Galen Jackman  
(10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION (LI))

A hearty welcome to 2016 for our members. I have a number of topics I would like to discuss with you as we press forward into this New Year.

The first is membership management. I think everyone is generally aware that we have struggled in being responsive to provide prompt membership cards for both new members and renewals. The facts leading to this situation are as follows:

A. The system we use to create and maintain the membership data base, produce the membership cards, prepare renewal reminders, and to mail the cards and renewal reminders is complex, analog, handmade, and extremely time-consuming. For example, the database requires 57 separate entries into an Excel spreadsheet for a single member. Address changes, deaths and other changing information have complicated the accuracy of the database. The tools for the operation are antiquated given today’s technologies and resources.

B. The responsibility for this operation among the National Officers lies with the Executive Director and ultimately with me. The Executive Director has a demanding full-time career coupled with a challenging family situation. He became overwhelmed with the antiquated membership operation and has not been able to bring the operation up to Association standards. My observations are that the membership operation is well beyond the ability of a volunteer person. Based on this situation, I have decided to change Executive Directors and hire a replacement.

I know that many members are understandably angry with this unresponsiveness. The National Officers met on March 5, 2016, in Watertown, NY, with the aim of developing a plan to immediately rectify the membership operation problems. Here is the corrective action plan:

A. We simplified the membership database that will streamline data entry. We have scrubbed the membership database to ensure it includes all the information we currently have and that it accurately corresponds with our financial records.

B. We approved the design of a new card that is mapped to the simplified database. For simplicity and cost, all membership cards will be the same except for the information on the card. For example, lifetime member cards will be so annotated, and annual cards will have expiration dates.

C. We hired a card vendor who will produce the new cards.

D. We hired a new Executive Director who will be compensated for managing membership operations.

E. The card vendor will prepare new cards for all annual members and we expect to have those in the mail on or about April 1, 2016. All current annual members and those who have applied will be sent cards. Renewal notices for annual members will be sent in January, 2017.

F. The card vendor will prepare new cards for all lifetime members and we expect to have those in the mail on or about May 1, 2016. Forms for lifetime member information updates will be sent on or about August 1, 2016.

G. We are reviewing the membership application and renewal form so they will map to the simplified member database.

H. We reviewed and simplified what will be included in the membership packets sent to our membership.

I. We have begun to craft a contract Statement of Work for the collation and
RACE AND THE 10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION IN WWII AND THE 1950s

Doug W. Schmidt
10TH MTN DIV (LI) VET

Today, the Army’s Equal Opportunity (EO) program ensures the “…fair treatment of all soldiers and their family members.” This has not always been the case within the United States military. Everyone is aware of the segregation within the United States Armed Forces up through WWII, but the 10th Mountain and Infantry Division have kind of a special story when it comes to segregation within the Army and America as a whole.

Like all other US Army divisions during WWII, the 10th Mountain Division was a segregated unit. Even if segregation had not been the standard at the time it is likely that societal and economic issues would have kept many black soldiers from joining the Division. That is because in the late 1930s and into the 1940s skiing in America was an expensive recreational activity that was centered mainly in the mountains of the Northeast United States and in a few select locations in the Rocky Mountains.

These areas were remote and far from the urban population centers where black communities had developed following the “Great Migration.”

Many of the young men that initially joined the Division had started skiing at a young age on family vacations and continued skiing while at college. Many joined their school’s ski team. Still more of the men in the Division came from Europe, while others had picked it up while vacationing in Europe and brought the sport back to the United States. Again, this left few opportunities for young black men to pick up the sport.

Additionally, unlike other specialties in the Army, like the airborne, where almost anyone could be taught to jump from an airplane, the Army learned early on that it would be more efficient to turn skiers into soldiers than soldiers into skiers.

So, yet again, even without the segregationist policies the ability of young black men to participate in the sport of skiing kept them from joining the “Ski Troops.” The Army’s segregationist policies continued to keep black soldiers out of the Division even as jobs that would have been deemed “acceptable” for blacks, such as muleskinner, cooks, truck drivers and any number of menial jobs became available.

Following WWII, the 10th Mountain Division was deactivated. The Division was again reactivated on 1 July, 1948, as the 10th Infantry Division at Ft Riley, KS as a training division. Then on 26 July of that same year, President Harry S. Truman issued Executive Order 9981, desegregating the US Armed Forces. Thereafter, black and white soldiers began receiving their basic training together. The 10th Infantry Division would train soldiers from the Midwest for the next six years until on 15 June, 1954, the Division converted to a combat division. Again, black and white soldiers trained together in preparation for rotating to West Germany as part of Operation Gyroscope.

The idea behind Operation Gyroscope was to regularly rotate entire divisions to overseas assignments. This was supposed to increase the unit’s combat effectiveness, while providing stability for soldiers and their families, and allowing for job security for the soldiers. Such a plan was desirable enough that many soldiers volunteered to take part in Operation Gyroscope. This included many black soldiers who may have seen a rotation to Germany as an escape from the discrimination they faced in everyday American life. The German people, wishing to improve their image in the international community following WWII, made efforts to make everyone feel welcome in their country.

After spending thirty months in Germany the 10th Infantry Division was set to return to the United States. Originally, as part of Operation Gyroscope, the Division was supposed to return to Ft Riley, KS. However, the Army’s plans for the Division changed. Instead of Ft Riley, the Division returned to Ft Benning, GA. This change in destination presented a huge problem for sixty black soldiers. These soldiers had married white German women.

Because the Army was desegregated, the soldiers and their families would have no troubles on the Army installation. However, once they stepped out of the gate they would be subject to Georgia law, as interracial relationships were illegal at the time.

This would remain the case in many Southern states until the Supreme Court struck such laws down in its decision in Loving vs. Virginia in 1967. All sixty soldiers that were affected by the new duty station requested and were granted transfers from the Division. Some stayed in Germany, while others were sent to duty stations in states without laws prohibiting interracial relationships. Today, such a situation is almost unthinkable, but not entirely outside of the realm thought concerning certain issues taking place in society.

Note: Doug looks forward to receiving any questions regarding the history of the 10th Mountain Division and can be reached at doug.w.schmidt@gmail.com.
**RESOURCE CENTER**

**DONATION GUIDELINES**

Keli Schmid, Archivist

**10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION RESOURCE CENTER**

This Donation Guide was created to raise awareness about 10th Mountain-related museums and organizations and to help families and vets determine where to donate 10th items. The 10th Mountain Resource Center in Denver, CO, is the first designated destination for letters, photos, maps, movies, artwork, diaries, journals, manuals, books or booklets (any one-dimensional item of graphic, photographic or written nature). However, there is no shortage of 10th items out there that are outside the Resource Center’s scope and mission. While it is safest to first ask the 10th Mountain Resource Center if they’re interested in an item, please feel free to pursue options listed here if they are not.

Note from the 10th Mountain Division Resource Center: If you have very many items, it is helpful to make an itemized list of the items. With photographs, it is useful if the person donating them could provide dates and especially identification on any of the people in the photo. With photographs, it is useful options listed here if they are not.


**10TH MOUNTAIN RESOURCE CENTER AT DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Type of items desired: letters, photos, maps, home movies, artwork, diaries, journals, manuals, books or booklets. Additional Guidelines: we prefer original materials rather than copies if at all possible (exceptions being discharge papers and military orders). We often receive book collections or other published materials, which we can accept if they are significant for use in the reference collection. If we already have copies, books need to be returned to the donors or placed in our annual book sale.

Contact: Keli Schmid.

Shipping Address: 10 W. 14th Avenue Parkway, Denver, CO 80204-2731
Phone: (720) 865-1812.
Email: kschmid@denverlibrary.org.
Website: history.denverlibrary.org/research/10th-mountain-division.

**FORT DRUM MUSEUM**

Type of items desired: duplicates of items at 10th Resource Center and History Colorado.

Contact: Kent Bolke.

Shipping Address: Heritage Center, Bldg 10502, South Riva Ridge Loop, Fort Drum, NY 13602.
Phone: (315) 774-0391.
Email: Kent.Bolke@us.army.mil
Website: www.drum.army.mil/AboutFortDrum/Pages/FortDrumMuseum_lv2.aspx.

**continued on page 5**
Hugh Evans (85-C, A) and Abbie Kealy (Desc 86-L)

The Snow Gods smiled on the 41st Tenth Ski-In, as WWII vets, families, friends, the Living History Group and active Special Forces descended on Colorado in February for a long weekend. Their mission? To ski, cavort and honor their missing friends on the vets’ original Ski Cooper training slopes and at the Tennessee Pass Memorial, near their Leadville base, Camp Hale.

It began with the three, “Cooper Hill Daze,” followed by four days at Frisco. With fresh snow not quite as deep as the epic 1944 D-Series, our age 90-something veterans Hugh Evans, Jimmy Nasser (85-C), Dick Over (110-SIG) and 99th Descendant Bruce Jorgum bravely led an entourage of 50 down the mountain slopes. Then a visit to an assembly at Leadville’s elementary Lake County Middle School had been arranged by Terry Ploot for presentations on the Tenth, to speak and answer the students’ questions.

Each Tenth WWII Veteran was assigned a volunteer, designated ‘Keeper’ a Descendant or Younger Friend. At Cooper, participants were able to ski the morning and then at noon met at the top of the lift to serpentine ski with flags leading down the mountain. A Memorial Service was held that afternoon at the Tenth Memorial Monument, ending with a big night on the town starting at the head of the “whiskey row,” the Silver Dollar Saloon, and finishing with dinner at the Quincy.

Post-Cooper Hill, a smaller platoon skied at Breckenridge, Vail and Keystone with royal treatment by long-term staffers and friends there. Ski Breckenridge was set up by Paul and Sylvia Stubbe. Next day at Vail, Dick Dirkes had made arrangements, including a visit to the Colorado Ski Museum and to the Tenth Statue near the Vail Village Bridge for a picture before heading for the slopes, including the Riva Ridge run.

All the vets skied free and there were discounted lift tickets for everyone else. The closing sentiment was ‘See you next year,’ especially since Descendants volunteered to take over organizational duties from fearless leader Hugh Evans. Many thanks for all those years of herding stray cats, Hugh — well-done!
PRESIDENT ADDRESSES ISSUES

mailing of the membership packets, renewals, and lifetime member information updates. The Executive Director will maintain the member database, but the cards, membership packets, renewals, and lifetime member information update requests will be outsourced.

I apologize for the previous membership difficulties, but I am confident we will execute this plan well and put the train back on its tracks.

The second topic I would like to discuss is the sharing of soldier experiences, particularly those who have served in the modern 10th Mountain Division (LI) from its reactivation to the present. We know through our social media that there are abundant stories about soldier experiences in the reactivation of the Division at Ft Drum, NY, of 2d Brigade at Ft Benning, GA, in Haiti, Hurricane Andrew, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

We would like to be able to share your stories with the membership through this Association. A first step would be to publish some of these stories in the Blizzard. If you could boil your story or a vignette down to a couple of typewritten pages, we’d love to have you send it to our Blizzard Editor, Felicity Hallanan.

Third, the Fort Drum Chapter is hosting the dedication of a new statue in Watertown, NY, at the “Honor the Mountain” ceremony on July 1, 2016. We would love to have good membership attendance. If you are interested in attending the ceremony, Mike Plummer and the Ft Drum Chapter can provide details.

Fourth, we will be hosting the 32d Congress of the International Federation of Mountain Soldiers (IFMS) in 2017 in the Watertown–Thousand Islands area. Our Vice President, Jim Redmore, is leading this effort. More information will be forthcoming.

Fifth, we plan to conduct a National Association Reunion in 2017. We have not selected a location yet. However, some have suggested New Orleans and the WWII Museum there, or Ft Benning/ Columbus, GA, where the 2d Brigade of the modern 10th was reactivated. We are looking for a chapter willing to host the reunion and an event coordinator who we are willing to pay up to $10,000 to help set-up the reunion.

Sixth, Doug Schmidt is managing our Facebook Page and he’s doing a great job. There is considerable information and discussion via the Page, and I would encourage you to join-in on the discussion. We will be coming-up on the 25th anniversary of modern Division events such as Hurricane Andrew and Somalia, and we expect a lot of information sharing on the Page.

Finally, let me note that a major part of the 10th Mountain Division (LI) is deployed and in harm’s way. This weekend, I had the opportunity again to walk among the memorials, monuments, and statues at Ft Drum dedicated to the men and women who have served in the 10th, from World War II onward. It is a sobering walk which vividly reflects the sacrifices of the soldiers and families of the Division. I ask you to keep our deployed soldiers in your thoughts and prayers.

DONATE YOUR MEMORABILIA

Denise Taylor (Desc 126-ENG-D)

To follow up on the 10th Mountain Division Donations Guide that Keli Schmid, archivist, at the 10th Mountain Division Resource Center, in Denver, has put together for this issue of the Blizzard, I would like to tell my personal story.

My father, Marvin Taylor, 126th ENG, CO. D, passed away in December 2002. Some years later, my mom gave me the box of 10th Mountain items that Daddy had collected over the years. My dad and I had looked through this box together before. For several more years it was very painful for me to go through it again.

One day I finally had the courage to sit on the floor and slowly go through it again, piece by piece, a very difficult task as it was I who attended the 10th Mountain events with my dad and had so many great memories with him.

I had asked him when we had looked through it together before if he had any photos, and he said his camera had gone missing so he did not. Well, imagine my surprise when at the bottom of his box of things was a photo album! Wow....

I sat there looking at photos from Camp Hale, the Po River, Riva del Garda, Venice, and him in Montecatini Terme, while in the hospital there, and so much more. I was sorry that I had not known about these photos while he was still alive. Perhaps he had forgotten or perhaps he did not wish to go there again. I will never know.

There were many tears shed that day being able to see the places he had been and what had shaped the man he was. I have been on the Italy trips four times and would have loved to try and find some of the places in these photos. Next time.....

So, I am finally in the process of having copies of these photos made for me and my family, and I’m going to send the originals to the 10th Mountain Division Resource Center in Denver. These are special pieces of history that need to be handled and saved in an environment that will preserve them forever.

I hope that if you have 10th memorabilia that you will consider, if they are photos or letters, etc., making copies for you and your family and sending the originals to the 10th Mountain Division Resource Center or, if you have other artifacts, to one of the museums listed in Keli’s article. Again, we cannot preserve them the way that these other places can, and unfortunately, we cannot be sure that our descendants will hold them as dear as we do, and may never make them a part of history.

So please, if you haven’t already, consider sitting down and going through your Vet’s 10th Mountain items, and donate now!
NORTH COUNTRY HONORS THE MOUNTAIN MONUMENT UPDATE

Gilbert H. Pearsall, Jr.  
(10TH MTN DIV [LI], LTC, RET.)

As 2016 begins, I want to take a few moments to thank all those who have supported the North Country Honors the Mountain monument project and to give an update on our project since the groundbreaking ceremony in August in Watertown’s beautiful Thompson Park.

Here are the 2015 North Country Honors the Mountain monument project highlights since the groundbreaking:

· Ed Olley and the team at GYMO Architectural, Engineering, Environmental and Land Surveying completed the final monument site design plan;
· Lawman Heating and Cooling, our main contractor, began working up at the site shortly after the groundbreaking;
· Jefferson Concrete designed, poured and delivered the first sections of the monument base to the site in November;
· T.F. Wright ordered and received the eight granite slabs from a Vermont quarry that will make up the monument;
· The first of the three Susan Grant Raymond bronze relief designs (10th Mtn at Camp Hale and Italy, 1943-1945) was approved by the committee. She is now creating her clay mold of this relief and working on the design for the other two reliefs —10th Mtn Re-activation and contingency operations, 1985-2001 and 10th Mtn in Afghanistan and Iraq, 2001-present day;
· Containers were provided to the leadership of Jefferson, Lewis and St Lawrence counties, Watertown and Fort Drum so that they can begin gathering their materials to place in the time capsule that is part of the monument;
· Lawman and the committee selected 30+ limestone boulders from Vespa Quarry in Watertown, delivered the stones to the site and placed them around the large center area surrounding the monument;
· The North Country Honors the Mountain committee picked out a granite “donor” stone at the Solid Waste Management facility of DANC (Development Authority of the North Country) in Rodman; the stone will be used to acknowledge our supporters;
· Thanks to the support from local media partners, the committee completed its initial marketing campaign to inform the public about our efforts and to solicit support and contributions;
· The committee exceeded our goal of $20,000 individual donations; this triggers the $20,000 match from the Northern New York Community Foundation; and
· Finally, the committee is beginning the planning for the unveiling and dedication ceremony on July 1, 2016, as part of the community’s annual Independence Day celebration and “Concert in the Park.”

I want to thank the City of Watertown and everyone who contributed either financially or through in-kind services to this project; this is truly a team effort and could not have been accomplished without such great support. I also want to acknowledge the hard work of the North Country Honors the Mountain committee without whose inspiration and vision this project would not be possible.

There is still a great deal of work to do in the spring to be ready for the unveiling and dedication on July 1, 2016, and our fundraising efforts will continue. Finally, please continue to monitor the North Country Honors the Mountain website at www.HonorTheMountain.com and our Facebook page for updated information on the project.

If you have any question please contact me at 315.489.3633 or gpearsal@twcny.rr.com.

MOUNTAIN UP: VETERANS SERVING VETERANS

Today, 10th Mountain Division veterans, whether on active duty or separated from the Army, live and work throughout the United States. Many of these veterans have started their own businesses and some of those businesses pay direct tribute to the 10th Mountain Division.

One such business is Mountain Up, a military apparel and gear brand. Founded by Ryan Hunt and co-founded with Veronica Hunt and Doug Schmidt, Mountain Up is inspired by a lifestyle of living life with a flair for adventure, patriotism, and generosity, and a tradition influenced by the uniqueness of the 10th Mountain Division — from the Veterans of World War II and continuing through to today’s veterans of the global war on terrorism.

Founder Ryan Hunt remains on active duty and has served both as an enlisted soldier and officer for more than 17 years. As a member of the 10th Mountain Division, Ryan has deployed to Iraq and Bosnia. Asked how his experience in the military and the 10th Mountain prepared him to be an entrepreneur, Ryan said, “Over the last 17 years, the Army and the 10th Mountain have provided me with so many opportunities to learn, manage, and lead diverse organizations. The military also provided me with opportunities to obtain both my undergraduate and graduate degrees.

“Education is the foundation, but my military experience and, in particular, my time at the 10th Mountain was paramount to all my success in and out of uniform. These leadership opportunities have equipped me to be an entrepreneur.”

Ryan’s co-founders also served in the 10th Mountain: Veronica for three years, also deploying to Iraq. Doug served five years with the 10th, deploying to Bosnia, Kosovo, and Iraq. The trio’s greatest challenge in forming their company was fusing their military experiences into a civilian business. They stayed open-minded to new ideas and ways of doing business and made sure to remain flexible and willing to try new things. They also found value in networking, and the opportunities that resulted, helping their business grow rapidly and in new directions.

“Being your own boss is awesome for a lot of reasons — to include having pride and joy in having something to call my own,” Veronica said. “I love Mountain Up. It’s a great apparel and gear line, but also reaches out to the community.”

“Taking the first step is the most important step. Remember you have brothers and sisters in the veteran community, such as the National Association of the 10th Mountain, here to help you out. And never give up on your dream to be an entrepreneur.”

For more information, please visit their website at www.10thMountainApparel.com and use code “GOOD10” at checkout to save 10 percent off their awesome hats and apparel.

VETERANS FEATURED IN NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO SERIES

Abbie Kealy (Desc 86-L)

Please pass the word that National Public Radio’s “Radio Diaries” has re-published their terrific 25-minute podcast honoring the 10th Mountain Division.

The series includes interviews featuring:
· Robert W. Parker (87-E, HQ);
· Robert J. Nordhaus (10th QM-HQ);
· H. Newcombe “Newc” Eldredge (85-L);
· Dick Wilson;
· Daniel L. Kennerly (85-D); and
· Al Wavelich.


Enjoy!
**DESCENDANT RELIVES FATHER’S ITALY EXPERIENCE**

Keith Garrett (Desc 86-1)

“Return to Italy” trips have been organized by the 10th Mountain Division Descendants, Inc. since 1963. These trips occur every three years, taking travelers to Northern Italy in remembrance of the Division’s combat role in WWII. Descendant Keith Garrett made the trip and, after extensive research has produced a detailed report of his journey following his father’s footsteps. Because of its depth and length, “Blizzard” begins the story in this edition, and will continue and conclude it in Edition #2, 2016, this summer.

My dad was in the 10th, but we did not have the opportunity to make this trip together. I do not believe he was aware of these trips. My first knowledge of them came sometime after his death in 1990 when, having moved to Nebraska, I spotted a vehicle with a division sticker in our neighborhood. I saw the owner and spoke with him about my dad and was told of the descendants’ organization.

Time passes quickly, and 2015 became our family’s first chance to take a ‘Return to Italy’ trip.

In preparation, I spent some time researching the history of the division in general and, in particular, my dad’s history with the division.

As a side note, it is striking how today’s research environment facilitates these efforts. Access to information is many orders of magnitude greater now than ever before. In the 1970s, I had access to only one readily available resource, “Remount Blue.” I read this account sometime around 1973, although I had come across it some years earlier in our home. I was near 16, then a more competent reader, and I felt impassioned to read it with my father’s awareness.

This history of his battalion — 3rd Bn, 86th Regt — sparked some of the few brief comments my dad shared with me about the war.

These and the history surrounding them are the subject of a more in-depth project which I am currently pursuing.

While this project will take some time, I thought many would like to hear about our trip with a brief introduction to some of this history. The following includes thoughts from our trip in the context with the First Offensive of the 10th Mountain. Progressive discovery of our fathers’ combat history in Italy was the purpose of our trip, and the First Offensive period was a crucial portion of that quest. I thought this abridgment would be of interest to readers and would help organize my thoughts for my comprehensive tribute project.

As many readers know, our trip began in Rome with a tourist agenda. For several days we focused on the sights of Italy as we made our way north. Reaching Florence, the military portion of our trip began.

**RETURN TO ITALY 2015: FLORENCE**

We began with a visit to the American Military Cemetery and Memorial in Florence. More than 4,000 American soldiers lie here — many of the graves are U.S. Fifth Army burials from WWII.

The cemetery is the final resting place for a number of 10th soldiers; more than 300 are buried here. Another 20-plus are among those listed on the Tablet of the Missing.

This would be the first of many places on our trip where one would have the sense, it is right to be here. Soon to follow, we would stand on places where many of these soldiers fell.

As descendants, it was our honor to place carnations by the graves of those from the 10th who were killed. We did this after a ceremony remembering all fallen buried in Florence.

Before going graveside, many of us captured photographs of the five 10th Mountain WWII veterans with us on our trip. I felt the spirit of my father in their presence.

After spending some time in the cemetery, I paused for one final look and saw re-enactors in period uniforms moving through it alone. The photograph I took of this scene reminds me of an image archived in the Denver Public Library (DPL) with the following description: “Tenth Mountain Division soldiers decorating the graves of their comrades at the American Military Cemetery in Castelfiorentino, Italy; probably after the memorial services held April 6, 1945.” (TMD-90).

**FIRST OFFENSIVE INTRODUCTION**

The “History of the 86th Mountain Infantry in Italy” by Charles Wellborn begins with a map of Northern Italy on which a red line is drawn from the west coast toward the northeast. The 86th was one of three infantry regiments (85th, 86th, and 87th) comprising the 10th Mountain Division. My dad was in the 3rd Battalion of the 86th Regiment. The red line on Wellborn’s map traces the combat route of the 86th in particular and the 10th in general.

Beginning in late December 1944, the 86th staged for combat in Livorno, Quericanella, and nearby Pisa in the south. By early May of 1945, they had fought their way northward. Occupation duties would take them further north to the border of Austria. The first mountain chain they encountered was the Apennines, where the Germans established their final defensive line, the Gothic Line. Stretching east to west across Italy, this defensive line protected Germany’s southern flank and what some thought could be escape routes through the Alpine mountains.

The 10th, the last combat division committed to the war, was destined to lead an offensive with the objective of breaching the Gothic Line, overrunning the Po Valley, and taking the war into the Alps. Before the war ended, the division had fought its way into Torbole and Riva at the Northern edge of Lake Garda in the Dolomite Alps.

One 86th soldier noted, the war’s end was “4 days too late,” referring to action by Lake Garda. My dad’s battalion, in the lead at this time, encountered the full force of the German artillery in Riva and Torbole.

**WINTER 1944-1945**

The 86th Regiment arrived in Naples, Italy, on Dec. 24, 1944, several weeks ahead of the Division’s 85th and 87th Regiments. Unexpectedly, they were deployed forward the following day. The move was precipitated by concerns over a potential German offensive from their positions on the Gothic Line. Allied positions on the southern edge of the Gothic Line were the primary defense between the Germans and Rome. If a German winter offensive materialized, Rome itself was threatened.

By early Jan., 1945, the 86th was located on the southern edge of the Gothic Line from Bagni di Lucca to Mt Belvedere. Later that month, the 85th and 87th regiments arrived and the 10th was united on the front lines.

The Division was defending and patrolling its assigned sector through mid-February, 1945. Patrols probed enemy defenses gathering intelligence for upcoming operations. Some patrols were conducted on skis. Armed engagements were common. After more than a month at the front, the 10th Mountain was informed of the planned Allied offensive which they would lead.

The offensive, Operation Encore, was planned to displace enemy forces and establish control of the Belvedere mountain range from Mt Belvedere on the southern edge to Mt della Torraccia at the northeastern end. This range was fortified by an occupying German army intent on defending it.

The title, Encore, was an explicit description of this fact. Prior to the 10th’s arrival, the Germans had defeated three previous Allied attempts to control this territory in Nov., 1944.

Encore’s battle plan was also explicit. Led by Major General George P. Hays, 10th commanders prioritized attacking and controlling the German-held high ground known as Riva Ridge prior to assaulting the Belvedere Range.

**RIVA RIDGE**

Riva Ridge overlooks the Belvedere Range with commanding vantage points for observing, firing, or directing fire in defense of the Belvedere Range. The German army held it and its approaches from the west. From their western stronghold, German supply lines had the advantage of modest terrain.

Continued on page 8
The 10th would begin their First Offensive with an attack from the east. There the ridge-line rises abruptly vertical more than 2,000 feet providing the German stronghold a presumed impregnable barrier.

Troops gathered under darkness sheltering in local buildings prior to the attack. Four of five trails scouted during preceding patrols would be used to climb to the top, some with fixed ropes. The element of surprise was a crucial component for success. Detection on the climb was to be avoided.

On Feb. 18, 1945, beginning at 1930 hours, the 86th 1st Battalion (Co A, B, & C) together with Co F of 2nd Bn, began the assault of Riva Ridge. Guns were ordered empty on the climb.

Used throughout patrols, searchlights aimed skyward produced a false moon effect during the attack climb. These were extinguished as troops began reaching the top. First casualties were reported at 0045 on Feb. 19 as climbers reached the top undetected despite barking guard dogs.

The operation achieved surprise and sufficient success to allow the planned assault on Mt. Belvedere to proceed. Full control of Riva Ridge would require several more days to achieve.

**FIRSTHAND LOOK AT RIVA RIDGE**

On our Return to Italy trip we were able to visit and stay in the area of the First Offensive, during the hill town portion of our trip. Our group was housed in the towns of Lizzano in Belvedere and Vidiciatico. Both were used as staging areas during the war and both had some cover from German positions through intervening terrain.

Still both towns were exposed, particularly Vidiciatico by its closer proximity. A Feb. 17, 1945, US Army report noted six rounds of 88-mm shells falling in the Vidiciatico area with no casualties, followed 25 minutes later by six more rounds killing two troops.

Staying inside the battle zone on this portion of our trip provided some sense of the long reach of this war as we travelled to and from hotels.

During our five-day stay here, we visited First Offensive battlegrounds and many other surrounding locales. At each we held ceremonial services commemorating the 70th Anniversary of these events. The sincerity of these planned observances was matched by numerous spontaneous interactions between the locals and our group of veterans and descendants.

The following are some Riva Ridge highlights from this portion of our trip.

On June 21st, Father’s Day 2015, a portion of our group took a guided hike to the top of Riva Ridge. At the top, we traversed a portion of the ridge line before hiking down into a small village where we joined the rest of the tour group for lunch and ceremony provided by the local population. We began our hike near the town Farno, where we visited a plaque commemorating the work of 10th Mountain engineers with the following dedication.

“Dedicated to the nine engineers who gave their lives for their country. And to the Italian people who took us into their hearts and homes as one of their own.”

The plaque stands where the base of an aerial tramway was erected to support the troops on Riva Ridge.

The tram sent supplies and evacuated wounded. It was erected soon after the attack and took about 24 hours to build. Standing next to the plaque is a spring house which served as a temporary morgue at the time.

With us at this site were two sisters whose father worked on the tramway. Their father’s work was well known among our group of hikers. As I stood there, I recalled many period photos showing the tramway in operation; the description for DPL photograph TMD-370 notes the following: “The tramway was used to evacuate casualties quickly; it made its 1600 foot trip in four minutes.”

Before we continued our hike up Riva Ridge a spontaneous event occurred. From a home located just above the commemorative plaque, a local resident emerged. We began to learn this man’s identity as hearsay passed through the group. Soon we all began to understand that he was here when these events occurred. His stated age varied, which mattered little to us. A spontaneous event for us was a testament of support from him. He was expecting us and hiked with us.

Throughout the course of our trip, we attended many moving ceremonial events.
My uncle, Jack Pehr, was killed during a bloody battle on April 14, 1945 in the Apennine Mountains south of Bologna, Italy, just a few weeks before VE Day. Jack was a member of the famous Ski Troops; Company C of the 87th Mountain Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division. He enlisted in the army in Oct., 1941 — even before Pearl Harbor — and joined this newly specialized unit in July, 1942.

I was the first child born into our family after Jack was killed in action. Therefore, in the Jewish tradition, I was named for him as a gesture of remembrance for a beloved deceased family member. Jack was certainly that.

Jack was born in Brooklyn in 1917 and raised as the first American-born son of immigrants from the shtetl of Dokshytsy in what was called the Pale of Settlement in western Russia. The area is now known as Belarus.

Jack’s father, my grandfather, arrived in the U.S. in 1910 and found support in a community of Jewish immigrants in the Brownsville area of Brooklyn. After three years as a peddler of brooms and brushes, he opened a store and sent for his wife and their three Russian-born young daughters. Together, my grandparents ran a successful floor-covering business. They had two more children: Jack and his younger sister, Mary, born in 1919.

Jack was very athletic and excelled in boxing, football, baseball, hunting and fishing, and eventually even skiing. All of his enthusiastic outdoor life was very uncommon for a kid from Brooklyn. He was also uncommon in his intellectual abilities and his desire to write and record the world in which he lived. He aspired to be a journalist and had a dream of attending Columbia University Journalism School. But my grandparents wanted Jack to work for them and eventually take over the business, which was a symbol of their American dream come true. Jack strained against this predetermination of his future and, probably as an act of rebellion, enlisted in the Army.

While this did upset my grandparents terribly, they quickly reconciled with their only son. Jack express devotion and love for them through his many letters home. And there were, indeed, many letters. Jack wrote almost 100 letters that were saved diligently by his older sister Lilly. My aunt gave them to me as his namesake, along with some 500- to 600 black & white photos and color slides of his time in the service. This archival cache of material is the rich source from which the documentary ‘Jack’ was produced by my now-good friend and filmmaker, Gregg McPherson.

Gregg took this story on and did extensive research on the family history and then, even more in-depth, on the 10th Mtn Div. He wove this into Jack’s particular story from the start of his Army service until his untimely death at 27. The documentary is rich in detail of the daily life of the soldier and also importantly the emotional impact of the extensive training and hardship endured by the men of the 10th. But more than a Division story, it depicts the intimate story of an American soldier, the impact on his family, and devastation of this worldwide war as told through brilliantly descriptive passages of Jack’s letters. Here’s a passage from Jack’s last letter home to demonstrate his beautiful writing style and the depth of his character. This was his reaction to Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s death as he heard about it while at his guard post. It was written just hours before his own death:

April 13, 1945

My hour on guard passed quickly, as I mused at the possible world changes in present and future history, in all our lives, which might come to pass as a result of the passing of one of the greatest men of our time. His death, particularly tragic, because it occurred at so crucial a point in the war, came to me as a deep personal loss, as I know it did to every man privileged to have borne arms under this greatest of Commanders-in-Chief.

We in the service know we lost a great, good friend.

Continued on Descendants page 2
Continued from Descendant page 1

As if in tribute to the man, the sky is dull and overcast today, and there seems to be a somber stillness in the air, as if the world, even in war-torn Italy, where Death is an old familiar story, repeated day after heartbreaking day, mourns the loss of this immortal, humanitarian spirit. America, the greatest nation in the world, has lost one of her greatest sons. By his unselfish devotion to duty, to the great heartbreaking tasks which confronted him during all his years in office, the manner in which he unselfishly gave of his time, effort, health and strength and every personal resource at his command, he shall serve forever as an example and inspiration to those of us who fought in Freedom’s Sacred Cause.

Love, Jack

This article just touches on the beginning and ending of Jack’s story. The film is a beautiful rendition of this heart-breaking and very moving tale. Here is the film director’s account of the production based on Jack Pehr’s life and letters:

JACK: ONE SOLDIER’S STORY OF THE 10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION DURING WW2

By Gregg McPherson

I was finishing up my previous documentary project when a mutual friend arranged a meeting with Jackie Posner. With Jackie’s background as an advertising executive I thought she might have some suggestions on how to promote my documentary. Little did I know that this meeting would be the beginning of a new documentary that would open new worlds for me.

Jackie asked me at that meeting what my next project might be and I told her I was still looking for one. She told me about her Uncle Jack and that she had all of his wartime letters and hundreds of his photos. She asked if I would like to see them. Out of curiosity, I told her I would and we arranged a visit to her home. When I arrived and started to read some of Jack’s letters, it quickly became apparent that Jack had been a very bright, articulate young man who wrote with great feeling. His photos illuminated a world I knew noth-

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10th Mtn Division

Merit Scholarship
Val Rios (Acting- see above)

Monument/Memorial Project
Steve Coffey (See Officers)

On Delay Chairperson
Pamela Pkla
(See Wash., D.C.)

Memberships
Wil Niebles, c/o Don Perkins
(See Metro NY, above)
DESCENDANTS ACTIVE PART OF OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP EVENT

Tom Hames  
(Desc Eugene S. Hames 85-K)

I could not decide which was more antiquated. Our motel in Lander, WY, or the WW II uniform I was about to wear. Who said antiquated is bad? 

As a descendant of a 10th Mtn Div soldier, I was in Lander for the 50th anniversary of the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS). The 10th and NOLS have a common genesis. Paul Petzoldt, a 10th veteran, formed NOLS in 1965. Paul was a world class mountaineer when he joined the 10th to train soldiers how to rock climb, orient and ski.

It was Paul’s time in the 10th that taught him leadership lessons in wilderness are so valuable that he wanted to implement those lessons in a wilderness setting to young people.

Several other 10th veterans were involved in starting NOLS, including Ernest “Tap” Tapley and Frank Chuk. NOLS sent its first class into the Wyoming wilderness in 1965. Now they operate in 28 countries and have over 250,000 alumni worldwide.

Added to my interest in the anniversary celebration was my alumnus status with NOLS, having taken the Brooks Range, AK, wilderness course in 1987.

I joined with the 10th Mtn Div Living History Display Group as a docent to exhibit WWII rock climbing and ski equipment and interact with the NOLS attendees as a living historian.

As a 10th descendant, I had knowledge of the 10th, but little opportunity to share that knowledge. At this event I could share my knowledge of the Division with outdoor educators. These educators are involved in education of students to travel safely in the wilderness, impart orientation skills and inspire leadership in a group environment.

Donning the uniform of a WWII mountain soldier invoked mixed feelings. How did my father feel when he first put on the uniform? Why did he put his uniform away seven decades ago? How would I feel telling his and the division’s story while wearing that uniform?

Seeing the other living historians preparing their uniforms gave me confidence our presentation would go well. The wool combat shirt, the mountain soldier pants and the heavy boots with built-in gaiters felt comfortable, but my midsection was snug, as I carry about 35 more pounds than the average mountain soldier in 1945 — not to mention about 35 more years than the average GI then.

We set up in a Lander city park. Events for the celebration included a five-mile run, a barbecue lunch, a fly-casting seminar and our living history display/presentation. Setting up the display, which included a medic station, weapons, tents, skis, snow shoes, contents of the rucksack and equipment, took about an hour and a half.

Attendees for the various events started to filter into the park, passing by to stop at our display. Some sought the sacrifice of those soldiers who did not return or were wounded subdued our interaction, but only momentarily. The interaction was lively. The clothing, technical rock climbing equipment, stoves, food all had changed so much. All marveled at the technical changes to all this equipment and how the World War II soldiers learned to ski, cook, rock climb and move outdoors with safety with what was, in the 1940s, modern equipment.

Reliving my NOLS course from 1986 was great fun. Of greater satisfaction was sharing the history of the 10th Mtn Div with outdoor educators, students and staff. My 1986 NOLS course was a once in a lifetime adventure. Attending the 50th anniversary celebration was also a once in a lifetime experience. Having a real connection to my father’s time in the 10th at Camp Hale, CO, in combat in Italy and sharing that connection with mountain-minded individuals was a unique experience I shall cherish.

For more information on the 10th Mountain Division Living History Display Group, Inc. visit www.tenthmountain.org or email: INFO@tenthmountain.org.

ARMADILLO

Phebe Davol (Desc 86-L, HQ)

The Armadillo Chapter is planning a reunion in Little Rock, AR, the weekend of June 10-12, 2016.

This event is hosted by Karen Case, (Desc James W. Stanley, Sr. 86-HQ) and Dr. Ann Keese Thomas, widow of Sam Terrell Thomas (87-L). We are inviting all Chapters’ Veterans, Wives, Sons, Daughters, Grandchildren and Friends of the 10th. We reserved a block of rooms at the Residence Inn (Marriott) Little Rock, Downtown.

Activities for the weekend include tours of the Clinton Presidential Library, and of the USS Razorback WWII submarine and its tugboat USS Hoga which are both docked on the Arkansas River a few blocks from the River Market.

The group will have additional options of spending time in the River Market areas shops, bars and restaurants, visiting the Museum of Discovery and the Mac Arthur Military Museum.

There will be a banquet Saturday night with a White Armadillo Raffle and prizes. We are inviting members from other Chapters who may be interested.

If you would like to receive materials associated with this event, please contact: Jeannie Geuras at #512-441-2167, jgeuras@austin.rr.com or Karen Case at #501-472-4588, karencase6033@gmail.com, or Phebe Davol at #512-917-0423, phebe.davol@gmail.com.
It was a first for the Utah, 10th Mtn descendants at the 2002 Olympic Nordic stadium. On Jan. 16, 2016, seven members of the Utah Chapter turned out at Soldier Hollow, one hour from Salt Lake City, to lend our name and help stage a biathlon event for elite and novice competitors.

Ron Sawdey (Desc 87-B), our chapter president, worked closely with Shawn Robison, representing the Utah National Guard and responsible for staging the event. A biathlon is not easy to stage because it involves shooting live rounds. So liability is a big concern. Fortunately, the Olympic biathlon range and stadium was still in good working order since 2002. At the main lodge Ron had also arranged a photo display of ski troopers on patrol and in formation at Camp Hale. Bill Christiansen, a veteran himself, manned the display and answered questions for visitors to the Soldier Hollow complex.

Down at the stadium, the elite racers were warming up with their expensive, specially-fitted, lightweight rifles strapped to their backs. Meanwhile, 10th descendants were hanging our new, 3-by-20-foot banner conspicuously near the start. We were also shifting “V” boards directing penalty laps and getting last-minute instructions on how to score hits and misses at the shooting range.

One 10th Mtn descendant signed up to race in the novice class: me. I had never skied a biathlon race before so I needed an introduction to how this was all done. There were eight novices including three women and five men.

At the shooting stations two biathlon veterans patiently showed us the safety protocol, how to get down on the firing mat, activate the bolt, line up the sights and squeeze off a shot. Our instructor was not surprised to see the women out-shoot the men at this stage. But I was grateful that we beginners did not have to carry rifles while skiing our three, 1.5 km laps, or take penalty laps for missed targets. Instead they simply added 30 seconds to our time for every missed shot.

As I skied into the shooting range my novice competitors were already happily firing away. Out of breath I flopped down on the rubber mat, got tangled up in my ski poles seconds to our time for every missed shot.

As we packed up our gear to leave, I thought about what it must have been like for our fathers at Camp Hale learning how to shoot a standard M-1 rifle at 10,000 feet or higher in deep, cold powder snow wearing mostly cotton equipment.

Of course at Camp Hale there was a shooting range, but on the infamous D-Series, simulating real battles with the enemy, it must have been pretty grim. No lightweight skis, groomed course, ly-cra tights and a warm lodge nearby. By the day’s end and some imagination I gained a little insight into the difficulties my dad had to cope with those two winters of ’43 and ’44 in the 10th Mtn Div.

The one advantage he had then over me was, he was a lot younger.
**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

**Bruce Campbell (86-I, M)**

Better late than never, they say! We got a new camera at Christmas, which after we learn how to operate it, I’ll have some pics for my next report including Riva and our summer picnic. The Christmas function was held at the Mahe restaurant in Seal Beach. A nice menu with a Japanese flair. As we all know our turnout is diminishing each year, but our descendants and friends make it enjoyable. Last year we lost three members: Julius (George) Wenger, Eugene (Gino) Hollander and John Carroll. Then on Feb. 1, Jay Johnson, husband of Kathy (Loewy) Johnson, passed away. Sad news borne by all.

We’re now looking forward to the Riva/ Belvedere luncheon planned for Feb. 20 in San Juan Capistrano. Next will be our ninth annual summer picnic to be at the Campbell’s home in San Marino, date to be set during Riva get-together. It should be noted that our treasurer, Kathleen Jones (Desc 85-L, A), did a wonderful job in arranging and running the raffle at Christmas. There were many appealing items and the sale of tickets just about balanced out our luncheon subsidies.

Sempre Avanti!

**HALE AND FAREWELL BOOK ON SALE!**

Even if you were unable to attend the amazing 2007 10th Mountain Division Reunion in Denver, Colorado, you will still enjoy the Hale and Farewell Book. In it, you will find beautiful color photos of many of our Veterans, some of who are no longer with us, as well as photos of 10th Mountain Descendants and Friends of the 10th. Many folks in the photos are people we’ve known from Reunions, Trips to Italy, and local events.

With over 175 pages of photos and history, this beautiful, hardback, coffee table book will bring a smile to your face as you look through the pages, remembering these wonderful people who have touched our lives.

Don’t miss out. Once they’re gone, they’re gone forever. To get your book, for $40 plus shipping, contact: Denise Taylor by calling #303-423-2514, or by email at mountaingirl555@msn.com.

**SIERRA NEVADA**

Val Rios (Desc 87-K)

The 2016 annual 10th Mountain Division Biathlon sponsored by the Sierra Nevada Chapter and hosted by the Auburn Ski Club was held Jan. 17, 2016, on the slopes of Boreal Ridge near Truckee, CA. Over 50 participants completed the race, with the youngest competitor, Izzie Pullen, age 10, finishing 1st in the Youth category. Competitors ranged in age from 10 to 76!

Sierra Nevada Chapter President, Val Rios, was present to give a brief overview of the Chapter’s involvement and support of the Biathlon for over 30 years. Also on hand were Living History members Jim Ronka, Bruce and Jim Dougherty with son Hunter.

Both participants and spectators were able to view and handle much of the 10th winter gear that the Living History members brought for display. It was a wonderful day for all!”

**2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>Luncheon, Glendale Heights, IL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>Rocky Mountain</td>
<td>Trash Bashing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 22</td>
<td>Delaware River</td>
<td>Luncheon, Barbara Winters, Pottstown, PA</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 9</td>
<td>Rocky Mountain</td>
<td>Trash Bashing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 2-4</td>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>Annual Labor Day Weekend reunion, Itasca, IL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 3</td>
<td>Rocky Mountain</td>
<td>Trash Bashing</td>
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<td>Oct. 22</td>
<td>Rocky Mountain</td>
<td>Trash Bashing</td>
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William Morrison (86-L)

The Upstate New York Chapter has stayed busy through the cold of winter. In particular, February was a bittersweet time of the year for veterans of the Tenth, as each one relives the life-changing events of the fateful days of Feb 18 and 19, 1945, with memories of the horrors and uncertainties that war can bring that never completely fade. Like veterans in other chapters, we will meet again to remember Riva Ridge and Belvedere, our introduction to the realities of battle.

Belvedere luncheon was a wonderful gathering of 17 members at the Century House in Latham NY. Topics discussed included the upcoming dedication of the Nort Country Honors the Mountain trip and possible re-dedication of the grave of Minnie Dole. A complete story will be included in the next edition of the Blizzard.

We understand the New England Ski Museum in Franconia, NH, has DVDs of the Tenth available, which some may have seen: “Fire on the Mountain,” “The Last Ridge” and “Climb to Glory.” A new book is also available, “WWII - Camp Hale” by David Witte, which describes the hectic building of Hale in just eight months at a cost of $31 million, by thousands of builders often living in difficult and uncomfortable conditions.

Living a short distance from Ft Drum, we have closer contact with the 10th Mtn Div (LI), reactivated 30 years ago, an event witnessed by many chapter members. To commemorate this and the great impact the 10th has had on the entire North Country, a new monument at Watertown, NY, will be dedicated this summer. Retired Division members Mike Plummer (10th Mtn Div [LI], Ret.) and Gil Pearsall (10th Mtn Div [LI], Ret.) are involved, along with Susan Raymond, the artist behind the Mountaineer Monument at Ft Drum. Many chapter members are planning to attend the dedication July 1, 2016.

Serving as Commanding General of Ft Drum and the 10th Mtn Div (LI) seems to be a stepping stone to greater Army responsibility. The new Army Chief of Staff, MG Mark Milley, was Commanding General at Ft Drum during a Veterans’ Day visit by our members Howard Sebold (605-FA) and Bill Morrison. This was to be Howard’s last ceremony at Drum, and he was very honored to meet the General.

Our congratulations to General Milley.

Chapter members in the news include Charlie Smith, with a full-page color spread in the Ft Drum “Mountainier.” Also, congratulations to Phil Santasiero (87-K) and a group of other vets for a successful campaign to keep the Veterans’ Memorial Highway near Lake Placid open until Veterans’ Day.

We have had a preliminary contact with the Whiteface Mountain Ski Patrol regarding a possible re-dedication at the Grave of “Minnie” Dole this summer at Paul Smiths College.

There was a ceremony a number of years ago to dedicate two plaques remembering his contribution to both the National Ski Patrol and the formation of the Tenth Mountain Division. The commanding general of Fort Drum and several Upstate Chapter members were in attendance.

Finally, we hope the news about financial abuses by leadership of the national Wounded Warrior Project have not had a negative effect on the Fort Drum Chapter. (Ed. Note: We have been assured the funds raised by the Chapter for wounded soldiers and for scholarships, have not been adversely affected by an investigation into the other organization.)

Kim Hudyma (Desc 86-SVC)

The Washington, D.C., Chapter celebrated Veterans’ Day in style with a luncheon at Clyde’s Restaurant of Tyson’s Corner, VA.

Mark Germer (Desc 10-CAV-RECON) spoke about “Above Limits Organization,” a journey in adaptive climbing, and its link to the wounded, ill and injured.

The meal was delicious as always. We were happy that Jack Barnes (87-C) came so we could extend 90th birthday wishes. The Chapter had a grand turnout and had several climbing friends of Mark’s attend.

We collected many items and generous contributions for our Adopt-A-Platoon, 6-6 CAV, who are currently stationed in Korea as a Reconnaissance Squadron. Pam Pikla (Desc 10-AT-A) has graciously volunteered to send our monthly packages overseas.

Our next get-together was set to be at The Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., on March 22, 2016.

We arranged a private tour of the Jefferson Building and then a presentation on the Veterans’ History Project. Lunch was to follow in the complex. Big thanks go to Ralph Tuccillo (10th Mtn Div [LI] and Christopher Doucette (Desc 10-QM-HQ & 87-HQ-3) for helping to organize this event.

On Feb. 6, several chapter members were invited to celebrate Pete Naylor’s (Desc 87-HQ-3) 90th Birthday. Sally Oesterling (Desc 87-HQ-3) planned a wonderful event with guests traveling from several states to enjoy the party. Pete has been so supportive of the National Association of the 10th Mountain Division and the Descendants over the years. It has been a joy to have him in our chapter.

Patty LaRocca (Desc 616 HQ)

Happy New Year from the Midwest Chapter! Wishing everyone a Healthy Year.

Our Chapter voted and decided to have another Reunion this summer. I would like to open the invite to all members of the 10th. The dates are Sept. 2-5, which falls over Labor Day weekend.

The location this year is at the Holiday Inn Chicago West Itasca. The hotel is about 20 minutes from O’Hare airport which makes it convenient for us to pick up any guest that decides to fly in. Rooms are $90 and include breakfast for two. The hotel has a very nice restaurant/bar and indoor pool. They have also provided us with a hospitality room for the whole weekend. Meals aren’t planned yet so there isn’t yet a registration fee.

We always have a theme night and this year’s theme will be a Hawaiian Night. It would be great to see new faces at our event (maybe some of those from the Italy trip). If you are interested, contact me with any questions. The address for the Holiday Inn is 860 W Irving Park Rd, Itasca, IL, 60143. If you call to book a room, make sure you say it’s with the 10th Mountain Division WWII group.
Hugh W. Evans (85-A, C)

The writer is trying to gracefully bow out from his several, traditional Tenth duties. He wants to complete his Memoirs, and he is still back in the early 1980’s with 30-plus years to go. Each day after paying the bills, preparing, eating and cleaning up after three meals, not to speak of buying the groceries, a good night’s sleep and, of course, an afternoon nap and buying, counting out and taking all his pills, it seems 24 hours have passed and the writer has little to show for it.

Some time ago Dan Whitttemore (Desc 86-H), graciously assumed the Tenth Resource Center responsibilities. Recently Gary Burton (Desc 87-L), has taken over the Trash Bashing/Adopt-a-Highway duties, with the 2016 dates already set at May 14, July 9, September 3 and October 22. *Now the writer is planning to interest someone at this year’s Ski-in to take over future Ski-in planning and organizing, which then will leave the writer with only having to find a person to write the Chapter “Blizzard” quarterly reports. He thinks that someone will be Descendant Connie Nelson (Desc 85-D), who already writes the Descendants’ Rocky Mountain Chapter quarterly report. Then he’ll be free!

Looking back, on Dec. 26, 2015, we had a marvelous Boxing Day lunch at Dave and Jane Christie’s wonderful Genesee Event Center. There must have been 150 or so Tenth types there. This fine turkey and roast beef plus all the fixings lunch was garnished with wine and drinks and much talking, singing and laughter. But just recently Dave sold his Event Center, so we now do not know what the future will hold. Time will tell.

Our Chapter monthly luncheons continue with dwindling numbers. The writer, on doctor’s orders, is no longer driving, nor is wife Ann, so we sold the car. The Country Buffet in Lonetree, CO, is just a place too far.

Last Saturday the writer attended the Denver Snow Show (see report, this Edition). What an impressive show this is, with hundreds and hundreds of displays in the Denver Convention Center. Since the end of WW II, based on the initiatives of some 250 Tenth Veterans, the ski (and snowboard) industry has grown beyond belief.

When I made my visit, Tom Hames (Desc 85-K), Denise Taylor (Desc 126 ENG), Greg Kyle (Desc 86-E) and David Little, Reenactor & Honorary Member, were there manning the Tenth Exhibit Booth. Dick Over (110 SIG), arrived shortly after me and they took us on a great tour of this show.

Dick and I ended up signing about 50 posters! We had a good visit with Klaus Obermeyer, 96 and still skiing and driving, who had a big exhibit showing off his wares. He is no longer writing, who had a big exhibit showing off his wares.

Looking ahead, at this writing the 2016 Tenth Ski-in is just around the corner. It was to start in Leadville on Feb. 18 with Cooper Hill Day being on the 19th, the official 10th Mountain Division Day! There was to be a ceremony at the Tenth Tennessee Pass Monument, followed by a visit to the Silver Dollar Saloon for a we brew and a bit of singing before dinner at Quincy’s.

Rocky Mountain WWII veterans at their annual Christmas party at Christies of Genesee, left to right: Richard (Dick) Kaufmann, Joe Perry, Richard (Dick) Over, Marlin Wineberg and Hugh Evans.

The Ski-in ended at Frisco on Feb. 24 after three days there, one skiing at Breckenridge, the next at Vail and the final day at Keystone.

Steve Raabe (Desc 86-Med-HQ), organized a three-day, two-hut trip for 14 people March 19-21. The first night was to be at Uncle Bud’s Hut and the next night at the Skinner Hut -- only a hike of 23.5 miles and climb of 3,740 feet vertical. A piece of cake!

This is my last report. It has been a pleasure. See you around.

It is snowing again!

Robert Joyce (Desc 85-HQ, 407-HQ)

Our Roadrunner Chapter in New Mexico is planning a luncheon for June 4, 2016, at the Bucca do Beppo restaurant in uptown Albuquerque. We will share pictures of the Forever Italy 2015 trip. We will meet at noon, then have a short meeting to discuss this year’s plans for visiting the Veterans’ Hospital.

Joining for lunch, Rosemary Sisneros, widow of George Sisneros (85, 604 FAB), son Ray Sisneros and daughter, Becky Joyce, director of the Roadrunner Chapter, celebrated together recently with the Brusuelas family, in Alamogordo, NM. We chose an Italian restaurant, of course. Paul Brusuelas and his brother Sam (85-A) were together during the Italy campaign except for three days, when Sam volunteered to take a casualty down from Mt Belvedere. Paul and Sam (deceased) are proud Tenth Mountain Division soldiers. The Brusuelas have returned to Italy seven times. Sempre Avanti!

Bobby Foil (W Sid Foil 85-E) and I (Daughter George Sisneros 604 FAB, 85-HQ) planned to go to Leadville, CO, for the Tennessee Pass Memorial Day celebration. We planned to place a wreath for the Roadrunner Chapter in memory of all New Mexico 10th Mountain veterans, past and present.

We were to stay at the Columbine Inn, Leadville, which is a wonderful place for all 10th veterans and descendants.
ARIZONA

Carol J. Maywood (Friend of 10th)
The Arizona Chapter gathered Nov. 10, 2015, for our monthly luncheon.

Members present included Al Field (85-I), Nancy Payant Middlemas (Desc 87-K), Jill Krols (10th INF), Bill Payant (87-K), Carol Maywood, Randy Payant (Desc 87-K) and Al “Mac” McKenna (126 ENG-HQ-S2).

Members visited and enjoyed lunch together in the dining room prior to the meeting. We were delighted to welcome a new member -- A.J. McKenna has moved to Arizona from Colorado, and hopes to attend our meetings henceforth.

The meeting was called to order by president Randy Payant. Since all WWII members of the Association are now officially lifetime members, with no further duties, many have chosen to donate directly to the local AZ Chapter so that the treasury can maintain functions such as mailing minutes and paying for Memorial Day wreaths.

The Veterans History Project continues.

Participants are asked to provide contact information: be persistent: military veterans are encouraged to connect with other veterans and find out more about it.

Join the monthly conversation and coffee hour at the Connections Café, Tempe Public Library every 2nd Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m. For more information, contact Tempe Connections / Veterans History Project, Tempe Public Library, Main Floor, 3500 S. Rural Road, SW corner of Rural Road & Southern Avenue, Tempe, AZ 85282, #480.350.5565 or 480.352.1466.

Email: vhp@tempeconnections.org. Website: www.tempeconnections.org/vhp.

Gil was invited to participate in an Honor Flight from Tucson in October. Participants were half WWII vets and half veterans from the Korean War. He encouraged members who haven’t yet participated to sign up with either the Phoenix or the Tucson sponsors of the trip, and enjoy a wonderful experience.

Although Al’s Newsletter #70 was to be his last, he created and presented an abbreviated special edition #71 for the Chapter to welcome and honor achievements of our newest member.

It features a history of the “Blizzard,” which originated as the “ski-zette” at Camp Hale in 1942, renamed at Camp Swift in 1944, and continued publication through the deployment to Italy, then ended with deactivation of the Division.

As 10 independent regional chapters planned a 30-year reunion in Vail, CO, for July, 1972, and unification into a single National Association, the beloved “Blizzard” was reborn and assigned to Mac, who also served as Vice President of the Rocky Mountain Chapter. Vol. #1 of the “Phoenix Edition” was published in late 1971, and Mac continued as editor with Dick Wilson (85-M) until 1978 when Association headquarters moved to New England.

Tribute is also given to the Co D, 126th Combat Engr Bn, whose rapidly constructed aerial tramways at Ski Ridge, and later connecting Campidello with Castelcacciaio (a 2200-foot span across a deep canyon), enabled the swift evacuation of dead and wounded soldiers, and delivery of many tons of supplies. Excerpts from “The Tramway Builders,” by Philip A. Lundy and Charles M. Hampton, and “An Engineer’s Sacred Stone,” by Chuck Hampton (Desc 126th Mtn ENG) and Charley Hampton (Desc). A new feature, beginning with this meeting, is showing a relevant documentary video. Our inaugural video is “The Last Ridge,” the documentary shown recently on many PBS stations. Of interest is the fact that the movie underlined and reinforced through images much of Al Field’s presentation, citing the significance of the aerial tramway constructed rapidly by the engineers of the Mountain Battalion.

As the meeting adjourned, Randy Payant gave each attendee a bottle of Tenth Mountain Whiskey and best wishes for the holidays. Next meeting was set for Feb. 9, 2016, starting with lunch at 11:30 a.m. at McDowell Village Senior Center, 8300 East McDowell Rd, Scottsdale.

NORTHWEST

Martha Powers Rainey (Desc)
The Northwest Chapter planned a February luncheon at The Old Spaghetti Factory, 0715 SW Bancroft St. in Portland, OR, on the Willamette River.

Members gathered Feb. 28, 2016, for the annual event, another good opportunity for veterans and descendants of all ages to get together to dine and share experiences.

DELAWARE RIVER VALLEY

Barbara Catterall (Desc Joseph P Croke, KIA 85-G)
The annual Veterans’ Day Salute of the Delaware River Valley Chapter was held on Nov. 15, 2015, at the Overbrook Country Club in Villanova, PA. It was a beautiful spring-like day for mid-November, and we enjoyed renewing old acquaintances and sharing fond memories.

We were happy to welcome descendant Peter Soria, whose father Albert (87-L) was unable to attend but hopes to join us in May. Also attending were Susie O’Neil (W Thomas, 86-I), Peter Binzen (86-H) and daughter Kate, Paul Kitchen (86-F), Michael Ziminsky (Joseph Ziminski [87-C]) and wife Sherri, Barbara Winter (Sister-in-law of Burdell Winter KIA [85-M, 10th RECON]), Judy and Bob Anderson and Wilma Breen (Gerald Breen 85-A), Frank Thornton (son-in-law Fred FINN KIA [85-L, A]), Barbara Catterall and Adolfo DeMarco (daughter, Joseph Croke KIA 85-G).

Peter Binzen discussed his recent book, “Richardson Dilworth: Last of the Bare-Knuckled Aristocrats,” about a former Philadelphia mayor. Kate Binzen regaled us with stories of summer family vacations with the O’Neils and Kitchens. Michael Ziminsky described his meeting with a long-lost buddy of his father from 10th Mountain Division. The man was shocked by Michael’s resemblance to his father! Michael and the vet developed a friendship and he treasures the many stories and anecdotes he heard about his father.

Our next gathering will be on May 22, 2016, for a luncheon at Barbara Winter’s Coventry Farm in Pottstown, PA, where we will enjoy not only her hospitality, but also the beautiful azalea gardens. If anyone plans to be in the Philadelphia area in May, we would love to have you join us. Please email me at Barbacat9@aol.com if you can attend.

ARMADILLO

Pheebe Davol (Desc 86-L, 86-HQ)
It is with heavy heart we report and will sorely miss two of our Armadillo Chapter Veterans, Marty Daneman (HQ-2-85) and Mogens Hallgren (85-C) as they passed away in Nov., 2015, and Jan., 2016, respectively.

Martin L. “Marty” Daneman was active in the National Association of the 10th Mtn Div and was founder and chairman emeritus of the Armadillo Chapter. In 2013 he authored and published “Do Well or Die: Memoirs of a WWII Mountain Trooper," available on Amazon at http://amzn.to/1MLiP1V. Marty was instrumental in not only starting our Chapter but eliciting the assistance of Descendants and other Veterans in activities for many years. We will miss you, Marty.

Mogens Fredrick Hallgren was originally from Bornholm, a Danish Island in the Baltic Sea. He immigrated to the US and grew up in New Jersey. When WWII broke out he wanted to enlist in the Navy but was denied enlistment as he was not yet a citizen. Rather than be drafted into the regular Army, Mogens joined the famed 10th Mountain Division and became a ski trooper. He was active and served in leadership roles in the National Association as Vice President and President of the Southeast Chapter. When he and his wife Joanne retired to Texas they joined the Armadillo Chapter and attended numerous chapter functions. We will miss you Mogens.

On a lighter note, please consider joining the Chapter for our annual reunion in Little Rock, AR, June 10-12, 2016. A description of the reunion is included in the Descendants Section of the Blizzard and an inset advertisement is included.

For more information please contact: Jeannie Geuras at #512.441.2167, jgeuras@austin.rr.com, or Karen Case at #501.472.4588, karencase0303@gmail.com or Pheebe Davol at #512.917.0423, pheebe.davol@gmail.com.
Bennett, Nelson (87-I), 101, January 29, 2016, Yakima, WA. Native New Englander from Lancaster, NH, called Sun Valley Native New Englander from January 29, 2016, Yakima, WA. Survived by wife Lois Miller, 4 sons, 10 grand- & 9 great-grandchildren. Lived in Cleveland, OH, area, then Dallas; 38 year career in sales & sales management with A. Stein & Co & Enro Shirt Company. President, Ohio Men’s & Boys’ Apparel Assn, served on boards, Dallas Apparel Mart, patron Dallas Opera & Dallas & Plano Symphonies. Founder, Armadillo Chapter, 10th Mtn Div Assn. Active in politics; with wife Lois completed Citizens Police Academy; volunteered with fire department. Author of “Do Well or Die: Memoirs of a WWII Mountain Trooper.” Co-recipient of Daughters of World War II Jack Altman Humanitarian Award. Participated in Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.

Castaneda, Christopher J. (3rd Sqdn, 71st Cav Regt, 1st Brigade Combat Team [BCT]), 19, November 19, 2015, Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. Died during “non-combat-related incident.” Native of Lancaster, PA, graduated from Hammonott HS in 2014; most-recently from Fripp Island, S.C. Joined Army in Jan., 2015; attended Basic Combat Trng & AIT at Ft Benning, GA; arrived at Ft Drum in May, deployed in August. Survived by his mother, father, stepfather, grandparents & three half-brothers. Memorial donations may be sent to The Fisher House Foundation, charity for families of the fallen, 116 Purple Heart Dr., Dover AFB, DE 19902.

Cramer, John Ernest (87-2-HQ), 91, January 12, 2016, Polson, MT. Survived by wife Shirley, 3 daughters, 2 sons; 9 grand- & 16 great-grandchildren. Worked for Forest Service and Anaconda Mining Co. for 35 years, in Missoula; retired at Flathead Lake. Active member, 10th Mtn Div Assn; known for identifying & giving taxonomic name for every tree in the forest; prowess as an elk hunter. Shared his love of skating with family.

Daneman, Martin L. “Marty” (85-2-HQ), 90, November 25, 2015, Dallas, TX. Survived by wife Lois Miller, 4 sons, 10 grand- & 9 great-grandchildren. Lived in Cleveland, OH, area, then Dallas; 38 year career in sales & sales management with A. Stein & Co & Enro Shirt Company. President, Ohio Men’s & Boys’ Apparel Assn, served on boards, Dallas Apparel Mart, patron Dallas Opera & Dallas & Plano Symphonies. Founder, Armadillo Chapter, 10th Mtn Div Assn. Active in politics; with wife Lois completed Citizens Police Academy; volunteered with fire department. Author of “Do Well or Die: Memoirs of a WWII Mountain Trooper.” Co-recipient of Daughters of World War II Jack Altman Humanitarian Award. Participated in Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.

Gerhart, Clifford F. (85-I), 89, July 22, 2015, Fair Grove, MO. Survived by one son and one daughter, four grandchildren, one great-grandson; predeceased by wife Ruth. Most of his life he worked for Lily Tulip (Sweetheart Cup) as a purchasing agent prior to retirement. Member, Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church.

Gibbs, Clifford Arnold (86-D, 85-L, F), February 8, 2015, Pueblo, CO. Survived by wife Hannah (Untermayer), a son, 2 daughters, 8 grand-, 6 great-grandchildren. In addition to 10th Mtn Div, served with 11th Abn as paratrooper in the Philippines until 1945. Worked as a photographer at Pueblo Army Depot, then pursued a career in photography as owner of Babey Elite Studio. Member, Professional Ski Instructors of America, managing & owning several ski schools. Owner of Trail Tex Sales; pro shop manager at City Park Golf Course. Member, Eagles & Elks. Loved riding horses, team roping, hunting, raising & training hunting dogs, fishing, golfing, & cowboy shooting.

Johns, James Pingree (85-D), October 19, 2015, Roswell, NM. Survived by wife Amy, 2 sons, cousins; predeceased by a son. Served in WWII I & Korean War. Home in Roswell, NM, joined family business at Pecos Valley Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Second successful career with Northwestern Mutual Life Ins. Enjoyed tennis, golf; lifelong love of flying & airplanes. A 33rd degree Mason & Shriner; member, First United Methodist Church; President, Roswell Symphony Board, Campaign Chair, United Way of Chaves County, President, Roswell Assn. Life Underwriters. Member, Chamber of Commerce, Roswell Red Coats, National Assn of 10th Mtn Div, Coca-Cola Bottlers Assn, Million Dollar Round Table with Northwestern Mutual Life. Supporter, Roswell Symphony Orchestra, Museum & Art Center, Public Library, Assurance Home, Spencer Theatre, other charitable & community organizations.

Labby, Robert Stuart (87-HQ), 95, January 8, 2016, Portland, OR. Survived by wife Lore (Caro), 2 sons, 2 grandchildren. Spent his entire career in pharmaceutical industry, retiring from Schering-Plough. A true Oregonian outdoorsman, spent weekends & summer vacations on Mt Hood with ski patrol or fishing banks of coastal rivers for steelhead and salmon. Made many trips abroad with members of 10th Mtn. Instilled in his children a love of the outdoors.

Lumm, Harold G. (85-L), 96, June 12, 2015, Clifton, MI. Survived by 4 daughters, 4 sons, 22 grand- & 19 great-grandchildren; predeceased by wife Georgina (Pyke). Worked for General Motors Truck & Coach, Sealtest Dairy; farmed, & worked at Marlette Community Hospital & at Vlassie Pickles. Enjoyed fishing, hunting, playing cards & vacationing with family.

MacLellan, Kenneth F. Jr. (616 FA-C), 94, January 5, 2016, Scottsdale, AZ. Survived by Dottie F., a daughter & a son. An iconic local commercial real estate developer for more than 30 years; also an active member of Rotary Club International, & Paradise Valley Country Club. A senior executive at Sawyer & Keebler Biscuit companies; also managed & owned several other candy, food & household goods manufacturing businesses. Couple lived in Evanston, IL, North Oaks, MN & Lake Forest IL, before Scottsdale.

McGinnis, Daniel (86-L), 93, February 4, 2016, Clintonville, PA. Survived by a son, a granddaughter & 3 great-grandchildren, companion Ruth Neely, special friend Tonya Judy; predeceased by wife Helen (Cospiter). Lab technician with Quaker State, also worked for the PA Game Commission as a deputy. Member, Grace United Methodist Church, Parker City-Allegeny Valley Lodge #521, Meals-Hoffman Legion Post & Clintonville Lions Club. Enjoyed traveling, camping, skiing, fishing & hunting.

Robinson, George Shackleford III (COL, Ret.)(10th Medical Battalion, 10th Mtn Div [LI]), November 28, 2015, Punta Chulhara, Spain. Member, Army Medical Service Corps; served in Vietnam as medical advisor to ARVN Abn Div, & in US Army Institute of Pathology. Commanded 10th Med Bn at Ft Drum, 1984-1986, fighting to retain “pure” medical battalion that eventually became a Forward Support Battalion. As a 40-something battalion commander, earned coveted Expert Field Medical Badge leading candidates in 12-mile “ruck march.” Deputy Commander, 44th Medical Bde, Ft Bragg, NC, serving in Desert Shield/Storm. Hobby stained glass work; decorated battalion headquarters with pieces extolling work of military medics, & framed photos of all “medic” Medal of Honor recipients. Advisor to Saudi National Guard, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Moved with wife to Heidelberg, Germany; senior medical planner for US Army Europe, visiting Eastern European/Western Asian nations free of the Soviet Union.

Squer, Lee Goddard, 97, January 21, 2016. Predeceased by wife Janet (Wagg). A graceful skier, avid hiker, 50+ year “Trails Club of Oregon Member, mountain climber & all-around amazing role model. A Northwest Chapter Associate for decades, helping out with race-day clean-up & Memorial Tree Projects & attending Chapter meetings regularly.

Winters, Eugene Philip (87-G), 96, November 26, 2015, OR. Survived by a son, a daughter, 2 grandchildren; predeceased by wife Leona (Tix). Faculty member of Oregon State University’s College of Agriculture for nearly 30 years, living throughout Oregon as an OSU extension agent. Family spent four years in Amman, Jordan; worked with local university faculty members & farmers to improve crop production. Spent retirement with family & friends, hiking, skiing, tending to his lawn and traveling in US, Europe & the Middle East. A tree will be planted in Gene’s memory in the Northwest Chapter’s Memorial Tree Grove along Highway 26 near Banks, OR.
Buddy Hunter

SON SEeks FATHER’S WAR COMRADES

My dad was Francis G. Mackin, SSGT from about 1941, in 87-C and 85-E when the 10th was sent to Italy in 1945. I was wondering if anyone knew him. He passed away Feb. 21, 1992.

He was a trainee in 1944 at the MTC. He was also in the group at the ice fields testing the Weasel. He was wounded, and sent to an EVAC hospital on April 19, 1945. He was not seriously wounded and was able to climb up to the forward observation point on Lake Garda to take a picture named my daughter Ada in 2006.

In early December 1945, he returned from the Philippines on the USS General Mitchell. I wonder how did he end up in the Philippines too? The ship picked up 3,000 special serviceman in Italy and went straight to the Philippines in June or July 1945. The 10th trained in California with some Filipino soldiers for a few weeks; maybe that was why he went.

He didn’t talk much about his service but mentioned arriving with some guys on a train around Calgary, drunk, and they had to be like poured from the train. My mom used to talk about him and his squad being shelled and the other guys being killed and he would not talk about that.

He was about 5’6” tall and loved horses and skiing. But he had no desire to climb mountains or to be cold again. Thank you.

Peter Mackin
PeterMackin@gracecpa.com

2015 FOUNDATION DONATIONS

Continued from page 16

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

MAIL CALL

DESCENDANT SEeks COLLABORATORS FOR WRITING PROJECT

My Grandfather was commander of 87-F on Kiska. I have been working for some years now on a book that follows Company L-86 in Italy in an in-depth and detailed day-by-day fashion, told to a large extent in the words of the men themselves. I am nearing the point of looking to get it published, and to that end I will be building a website.

I would like this website to be somewhat more than the average author’s website about his book. I plan to include a regularly updated blog about some of the interesting things I encountered in my research that I believe should have some special treatment outside of the published text.

I know there are quite a few others building research, scholarship and collections surrounding the 10th Mountain Division, many of whom are working on things that may be of more interest to the 10th community than my contribution. So I want to offer those people the opportunity to be contributors, regular or otherwise, to share their research with one another and the general public, and to possibly serve as a sort of bulletin board for the wonderful things happening.

I do not, however, want such an online place (if successful) to supplant or diminish interest in the “Blizzard” or get in the way of any of the Board’s efforts. I look forward to hearing from others about my project, and can be reached at sbb802@gmail.com.

Skyler Bailey

BLIZZARD SCHEDULE 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue No.</th>
<th>January - April</th>
<th>May - August</th>
<th>September - December</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH: 41ST ANNUAL SKI-IN

Joined by WWII vets, flag bearers at 41st annual Tenth Ski-In are ready to head downhill. For more about the event, please see page 4.

PHOTO BY ABBIE KEALY

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14