

Elsmere Rancher Named Northeast's Agceptional Woman Of The Year

Northeast Community College News

Anita Keys, Elsmere, was named 2022 Agceptional Woman of the Year during Northeast Community College's Agceptional Women's Conference recently on the Northeast campus in Norfolk. The announcement was made as part of a video tribute that was played during the opening session of the 14th annual conference. The video was sponsored by Farm Credit Services of America and produced by the Northeast Agriculture Department and District 25 Productions, LLC.

A special selection committee made up of professionals from agricultural businesses and operations is assembled each year to select the winner from a competitive group of nominees.

"I am humbled and honored to get this award, and to receive it from your peers is something extra special," Keys said in accepting the award. "It's one thing to get an award for best yield or best whatever, but this is very special."

Keys was raised on a farm in Wayne County. After graduating from high school, she attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) where she met her future husband, Kerry Keys. The couple, who operate a ranch near Elsmere in southeast Cherry County, has two adult daughters who have become successful in their own careers. Stacey Keys is a 4-H extension assistant for UNL Extension in Burt County while Amanda Keys is employed as an accountant in Broken Bow.

Keys was nominated for the Agceptional Woman award by Karen Grant, Meadow Grove, who was bestowed the honor in 2015. She said Keys is deserving of the recognition.

"Elsmere may be a tiny town out west, but Anita is big on educating about life as a farmer or rancher from her own home to all parts of the United States and the world," Grant said. "She has connections and is willing to go above and beyond to spread the word of agriculture."

Keys was a member of



COURTESY

Anita Keys with the 2022 Agceptional Woman of the Year trophy she received from Northeast Community College.

the Leadership Education (LEAD) 17 program with content focused on eco-

nomics, government, human relations, communications, international trade, sociology, education, the arts, social-cultural understandings as well as agriculture. She has utilized the knowledge she gained from her experiences with LEAD with others.

Keys is a member of Common Ground Nebraska which is described as, "a group of farm women having conversations about food and how it's grown and produced." She also uses social media to explain life on the ranch and discuss how and what they do with their livestock.

"(Anita) can speak with knowledge because she is involved on the ranch helping wherever she is needed," Grant said.

Keys is also active with IFYE (International Four-H Youth Exchange), which focuses on bringing young people ages 18-25 to the United States to live with up to three families to learn their customs and lifestyles. Students from the United States may also travel to other countries as part of the program. Keys assists in matching farm and

ranch families with individuals from other countries in the program. She serves as a substitute teacher and works with 4-H. She chaperoned 4-H members to Life Challenges held in June at the UNL East Campus, an activity she has done for many years.

The Agceptional Women's Conference is northeast Nebraska's premier event for women in agriculture, attracting over 400 women annually who come together for a full day of networking, professional development, and personal growth opportunities. This year's event featured over 20 speakers who discussed issues related to creating predictable profits in an unpredictable industry, nitrates and public health, dedicating one's life to service, hemp in Nebraska, smartphone photography for the farm or ranch, keys to prevent Alzheimer's disease, and growing intuitive eaters, among many more options.

To learn more about the conference, visit northeast.edu/events/agceptional.

Local Veterans Receive Quilts Of Valor

Marcia Hora

Five veterans were presented with a 'Quilt of Valor' on November 6 at the Winter Building, Hyannis. Those honored were Keith Retzlaff, Jim Sevier, Tom Witt, Dan Finney and Fred Michal. Family and friends attended the presentation, coordinated by Kathy Dye, Panhandle Quilts of Valor overseer.

A Quilt of Valor is a formal expression of appreciation from a grateful nation. In 2003, a quilter named Catherine Roberts started the movement that became Quilts of Valor when her son was deployed in Iraq. Since that time over 326,777 Quilts of Valor have been awarded and recorded with the Foundation. Their mission is to honor service members and veterans who have been touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Honor.

The three local veterans honored were:

Tom Witt
May 10, 1966 –
March 10, 1970

Thomas Dean Witt, enlisted in the Air Force May 10, 1966. He left North Platte and took the Greyhound Bus to Denver, where he was sworn in at Lowery Air Force Base and then went to Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas, where he began basic training.

After four weeks of basics he went to Amarillo for tech school, training in Liquid Fuels Maintenance. Upon completion of tech school, Tom went home on a delay enroute for 30 days and took the City of Los Angeles train to Victorville, California, where he reported for duty at George Air Force Base. George Air Force Base was the first all Mach 2 (basically twice the speed of sound) air base in the Air Force.



COURTESY

Sheila Walker of Alliance who pieced these three quilts for Jim, Tom and Danny is pictured standing behind, l-r: Jim Sevier, Tom Witt and Danny Finney.

George Air Force Base was with the Tactical Air Command.

Tom worked in the Liquid Fuel Shop within the Civil Engineer Squadron. They perfected the "Hot Refueling Technique," which essentially meant that from the time an aircraft landed until the time it took back off again with a full load of fuel, it took 15 minutes.

Tom was stationed at George Air Force Base from July 1, 1966 until June 30, 1967. He received orders for a PCS (Permanent Change of Station) to Sembach Air Force Base in Germany. He reported for duty on August 1, 1967 at Sembach Air Base. Sembach Air Base was part of the United States Air Force Europe. There he was with the 603rd Civil Engineering Squadron. While in Germany, Tom spent most of his time at the fuels tank farm adjacent to the flight line. Tom received orders to rotate to

Robbins Air Force Base near Warner Robbins, Georgia, to arrive September 1, 1969.

Robbins Air Force Base was part of the Military Airlift Command. There, he spent from September 1969 until March 10, 1970, Tom's separation date from the Air Force.

He separated as an E5, Staff Sergeant.

Tom qualified as an expert marksman with an M16 and a M2 carbine and was awarded the following medals: National Defense, Presidential Unit Citation, Good Conduct, and Marksmanship.

James L. Sevier

James L. Sevier drew the military lottery number of 3 in July 1971, the summer he graduated from high school. The following spring while still enrolled in college classes he was called to duty and took his preinduction physical May 5, 1972.

October 19, 1972, he reported to Ft. Leonard

Wood, Missouri for eight weeks of basic training plus an additional seven weeks of AIT.

Jim then received orders for Germany. He was stationed in Wildflecken, Germany, HHC2/15 INF USAREUR for the next 19 months. Jim's duty was driving a five ton 6x6. While in Germany, Jim rodeoed in the European Rodeo Association, winning the European Saddle Bronc Champion title in 1973 and the European Bull Riding Champion in 1974.

He received the National Defense Service Medal; Expert M16; Expert H/Grenade.

Jim was processed through Ft. Dix, New Jersey October 10, 1974. He was honorably discharged October 18, 1978, with the rank of SP4.

Danny Finney

Danny Finney was in-

See Quilts
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Public Feedback Sought On R-Project Transmission Line

On November 18, 2022, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service or FWS) published a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register and opened a 30-day public scoping period, beginning November 18, 2022, and ending December 18, 2022, to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for an anticipated incidental take permit (ITP) application associated with the R-Project Impact Statement (SEIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for an anticipated incidental take permit (ITP) application associated with the R-Project transmission line.

Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) is preparing a revised habitat conservation plan (HCP) in support of NPPD's anticipated ITP application to authorize take of the federally threatened American burying beetle that may result from construction and operation activities associated with the proposed 226-mile long, 345-kilovolt transmission line in north-central Nebraska.

The SEIS will evaluate the impacts related to the proposed issuance of the ITP and implementation of the revised HCP, including addressing the issues identified by the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado in its 2020 remand of the previous ITP that the FWS issued on June 12, 2019.

The Service is seeking feedback during the public scoping period on the effect of the potential action on the human environment, including the issuance of a permit authorizing incidental take of a covered species in association with covered activities, and revised

Habitat Conservation Plan implementation. Input received during the scoping period will be incorporated into the draft SEIS.

How to Participate in Public Meetings:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) will host two virtual public scoping meetings on December 8, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. CST.

Registration for the public meetings can be completed on the project website, www.fws.gov/project/r-project-transmission-line, and direct links to the virtual meetings will be posted on the project website the day prior.

To ensure accessibility, a recording of the public meeting presentation will be available online at www.fws.gov/project/r-project-transmission-line and at the following library locations:

- North Platte Public Library, 120 W 4th St, North Platte, NE 69101;
- Thomas County Library, 501 Main St, Thedford, NE 69166;
- Taylor Public Library, 106 William St, Taylor, NE 68879

How to Submit Comments:

There will be two methods available to submit public comments:

Online at <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/FWS-R6-ES-2014-0048>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments on Docket No. FWS-Ry-ES-2014-0048.

By U.S. mail: Public Comments Processing; Attn: Docket No. FWS-R6-ES-2014-0048; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Headquarters, MS: PRB/3W; 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803