

Bearcat Way Dedication

At 10:00 am, Saturday 6 August, 15th Ave N in Moorhead became ‘Bearcat Way’ at a well attended ceremony. Lt Colonel Jason Benson, Command Sergeant Major Mitch Hellkamp and Mayor Del Rae Williams unveiled the new sign. Under a clear sky with a light breeze, attendees watched as the Dilworth VFW Post 1223 presented colors including the US flag, MN flag, Unit flag and MIA/POW flag. Heather and Thistle Pipes and Drums followed with several wonderful tunes. Senator Kent Eken and Representative Paul Marquart provided information on our appreciation of our local guard units. Mayor Williams proclaimed the street to be known as Bearcat Way and unveiled the new sign. Lt Col Benson provided a brief history of the Bearcats and the ceremony ended with several songs by the Acappella Express Women’s Show Chorus. Refreshments followed.

Organized by the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Moorhead committee, many other organizations and departments provided assistance. The City Engineering department approved the streets signs, Butch Anton of Superfrog Signs designed and produced the signs, the Public Works department installed all the signs and our wonderful Police department helped with traffic control. We received funds for project from Moorhead Public Service and VFW Post 21 Auxiliary. VFW Post 1223 and American Legion Post 21 provided volunteers in planning and at the event. Moorhead Community Access Media filmed the event and video will be added to our website soon. Some photos and a brief history of the “Bearcats” are on-line at www.btyrmoorehad.org.

The 2nd Combined Arms Battalion – 136th Infantry Regiment traces its lineage back to the 2nd Regiment of Minnesota Volunteer Infantry which was mustered into service on June 26, 1861 in St. Paul, Minnesota.

The 2nd Minnesota served as part of the Union Army’s Army of the Cumberland throughout Kentucky, Tennessee and Georgia between 1862 and 1865. Some significant battles included: the battle of Mill Springs, Kentucky, where the unit earned its name as an adversary was quoted saying, “those Minnesota Boys fought like Bearcats.”

For nearly a decade the Moorhead-based ‘Bearcats’ of 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry Regiment have served within their local communities providing support and positive relations with city, county and public organizations. They have responded to the Governor’s call for state activation in response to flooding, tornadoes and civil unrest. They continue to augment ready Soldiers in support of federal missions overseas. Recently in June 2016 the battalion took part in a rotation at the National Training Center at Ft. Irwin California. There the bearcats held the standard and propelled the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division to receive a top 25% rating of any brigade across the United States Army.