

Veterans Still Serving America – Legacy and Vision of Clay County

In January 2016, the BTYR volunteered to coordinate events and activities to honor our Veterans in conjunction with the 100th birthday of the American Legion. Our project is entitled *Veterans Still Serving America – Legacy and Vision in Clay County*. This project will celebrate our Veterans and their contributions to our community and country. In addition, it will enhance the lives of veterans and their families for years to come by compiling the services provided by the American Legion and other veteran organizations in one location for easy access. We anticipate an outcome of this project to encourage veterans to join these organizations of their peers to receive support and services for future veterans.

In February, 2016, the Moorhead American Legion, Moorhead/Dilworth VFW and the Vietnam Veterans of America each passed motions endorsing our project and encouraging us to obtain funds to pay for the project. BTYR has established a coordinating committee and chair for the project. One of our first goals is to obtain data and information on the history of Veterans service organizations in Moorhead and Clay County.

To complete our first goal, we contacted the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County who will supervise the research gathering activities. We applied for a grant to pay for a graduate student or intern to conduct the research and gather the information. This will be completed during Fall semester 2016 or Spring 2017. Once the research has been gathered, we will pay a graduate student or intern to compile the research into the history of Veterans and Veterans' organizations in Clay County, MN, design and implement a marketing plan for our project to make our community aware of our Veterans' contributions, working with the Historical Society and Moorhead Community Access Media.

The project coordinator (a volunteer) has already obtained 2018 commitments from the following organizations.

Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County: supervise research and plan exhibits supporting the project.

Moorhead Community Access Media: supervise video creation and broadcast videos on our cable community access channels.

Moorhead Public Library: schedule story telling events related to our project.

Rourke Art Museum: schedule a Veterans' artist exhibition.

Heritage Education Commission: conduct and publish on-line Veterans Oral Histories.

League of Women Voters of the Red River Valley: schedule events related to women in the military.

Moorhead Extra Newspaper: publicize events through our weekly Veterans Corner column.

The Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Moorhead (BTYR) was certified by the State of Minnesota as a BTYR city in August 2012. Our initial goals were to support our Guard members and their families. With the decrease in deployments, we have supported our local Veterans with several programs. In conjunction with the Clay County Veterans Service Office, we provide assistance to Veterans identified and verified by the VSO. Each year we hold two fund raisers for projects identified by the BTYR. In 2015, we raised \$4,700 for our local Honor Flight program, paying for WWII and Korean Veterans to travel to Washington, D.C. to see the memorials. Also in 2015, we raised \$5,500 for our Veterans in the VA Hospital in Fargo, ND and the Minnesota Veterans Home in Fergus Falls, MN, each getting \$2,750. Planned 2016 fund raisers will be for the Honor Flight and for *Veterans Still Serving America – Legacy and Vision in Clay County*

Activities of the BTYR and this project are on our website – www.btyrmoorhead.org.