

## MEETING, GREETING AND SIGNING



- Photo by Paul Dols

Shoreview Reflections author John Koblas and historian Jaccl Krebsbach greet visitors to the book signing at the Shoreview Community Center on Friday, Nov. 9. Local residents and others who contributed their stories and talents to the historical book spoke and were recognized during the event.

## Northwest Youth and Family Services counselors to assist returning veterans

With the recent return of Minnesota National Guard veterans of the Iraq war, many families are experiencing an adjustment period as loved ones reintegrate into their daily lives.

In an effort to prepare mental health professionals and other service providers for the special needs of returning vets, the Minnesota Social Services Association recently offered a training session designed to give professionals the tools and information they need to help vets and their families make the transition.

Northwest Youth and Family Services (NYFS) Mental Health Counselor Lucy Spina recently attended the session and said it is important to remember that all returning vets can expect to experience some degree of difficulty returning to "normal" civilian life.

She adds that while veterans were required to attend reintegr-

ation training events across the state in September and October, these events are not always sufficient for all veterans and their families.

The long separation can be difficult on marriages and families, she added, especially if the loved one returns home with physical or psychological injury due to the war.

Problems can include post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, thoughts of suicide, substance abuse, depression and marital or family instability. Often, problems don't surface until weeks or months after returning home. Veterans experiencing extreme distress are encouraged to seek help immediately by calling 911 or the Crisis Connection at 1-866-379-6363.

At NYFS, counselors will be available to provide long-term counseling services for returning vets and their families. NYFS accepts Tricare military

insurance and offers services on a sliding-fee scale to those without insurance.

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs has also established LinkVet, a call center designed to provide information on veterans' benefits, health care, education and reintegration. Help is available by dialing 1-888-LINKVET between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. All calls are referred to Crisis Connection after working hours.

While professional help is crucial, Spina says the community can assist by voicing their support. "Be non-judgmental about your view of the war and recognize their sacrifice, effort and courage."

For more information about counseling services for veterans at NYFS, please call 651-486-3808.

- Press Release

## Birthday

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"We had such a great time, that we decided to make it an annual event," she said.

Since then, the weekends have included jaunts to interesting sites around Minneapolis and St. Paul. The club has gone to the Hiawatha Pageant in Pipestone and on a trip down the Mississippi River on a paddlewheel boat.

This year it's doing something a little different — taking a train to Chicago for three days.

"We've seen everything in Minnesota," Abbott said. "If we don't go this year, we may never go."

Over the years, the club mem-



- Submitted photo

Front row (l-r): Pat Cadwell, Delores Mergen, Bev Quast, Evelyn Arneson and June Anderson. Back row: Bernice Kelash, Alvina Hauden, Mel Hakkala, Fran Abbott and Phyllie Martin