

THOMAS COUNTY Herald

Your Source Of News In The Sandhills

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Historic First For The Ladies

SGT Bobbie Scott,

Surreal, humbling, awe-inspiring are all words used by our Veterans to describe the 2018 Honor Flight from Nebraska. This flight was unlike previous flights because it was the first all female flight, making it the first flight of veterans who were not forced by the draft, but rather volunteered to go to war. One hundred and thirty five volunteer Veterans from World War II (WWII), Vietnam, Korea, and the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) made up this flight.

I am Sergeant (SGT) Bobbi (Tropf) Scott. My services as one of the first female Gunners on Convoy Security Missions during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in the GWOT qualified me to make this historic trip. Our adventure started Sunday, September 23. We were issued our new uniforms for the trip, a red three quarter length blouse with a black vest, both with our proud sponsor "Auction Time" embroidered on them. We were also given a choice of a black fanny pack or

red purse filled with possible essentials for our trip.

In preparation for this trip, the Quilt of Valor Foundation hand-crafted more than 135 different Americana quilts to give to each of the Veterans on the flight. It took over 350 volunteer quilters from 35 Nebraska counties and contributions from three additional states to accomplish this task! During the Quilts of Valor ceremony, each veteran was called up to be recognized for her service to our great country, then wrapped in a quilted hug. The two WWII veterans on the flight were honored with standing ovations. SGT Katie (Nixon) Koopman said, "Their contributions helped pave the way for other female veterans." In our eyes, they were the true heroines of the trip.

On the evening of September 23, dinner was provided to the Veterans, their families, and several other special guests, including Loretta Swit, who played Major Margaret "Hot Lips" Houlihan in the TV series, M*A*S*H. Afterwards, the fallen female veterans were honored. Their ultimate



COURTESY PHOTO

Pictured above in front of the Vietnam Women's Memorial are, back row, l-r: unidentified, Tenille Friese, Nicole Schram and Alyssa Schuett. Front row, l-r: Katie Koopman, WWII Veteran Kathleen Briard and Bobbi Scott.



COURTESY PHOTO

Bobbi Scott joined the military at 17 in 2003. She served for nine years and was deployed to Iraq in 07-08. She served as a 50 cal gunner on convoy security missions. Bobbi has lived in Thedford for the past five years with her husband Dr. Brigham Scott DVM. She says it gets a little confusing when people ask who the "Vet" in the family is. The Scotts have two beautiful daughters, Ariata, 4, and RyDell, 2.

Bobbi is pictured here with the "Quilt of Valor" she received.

sacrifice touched all of us and reminded us of the true cost of our freedom. The traveling national memorial "Remembering Our Fallen" is dedicated to all of the men and women who gave their lives from 9/11 to present. We were all a little shocked to find out that Nebraska's Memorial Stadium turned down the opportunity to have the traveling monument outside of the stadium for one of the Husker games.

Monday, September 24, started with a 2 A.M. wake-up call; buses boarded at 2:30 A.M. in La Vista and transported us to the Omaha airport. We felt like the red carpet had been rolled out for us. There was a big band playing, and we had no trouble getting through security! The historic All Female Honor Flight departed Omaha at 4 A.M. One male service dog attended the flight with his female veteran. She said he was the only exception to the rule!

The honor flight landed at Ronald Reagan Washington National D.C. Airport (DCA) at 7:30. We were warmly greeted at the gate by people proudly waving American flags. Our path was lined with well wishers, bands, and a female choir. Unfortunately, the weather, 65 degrees and rainy, wasn't as warm as our greeters. Thankfully, the bags provided were equipped with much needed ponchos!

We boarded the four buses and were chauffeured around Washington, DC. We stopped at Iwo Jima, Section 60 of Arlington National Cemetery, Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown, and the 9/11 Memorial at the Pentagon.

(See Flight page 9)

Local Ranch Family Is An Ag Pen Pal For Randolph Classroom



COURTESY PHOTO

Anita Keys, above center, is pictured with her Ranch Family Penpal for Ag in the Classroom, the Randolph fourth graders.

Anita Keys of Elsmere is an Ag Pen Pal with students at Randolph Elementary in Randolph, NE for the coming school year. Anita has been exchanging letters with 4th graders taught by Stephanie Harder. This is the 9th year Anita has participated in Ag in the Classroom.

The Ag Pen Pal program is part of the Nebraska Farm Bureau Foundation's Nebraska Agriculture in the Classroom program. The aim of the Ag Pen Pal program is to make a personal connection between students and farmers and ranchers in Nebraska. Through the program, students get a real view of Nebraska agriculture and gain a better understanding about how their food, fiber, and fuel are produced. For the 2018/2019 school year the program matched more than 200 classrooms with

farm/ranch pen pals. Pen pals correspond through letters, emails, and classroom visits.

Anita said the students were most interested to learn about our cattle and the wide open spaces of the Sandhills. "It was interesting to me that the students didn't know about cattle guards and some didn't know the proper names like 'steer' and 'heifer'." Mrs. Keys has already had an opportunity to visit the classroom in Randolph, sharing a Powerpoint about their ranch. The 4th graders enjoyed samples of beef jerky and cinnamon cucumbers which Anita had canned from cucumbers grown in her garden.

As 4th graders, the class is studying about natural resources, so they have questions about the Ogallala Aquifer. They also will be studying Native

Americans and had questions about artifacts. The students had lots of questions about branding. Keys said she learned from the students as well. For example she found out how few of them in "rural small town" Nebraska actually live on a farm and how many generations removed they are from farming.

"I've enjoyed sharing a bit about ranch life in the Sandhills with the 4th graders in Randolph. This helps them to better understand the source of their food." If your family or classroom would like to be part of sharing by joining the Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom program contact them at Email: foundation@ForAg@nefb.org; Telephone: (800) 742-4016 or see their website at https://www.nefbfoundation.org/volunteers/get-involved/ag-pen-pal.

Notices

- Notice of Organization Prairie Feed Supply, LLC
- Thomas County Commissioners Public Notice
- Thomas County Ballots
- Thomas County Commissioners' Proceedings

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News Briefs

The annual Turkey Dinner & Bazaar at the Seneca Auditorium in Seneca, will be held Sunday, October 28, 2018. Serving will begin at 11:00 a.m. MT. There will be baked goods for sale, as well as jars of horseradish made by the Seneca Women's Fellowship. The price is \$8.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children 12 & under. Children 4 & under eat free. The dinner is hosted by the Seneca UCC Fellowship.