

Christmas Program at the Minnesota Veterans Home in Fergus Falls



On 30 December, Gail, Tim and I drove to the Fergus Falls Veterans home to present two checks for their recreation fund. This week's article was to be about that presentation with a picture of the three of us presenting a check to the Home, as part of their Christmas program. However, that is not the story, their program is the story.

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. As in the song Away in the Manger, "no crying he makes", he is the grandson of one of the LPNs at the Home. He was asleep in the manger the entire program. The program starts with Joseph and Mary, played by Rodney and Claudia, walking on stage followed by an Angel carrying Baby Jesus. Jack Stanek, Home Chaplain read verses of the Christmas story, separated by Christmas hymns and the entrance of other players. Three Angels, Lou, Alice and Darlene, each helped by a walker entered and took their places by the manger. Shepherds Ralph, Bob and Doc followed taking their places on stage. Then the three Kings, Larry, Ernie and Bud dressed in crowns and regal capes entered riding their camels, cleverly disguised as motorized wheelchairs. 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.

The Minnesota Veterans Home - Fergus Falls is recognized as a leader in skilled nursing care delivery. Residents receive specialized and individualized care through a team approach. The Home's goal is to help residents maintain the greatest possible independence in their lives by providing as much choice as possible.

Oh, yes, the 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.