



Waunakee Rotary Club

June 30, 2011
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In the post-Civil War time of mayhem and lawlessness in the South, one Wisconsin soldier fell in love with the daughter of a plantation owner as he recuperated from his wounds.

Sgt. George B. Van Norman fought in the Battle of Nashville, and now more than a century later, his great-great-grandson has written a book about his life and how Van Norman came to own a spur and a sash that he left behind for future generations.

Robert Grede is the author of "The Spur and the Sash," and at the June 23 Rotary meeting, Robert described the book and a little about the Civil War.

A member of the Milwaukee Rotary Club, Robert has written several books but this is his first work of historical fiction.

Van Norman volunteered for the war and reported to Camp Randall to train after the war began in 1860, Robert said. He was part of the 8th Wisconsin Live Eagle Regiment, which actually traveled with a live eagle named "Old Abe."

The Regiment was in 32 battles and 40 skirmishes, where 45 were killed in action and 210 died of disease.

Robert described the Battle of Nashville, where the book begins, Dec. 15-16, 1864. Union General George H. Thomas used tactics that are studied today at West Point Academy, Robert said.

It was the most decisive victory in the war, sweeping Confederate General John Bell Hood's Army of Tennessee from the field.

Robert's grandfather was wounded twice; once when a battlefield tree was toppled and a falling branch left a scar that a moustache later covered and again when a toppled tree landed on him, breaking his arm.

That second time, Van Norman was left to recuperate in a plantation

owner's home where he fell in love.

Robert said more Americans died in the Civil War than in next four wars combined.

When President Lincoln was shot, his successor, the unpopular Andrew Johnson, was not interested in reconstructing the south.

"His idea was to punish the south and the people who had reviled him," Robert said.

He described total anarchy in Middle Tennessee, with 6.2 million slaves newly freed, along with carpetbaggers and lawlessness.

Amidst all that, Robert's grandfather fell in love and came upon the spur and the sash that would be passed down from generation to generation. The story is how Van Norman came upon those items. To learn more about the book, visit www.ThreeTowers Press.com.

Other items:

- The club said "aloha" to Hanoulia Salame at her last meeting before she was to return to Belgium after her year-long study exchange in Waunakee. President Brent Ziegler recognized Lori Derauf and Harriet Statz for their work with the exchange students. Lori and Harriet presented Hanoulia with a keepsake gift of a vintage Coke bottle cap made into a bracelet. Hanoulia thanked the club and Harriet for the opportunity to study at Waunakee High School and spend the year here.

- It was Brent's last meeting as president, and he thanked the board members for their help. We will send Brent off and welcome incoming president John Cullen at the July 7 steak fry dinner.

Guests: Sara Moffatt, guest of Shelley Moffatt; Marty Smith, guest of Gordon Meffert.

Visiting Rotarians: Robert Grede, Milwaukee; Jason Kierce, Madison

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Calendar of Events:

- July 7, *Steak Fry at Rex's Innkeeper.*
- July 12, *Pontoon Boat Ride on Lake Wisconsin.*
- July 13, *Senior Citizen picnic.*
- July 28-31, *WaunaFest.*

South; Robert Samp and Susie Hiles, Middleton.

Birthdays: July 4, Sean Wayne
July 4, Todd Schmidt.

Anniversaries: June 30, Fritz and Sheri Durst; June 30, Gene and Catherine Smith; July 2, Katie Kennedy-Shepherd and Jeremy Shepherd; July 5, Joyce and Alan Maly; July 6, Steve and Jodi Hansen
Belated anniversary wishes to the following, whom this newsletter omitted last week: June 23, Frank and Joann Bucaida; June 23, Kim and Margo Kalepp; June 25, Shelley Moffatt and Tom Fendrick; June 28, Gordon and Marilyn Meffert.

Prayers: June 30, Pat Durden; July 7, Leonard Allen; July 14, Susan Vergeront.

Programs: June 30, Service Club Olympics; July 7, Club Assembly; July 14, Bob Runchey, building energy savings and energy retrofits; July 21, lunch at the newly remodeled EMS building/ facility tours; July 28, Alice Honeywell, on her book and biking across America.

Greeters: June 30: Susan Hedrick and Travis Heiser; July 7: Tony Hellenbrand and Robert Hoskins; July 14: Roxanne Johnson and Kim Kalepp; July 21: James Kattner and Kevin Kearney; July 28; Neil King and Neil Kruschek.