

WWIA
6516 Dolphin Cove Drive
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DC Everest Area School Dist.
6300 Alderson
Schofield, WI 54476

JUN 21 2010

12 June 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR DC EVEREST AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT ATTN: KRISTINE GILMORE

SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation, Mr. Todd Bohm

Dear Ms. Gilmore:

It is with great privilege that I write you this letter. I am the Founder of the Wounded Warriors in Action Foundation (WWIA), a National non-profit organization that serves our combat wounded heroes from Iraq and Afghanistan. Several months ago, Mr. Todd Bohm, a gentleman under your charge, contacted our organization offering to host a combined turkey hunt and fishing retreat for our Purple Heart heroes.

With very little guidance, and no resource support from the WWIA, Todd managed to put together a world-class event for our heroes; one that will forever be memorialized in their hearts and minds. What Todd managed to put together, in a relatively short period of time, was without question, the single best performance and truest expression of philanthropy I have seen in years.

Todd asked nothing in return for his hard work and dedication. His detailed planning and flawless execution set new standards for the WWIA. For his efforts, patriotism and steadfast execution, he should be commended.

Todd's actions reflect great credit upon himself, the fabulous community of Wausau, and the United States of America. He is an extraordinary teacher, exemplary coach, and tremendous patriot!

Should you ever want to contact me directly, my direct line is 813-579-8151 or, by email john@wwiaf.org.

Very sincerely and respectfully,

John J. McDaniel

Lieutenant Colonel (Retired), US Army

Founder, WWIA

American Heroes – American Sportsmen

Therapy for combat vets

Soldiers share memories while hunting, fishing

By Amy Ryan • Everest Herald • May 28, 2010

Daniel Smith, Nick Colgin and Nicholas Schoon had never met before May 22, when they spent hours hunting turkeys and then fishing on Lake Wausau. But for them, those few hours were better therapy than anything else they've tried.

"This is replacing bad memories with good ones," Schoon said. "I'll look back on this weekend and remember it forever."

The three men are combat veterans who were wounded in action. Smith served in both Iraq wars. Schoon also served in Iraq, and Colgin in Afghanistan. Now all three live stateside: Smith, 39, lives in South Carolina; Colgin, 25, lives in Wisconsin Rapids; and Schoon, 26, lives in Texas. For a weekend, they got to come to the Wausau area to hunt and fish with Wounded Warriors in Action, a national nonprofit group that organizes hunting and fishing opportunities for soldiers wounded in combat.

Local fishing and hunting guide Todd Bohm, who also is assistant principal at D.C. Everest Senior High School, read about the program in *On Wisconsin Outdoors*, a statewide outdoor magazine, and wanted to help. He offered his turkey-hunting and fishing-guide services for the weekend.

"These soldiers have missed hunting seasons because of deployments and time recovering from their wounds," Bohm said.

The three soldiers each received Purple Hearts for their wounds; all suffered traumatic brain injuries, though the sources and severity of the wounds varied.

Bohm said the prime hunting and fishing in the area is something he wanted to share with the men.

"It's easy for us to take the resources we have here for granted. It's easy for anyone here to step outside and fish and hunt," Bohm said. "These guys were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice. If we can give

something back, it's an obligation we have."

Even though none of the soldiers got a turkey May 22, the men were grateful for the experience.

"It was just so nice to see trees and wildlife," Schoon said. "It's just the opposite of where I grew up (in Indiana)."

It also gave the men a chance to talk to other combat veterans in a non-clinical setting.

"I've been to the vet center. You can only say the same things so many times," Schoon said. "This is not about catching fish; it's about being out and talking to people who have been there."

Smith agreed. He said it's difficult to talk about combat experiences with family members.

"You don't want them to know because you don't want to take them there; you don't want them to see the horrors you've seen," he said. "Here it's safe. Here, when people ask you questions, they really want to know the answers, and you can be honest and tell them, and you don't have the worry about the effects it will have on your family. That helps."

It's exactly the experience retired Lt. Col. John McDaniel hoped he could give soldiers when he started the organization in 2007. McDaniel, who splits his time between Hackett in Price County and Boca Raton, Fla., is a combat veteran who served 20 years in the U.S. Army. He grew up in Wisconsin, and wanted to give something back to soldiers.

"We just wanted to make their dreams come true. They've given so much to their country," he said.

Now, after three years, McDaniel loves seeing vets get together and share experiences.

"I see it time and time again. These guys share a common bond not many people do. It's magic when they can get together and heal."



Local fishing guide Todd Bohm, center, takes veterans Nicholas Schoon, left, and Daniel Smith fishing on Lake Wausau on May 22 as part of the Wounded Warriors in Action program. (Amy Ryan/ Everest Herald)