



## **10th Mountain Division Descendants, Inc.**

### **Fall 2025 President's Letter**

#### **"Looking to our Future!"**

**"Sempre Avanti" - Always Forward!**

This was the motto of the WWII 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division and serves us well as descendants of 10<sup>th</sup> Mountaineers. We must always look forward and move forward to preserve the legacy of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division.

It may seem unnecessary to remind this group of the motto, but I believe it is important for us to revisit it at this time. I haven't looked at an age breakdown of the membership of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division Descendants, but I suspect that a majority of us are of a 'certain' age, an age where our WWII fathers and grandfathers realized that their numbers were dwindling and supported the creation of a descendant's organization. I believe that we need to face the reality that we are all aging, and that that we need to recruit new members and younger members to continue the legacy of the 10<sup>th</sup>. I don't have ready answers to this challenge, but I believe that we must focus on a few things if we hope to succeed.

First, I believe that we need to look to sponsoring activities that might appeal to younger people. One thought that I have shared with some Board members is that we consider a more active Italy Trip, one that might involve hiking or skiing the Italian slopes where the WWII veterans fought so valiantly. Similarly, I was pleased that the Rocky Mountain Chapter has decided to add an overnight ski/snowshoe into one of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Huts in Colorado as an addendum to next year's 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Ski-in Daze. Independent of our organization, Christian Beckwith has staged the inaugural Ninety Pound Rucksack Challenge this past winter, and hopes to expand the number of areas that will hold this one-day ski ascent.

Second, I think it is vital that we maintain a strong relationship with the current soldiers and leadership of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. We all know the legacy of the WWII soldiers, but the Modern 10<sup>th</sup> is writing its legacy every day. The 10<sup>th</sup> has been one of the most deployed Army Divisions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, serving and sacrificing in conflicts around the world. We need to lean into that legacy and encourage the descendants of those soldiers to help share their stories. I don't have the specifics on how we do this, but it is a topic that the Board will wrestle with when we meet in-person in November.

Third, I believe it is essential that we strengthen our ties with the other organizations that represent the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. Even though we've always been involved in the work of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Foundation we need to look to ways to deepen that relationship, and

have taken the initial steps to do so. Similarly, our Descendant organization grew out of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division Association (the veterans of the 10<sup>th</sup>), and we have always maintained a good relationship with them. However, today the Association is comprised entirely of Modern 10<sup>th</sup> veterans, and we need to work harder to connect with them and their families to ensure the health of both organizations.

These are a few of my thoughts on how we can move forward, but I invite all of you to help in brainstorming ideas on how to keep the Descendants a vital and active organization. Please reach out to me with your thoughts and your suggestions.

I look forward to hearing from you. Sempre avanti!

Ron Sawdey, President

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