, Patty Thielen, John Deuhs, Neil Andersen, Kathy Marty, Kerry Beckenbach, Marge Fletcher, Paul Cantleberry, Janese Evans, Tom Chial, Nick Ostapenko, Bob Boone, Lyle Doerr.

Memorials (Oct. 1 through Dec. 31)

<u>Given by:</u>	<u>In Memory of:</u>
Sandra Hofman	Warner Johnson
Ray Lunde	Warner Johnson
Duane Marholz	BG (Ret.) Peter Sajevic
Lyle Doerr	BG (Ret.) Peter Sajevic
Tim Kennedy	MG (Ret.) Robert Blevins
Ray Lunde	COL (Ret.) Marvin Fellman
Jan Kiefer	Rita Kiefer
Betty Masoner	Donald Dyrhaug
Betty Masoner	Harold Watts
Richard and Betty Hayes	MSG Robert E. Miller
Wayne Hayes	MSG Robert E. Miller
Art Ludwig	MSG Robert E. Miller
Harris Olson, Jr.	Harris W. Olson

In Memoriam

In Memory of: _____

Given by: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Please indicate here name and address of member of family to whom we can send notice of your gift:

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Make checks payable to:
Minnesota Military Museum
15000 Hwy. 115, Camp Ripley
Little Falls MN 56345

Gifts are deductible for income tax purposes

Contributions Honor Roll (October 1 through December 31, 2012)

Renewing Members: Gerald Becker ▪ Bernie Cahill ▪ Neill Carter ▪ Joe Ferguson ▪ Ross Fortier ▪ Lyle Fuller ▪ George Jacobs ▪ Ed Komac ▪ James Kuhn ▪ Earl Lillestrand ▪ Duane Marholz ▪ Willis McLain ▪ Allan Meixner ▪ James Nygaard ▪ Paul Rehkamp ▪ Herb Schaper ▪ George Sellner ▪ Leroy Spangrud ▪ George J. Steiner ▪ Nancy Walsh ▪ Jim Weber ▪ Roger Williams ▪

New Members: Mark Brown ▪ Craig Johnson ▪ Kurt Stelten

American Legion: Post 435, Minneapolis ▪

Donations: John Adams ▪ Win Anderson ▪ Roxanne Backowski ▪ Kevin Bakke ▪ Richard Bernards ▪ Bruce and Arlene Beutel ▪ Sandy Blomquist ▪ Teddy Bryant ▪ Linda Cameron ▪ Paul Cantleberry ▪ Thomas Crook ▪ Brian Dahlgren ▪ Clint Deraas ▪ Dorothy Doerr ▪ Lyle Doerr ▪ John Donovan ▪ James Ekelund ▪ Tammy Erickson ▪ Janese Evans ▪ Robert Ferguson ▪ Ty Ganglehoff ▪ Kevin Gerdes ▪ Trudell Guerue ▪ David Hanson ▪ Richard and Betty Hayes ▪ James Hovda ▪ Robert Hystad ▪ Jennie-O Turkey Store ▪ Anton Johnson ▪ Craig Johnson ▪ Roger Johnson ▪ Todd Johnson ▪ Robert Kennedy ▪ Timothy Kennedy ▪ Jan Kiefer ▪ Betty Kirvan ▪ John Kolb ▪ Dave Kramer ▪ David Larson ▪ Kristi Lawless ▪ Gary LeBlanc ▪ Steve Linton ▪ Art Ludwig ▪ James Lund ▪ Raymond Lunde ▪ Bea Manka ▪ Betty Masoner ▪ Ann Matvik ▪ Theodore McLaughlin ▪ Paul Meyer ▪ Jean Miller ▪ Minnesota Twins Baseball Club ▪ David Newhall ▪ Richard Nitschke ▪ John Nys ▪ John O'Leary ▪ Ann Peck ▪ Leslie Petersek ▪ Melissa Peterson ▪ Bruce and Marge Rakow ▪ John Roy ▪ Katherine B. Andersen Fund of the Saint Paul Foundation ▪ Ken Schumann ▪ William Senn ▪ Susan Shelton ▪ Stacy Shuda ▪ Kenneth Slipka ▪ Scott St. Sauver ▪ Stearns Electric Association ▪ Ken Streiff ▪ Jeff Thielen ▪ Dustin Thompto ▪ Michelle Tray ▪ Jon Van der Hagen ▪ Vietnam Veterans of America ▪ Larry Wilcoc ▪ Karin Wittmann ▪ James Youngquist

Annual Report now available online

The 2012 Annual Report of the Military Historical of Minnesota is available online. Go to the museum website at www.mnmilitarymuseum.org and click on "about us" in the left side navigation window.

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Allies is published for the members and friends of the Minnesota Military Museum.

Nicholas Ostapenko, **President**
Jeff Thielen, **Executive Director**
Doug Bekke, **Curator**
Leland P. Smith, **Archivist**
Sandy Erickson, **Administrator**
Al Zdon, **Editor**

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Artifact Donations

(October 1 through December 31, 2012)

Uniforms: Blouse, USA (2) ▪ Blouse, USMC ▪ Boots ▪ Cap, Garrison (5) ▪ Cap, German (5) ▪ Cap, USMC ▪ Coat, pea USN ▪ Coveralls ▪ Shirt ▪ Jumper, USN ▪ Leggings ▪ Scarf (2) ▪ Smock, Waffen SS ▪ Suspenders ▪ Trousers, USA ▪ Trousers, USMC (2) ▪ Trousers, USN ▪

Equipment: Canteen, insulated ▪ Carrier, E-tool ▪ Cover, helmet ▪ Cover, shovel ▪ Gas protection sheet bag, German ▪ Kit, mess ▪ Liner, helmet ▪ Pack, field ▪ Pouch, compass ▪ Shells, mitten ▪ Shovel ▪

Miscellaneous: Books ▪ Coins ▪ Currency ▪ Documents ▪ Flag, German (reproduction) ▪ Flag, Vietnamese ▪ Flare ▪ Guidon ▪ Manuals, military technical ▪ Model kits and decals and paints ▪ Newsletters ▪ Patches ▪ Photographs ▪ Plaques ▪ Prints ▪ Posters ▪ Rosary ▪ Scrip, military ▪ Tapes, VHS ▪ Tray, mess (2) ▪ Trunk, 2nd MN Infantry ▪

Weapons and related items: Carbine, Dutch M-1895 ▪ Carbine, French M-1916 ▪ Carbine, M-1938 Italian Cavalry (2) ▪ M-16 cleaning case with tools ▪ Holster (2) ▪ Knife, K-Bar ▪ Magazines (2) ▪ Pistol, Czech model 27 ▪ Pouch, ammunition (3) ▪ M-1895 Austrian Steyr rifle ▪ Gewehr, German 1874/84 ▪

Artifact Donation Honor Roll

(October 1 through December 31, 2012)

The museum gratefully acknowledges donations of artifacts from the following:

Russell Anderson ▪ Jim Beggs ▪ Sue Denuccio ▪ Lyle Doerr ▪ Joy Lotze ▪ Ed & Vivian Miller ▪ Charles Niosi ▪ Keith Olson ▪ Dennis Paulson ▪ Melissa Poepping ▪ John Roy ▪ Dave Torkelson ▪ Raelene Wilmes ▪ Ralph Yeager ▪