

11/11/2009

Dear Members of the Governor's Art Award Committee:

It is rare that I am moved to tears by an inanimate object. However, the art creations of James N. Muir have done this to me more than once. My first exposure to James's work was "The Band of Brothers". After seeing this piece and reading the artists explanation of what each part of "The Band of Brothers" meant I became emotionally attached to it. So much so that I bought the sculpture for a very special event my wife and I sponsored in our hometown of Palmerton, Pennsylvania. We honored all our veterans at a "stay at home" 4th of July. It was presented to the local high school "In Honor of Major General Rhett Hernandez and All Veterans". It is a spectacular addition to the school's entry way. General Hernandez is a former student of mine and is very special and he was our keynote speaker at the July 4th event and I felt I needed something special for the community to remember that day.

I am on the National Alumni Board of Directors for Northern Arizona University and in July, 2008 I was approached by a fellow Board member who is a Viet Nam War veteran and he asked if I would organize a celebration at NAU similar to that held in Palmerton. I excitedly said "YES" if he would help with it. Fifteen months later, on October 24, 2009, NAU very proudly, as a theme for Homecoming, honored in fine fashion all of the veterans whoever attended NAU. For this event my heart turned back to something that all veterans, and all Americans, would be proud of to become a part of this event and stay with NAU to honor all veterans now and long into the future. The "Band of Brothers" came to the rescue. Nothing could bring more lasting meaning to October 24, 2009 and into the future than this meaningful work of art. So my wife and I bought our second "Band of Brothers" and dedicated it to NAU that day at a special banquet with all veterans in attendance our guests. The reaction of those in attendance has been tremendous with much praise, gratitude and emotions. It is being permanently displayed in a custom made walnut cabinet in the new student union.

I have also purchased "The Sons of Liberty" 1775 and 1995. They too are very special, showing the youth of our nation stepping forward and **volunteering** to be in "harm's way" on our behalf. James shows them so well. Proudly they stand, knowing what may become of them, many "giving that last great measure of devotion to our nation." I keep them close to me in my study as a constant reminder of who I owe the most to for a free and secure country. James has conveyed that message to me as he does with all his work. I thank him for it and I would hope that you would consider him to receive the prestigious Arizona Governor's Art Award for 2010.

Sincerely,
Richard L. Nothstein
Palmerton, Pennsylvania