

National Auxiliary President Visits North Dakota

The Department of North Dakota had the honor of hosting National Auxiliary President Lisa Williamson of Fairbanks, Alaska, in mid-July. We treated Lisa to 2 days of showing off our state and visiting with Legion and Auxiliary members. Hosts included: Tammy Ryberg, NEC; LoAnn Dick, Department President (2024-2025); Gloria Covert, Past Department President (2023-2024); and Andrea Neshem, Department Historian.

The traveling group lodged in Minot and traveled from that point. We spent a day up north with our first stop at Annie's House at the Bottineau Winter Park. Dwight Olson from Bottineau served as our tour guide and told us how Annie's house was created. Annie was a native of Stanley, ND, and worked in one of the World Trade Center towers that was attacked by terrorists on September 11, 2001. At Annie's House, disabled veterans use the adaptive summer and winter program free of charge because of generous donations.

The International Music Camp was our next stop, where Camp Director Tim Baumann served as our tour guide. We enjoyed listening to practice groups sitting out on the lawn rehearsing their music lessons. The American Legion and Auxiliary built and help maintain the practice huts for students known as American Legion Row.

After Music Camp, we headed for the International Peace Gardens where we had lunch at the café, toured the cactus conservatory, and wandered around the Peace Gardens. We enjoyed the tranquility of the gardens.

Our next stop was Mystical Horizons, the only authentic working stonehenge in North Dakota. The Canadian smoke was pretty thick, so the view was not as pretty as it usually is. On the return trip to Minot we stopped at the large wheel turtle located in Dunseith and visited the geographical center of North America located in Rugby.

On our second day we traveled to Washburn for a meet and greet with members of the American Legion Family from around the area. We enjoyed an impressive noon meal prepared by the Washburn Post and Unit members.

National President Williamson is a member of the Legion Riders in Alaska. Steve Anderson and Ted Asp of the Cando Legion Riders and Milo Wallace of William G. Carroll Post 26 Minot escorted the entourage to Washburn and back to Minot. The traveling group visited the beautiful Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and then headed to Fort Mandan for a tour.

We appreciate National President Williamson for taking time from her busy schedule to visit North Dakota. We also appreciate Ed and LoAnn Dick for serving as our chauffeurs for two days on the road.

Article and photos submitted by Past Department President Gloria Covert