



Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association, Inc.

# REFLECTIONS



*Supporting the mission and programs of Northern Tier National High Adventure.*

SPRING 2017 EDITION

## Interpreter receives Navy heroism award

*By Bill Erickson*

Midshipman Jonathan Dennler received the Navy and Marine Corp Metal for heroism for actions taken in the July 21st storm on Basswood Lake that claimed the lives of a Scout and Advisor. Jonathan, an Eagle Scout, was an Interpreter as part of the Naval Academy Professional Training Event. Up to forty Midshipmen a year select this summer training option.

The following is from a United States Naval Academy press release:

### #001-17 Naval Academy Midshipman Receives Navy and Marine Corps Medal

Midshipman 3rd Class (sophomore) Jonathan Dennler, of Medford, New Jersey, was recently awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for heroism while serving as Camp Guide at a Boy Scouts of America Northern Tier National High Adventure Camp.

The Navy and Marine Corps Medal is the highest non-combat decoration awarded for heroism by the United States Department of the Navy. It was presented to Dennler on Jan. 9 by USNA Superintendent, Vice Adm. Ted Carter, during a scheduled address to the Brigade. The Navy and Marine Corps Medal was first established in 1942, with John F. Kennedy being one of the first recipients in WWII.

#### Award Citation:

Midshipman Jonathan R. Dennler was presented with the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for his heroism in Quetico Provincial Park, Ontario, Canada on July 21, 2016. With two adult leaders and six Boy Scouts under his charge, Dennler's crew was hit by a severe thunderstorm with wind gusts over 80 miles per hour and significant lightning strikes. Two large trees collapsed on his campsite, crushing the tent he was sheltered in and killing one adult and one Scout in an adjacent tent. Another Scout was pinned beneath the tree, while another suffered a compound fracture to his ankle. Dennler took immediate action, despite his glasses being knocked from his face by the falling tree, and at great risk to his own life. He located the camp



Photograph by United States Naval Academy

radio and attempted to make an emergency call to bring assistance to his campsite. When radio communications failed, Dennler canoed over one and a half miles at night in 60 mile per hour winds and lightning, to evacuate one uninjured Scout and return with aid from the Prairie Portage Ranger Station. He calmly conveyed the situation to the Ranger who, under the guidance of Dennler, returned to the scene with needed medical supplies. By his courageous and prompt actions in the face of great personal risk, Dennler reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

Despite the tragic loss of advisor Rorth Lac and Scout Christian Sanchez, the Northern Tier and BSA should be proud of Jonathan's actions. Unbeknownst to Jonathan, guests at the ceremony included his parents, John Van Dreese and Leslie Thibodeaux from Northern Tier as well as Charles Goodrich, the other advisor of the Texas crew.

## From the President's canoe

*By Karl Huemiller*

It has been an honor serving on the board of directors with Chuck Rose as president. At the January Board of Directors meeting he announced that he will be stepping down as President of the Association. His passion and leadership has been core to the success of the Alumni Association. We will miss him.

I am honored to have been elected President of our Association. As a member of the Board of Directors over the past five years, I have edited revisions to the Charlie's Guide, led the 2014 and 2016 reunions, participated in multiple Alumni Work Weeks and presentations at Staff Training, manned the Northern Tier booth at Canoecon and spent countless hours on the day-to-day business of our Association. I look

forward to continuing my participation as President.

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the Charles L Sommers Alumni Association. Over the past quarter century we have supported the base with our time, talents and treasure. We have provided youth with the opportunity to explore the wilderness, find themselves and learn the importance of community. Even more importantly we have helped to mold conscientious citizens. As we grow in life it becomes increasingly important to support and mentor the next generation. Which is why I am excited to work with you in building on the foundation we have established and to strengthen our support of the vital programs delivered by Northern Tier.

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## 2017 Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association Officers and Board of Directors

The Board of Directors have elected Karl Huemiller as the association's new President and Eric Peterson was selected as the new Vice President. Eric Johnson will continue as Treasurer and Cory Kolodji will continue as Secretary. The Executive Committee now consists of the

four officers plus the past president (Chuck Rose). Other 2017 Board of Director member are: Roger Clapp, Roger Dellinger, Blake Edwards, Kyle Ford, Travis McCormick, Dan (Vern) Miller, Don Richard and Liz Vollmer-Buhl. Please give them your support.

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## Hol-Ry! Join us to give back, and have fun! Work week: May 26 - June 9, 2017

*By Dick Shank*

This is your chance for a sweat equity SAA polo shirt, camaraderie with your fellow alumni members and current staff, and benefit to Northern Tier programs and facilities. A Win, Win, Win proposition!

"Work Week" is May 26 to June 9. We can use help for a day or a week, so come as early and stay as late as you can! Bring your skills and enthusiasm; we will provide on-the-job training and tools. The work will involve a variety of projects on the Base, including some ongoing work on the Welcome Cabin and bunkhouses.

Meals and bunkhouse accommodations on the base will be provided at no cost. You can have the bonus of participation in training week activities as your interest and time permit. Our annual volunteer alumni dinner will be held on or about June 8. Seminar Day will be June 9, sponsored and staffed by your fellow alumni to provide additional education for trail staff in outdoor and guiding skills. In recent years this has included

presentations on route planning, storm proofing, plant identification, geology, baking, fishing, birding, shore lunch skills, journaling, Base history, lake ecology, astronomy, weather, and other topics. If you've got an area of expertise you're willing to share, please contact us! Consider also contacting your fellow alumni to participate with you and make your own reunion part of the fun.

As in prior years, some of our alumni have worked a few days and then headed out on the trail. The base will be glad to help outfit you if needed (advance arrangements with Northern Tier are required).

We hope to hear from you! To arrange to participate visit <http://portal.holry.org/event-2390454>. For more information, contact Dick Shank at

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## Jack and Mary Osborn endowed scholarship

*By Chuck Rose*

The estate of Jack and Mary Osborn has donated over \$25,000 to establish a named scholarship in their honor. Both were very active in Scouting. Jack was past chair of the Northern Tier committee, helped establish the international staff program, and was instrumental in acquiring land for the Atikokan Base and ownership of the Sommers Canoe Base property (from 1941-1987 the land was leased from the Forest Service). The gift

was made possible thru Jack and Mary's estate planning, an example which others may wish to follow. Jack died in 2003, Mary in 2014. Our thanks go out to Jack and Mary for their life time of support to Northern Tier and the Boy Scouts of America. The Jack and Mary Osborn Scholarship is the ninth endowed scholarship of Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association.

## "The Root Beer Lady, the musical"

By Cory Kolodji

Well... on November 26 Doris Kolodji and I along with about half the town of Ely attended the opening of "The Root Beer Lady, the Musical" written by our own Barb Carey who all no doubt remember from many Reunion campfires. The play is adapted from Bob Cary's well known "Root Beer Lady" book which all have read (right?). If you haven't read the book, well, get reading. You might also check out "Dorothy Molter, The Root Beer Lady of Knife Lake" by Sarah Guy-Levar and Terri Schocke. Or...you could check out this delightful musical rendering of Dorothy's life at your next convenience. That will be this summer August 4, 5, 6 and 11, 12, 13 when it will be staged at the newly remodeled and reopened State Theater in beautiful downtown Ely, Minnesota.

Many of us Charley Guides and Harry (Girl Scout) Guides had the pleasure and good fortune to know Dorothy Molter personally. We drank the root beer and deciphered the KWITCHURBELIAKIN sign in person. We might have had coffee with her in her cabin or talked with her nephews or met her ducks. Well, when you see this play, you will feel like you're meeting Dorothy all over again. It's almost like paddling up the ribbon rock on a hot day and pouring a bottle of cold home-made root beer down your throat. And, you will feel like you know her better than you did before.

The show brings Dorothy Molter to life. Local actresses play Dorothy at various points in her life: dark braids, light braids, white cropped grandma hair. You meet her parents and the mysterious (to me) Bill Berglund who

willed Isle of Pines to Dorothy. Scenes from Dorothy's life and songs written or adapted by Barb are woven together by narration from Dorothy's sister Ruth.

There are many reasons to attend this summer. You will support the Molter museum for one and promote the memory of a local hero. I would go just for the music. You'll recognize a couple of the adapted tunes like the Blackfly Song and the Far Northland. You will wish you already knew the Dupsa Dove by Peter and Lou Berryman. You will definitely want to Root Root Root for Toot Beer. Go for the band, the lovely Prairie Portage Trio, which includes a very well played accordion and a stand up Bass! Go for the excellent photos which accompany the multimedia event. But go you must. You won't be sorry.



The Cast. Photo courtesy Timberjay newspapers.

## Crossing Portages

By Liz Vollmer-Buhl and Vern Miller

Please join us in thanking the 2016 Crossing Portages Donors: Sandra Anderson, Kent Behnken, Doug Bender, Dave Bird, John Breen, Joe Cafferata, John Carson, Roger Clapp, Michael Clayburn, Bryan Craft, Kenneth Davis, Blaine "Butch" Diesslin, Dan Dineen, Vincent Evans, Jack Fenoglio, Roderick Garlitz, Amy Gibbs, Dallas Hill, Doug Hirdler, Mike Holdgrafer, Paul Holte, Tim Huemiller, Karl Huemiller, David Hyink, Mark Kelly, Cory Kolodji, Greg Kvam, Don Lee, Scott McCommons, Michael McMahon, Marvin Mealman, Don Melander, Robert Morgan, Dave Nachtsheim, Alex Nepple, Steven Niedorf, Andrew Nine, Bob O'Hara, Neal Olsen, Richard Olson, David Palmer, Jon Pederson, Eric Peterson, Joni Quarnstrom, Mike Quinn, Douglas Ramsey, Dean Rau, Lynn Reeve, Adam Reitelbach, Kimberly Renner Bielawski, Don Richard, Chuck Rose, Robert Rosene, Terence Ruane, Brenda Ryther, Louis Sabatini, Dan Segersin, Lee Sessions, Richard Shank, Joel Sheagren, David Sheffield, Steven Spencer, David Swanson, Bruce Tannehill, John Teat, John Thurston, John Van Dreese, Jim Varcho, Peter Vial, Brian and Elizabeth Vollmer-Buhl, Bob Vouk, James Wedge, James S. Wilson, Dennis Wogaman, and Jim Zeszutek.

Thank you for contributing to the 2016 Crossing Portages Campaign! Your contributions will enable us to continue the tradition of supporting youth wilderness adventure. We appreciate all who have supported the SAA for years, new donors and those who stepped up to first time donor challenges. You are helping the next generation of wilderness leaders through scholarships, staff training and other support.

Looking ahead, we are not only preparing for the 2017 Crossing Portages Campaign, but also forming a committee to create a Fund Development Plan to lead us wisely into the future.

Please do not feel that you have to wait until November or December to support the SAA. Donations are welcome year-round. You can donate online at <http://CrossingPortages.holry.org> or mail contributions to the Charles L Sommers Alumni Association, P.O. Box 428, Ely, Minnesota 55731-0428 or . If you wish to endow a scholarship in your name or that of a loved one, please contact Vern, Liz, or a director. You can do this by going to [holry.org](http://holry.org) and clicking "Contact Us".

Once again, thank you all for your continued support of the SAA!





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( Address Label )

### Alumni Work Week May 26 – June 9, 2017

- Arrange your Work Week participation in advance. See **Page 2** for details.
- Early sign-up is strongly encouraged to help Northern Tier and your fellow alumni with planning.
- Be a member in good standing of the SAA.

For further information or to join SAA, see the website at

<http://www.holry.org>

#### SAA Officers

*President:*

Karl Huemiller, [REDACTED]

*Vice President:*

Eric Peterson, [REDACTED]

*Corporate Secretary:*

Cory Kolodji, [REDACTED]

*Treasurer:*

Eric Johnson, [REDACTED]

#### Reflections Newsletter

*Editorial Staff:*

Bill Erickson, [REDACTED]

*Technical Advisor:*

Alex Nepple

*Advisor:*

Chuck Rose

**Correction:** In the last issue, we published an article authored by Dick Shank about the Lodge Interpretive Center opening. Dick did not mention that he was the project co-leader from its beginning and was the primary contact in working with Split Rock Studios to ensure the interpretive features were appropriately completed. Thanks Dick!

### Work at Northern Tier!

Do you know someone who would be interested in working at Northern Tier this summer? Have them visit <http://www.ntier.org/Jobs> to learn more!