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Veterans Day Event at BEC

NOVEMBER 13TH 2012 BY STAFF WRITER

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*Article By SMT Writer
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Dexter, Missouri - The annual Veterans Day event held at the Bearcat Event Center transpired Monday, November 12th. Each year the ceremony is sponsored by the Daughters of the American Revolution. Members of the general public and the entire Dexter Public Schools student body were in attendance. The event pays tribute to local and national veterans as well as serves as an opportunity for today's youth to become more aware of the role veterans play in each American's life.

When attendees entered the room, flashing photographs of veterans were on display. The program began with a presentation of the colors by Dexter Boy Scout Troop 200 and the Pledge of Allegiance by Lieutenant Colonel Cliff Manlove, USAF Retired.

Several distinguished speakers addressed the crowd through the presentation. Da Airman Darryl LaPierre, American Legion Post 59 Commander, spoke of his military experiences in the "chrome dome" flying "hot" planes by the poles in Alaska.

When Dr. Roger Alsup asked LaPierre to explain to the crowd why he chose to serve in the armed forces, LaPierre noted his love of freedom, love of country, and love of service were his driving forces. LaPierre stated that four of the city's police officers and one of the city's firefighters were retired military. He noted that over six thousand veterans reside in Stoddard County. These men and women are proud to continue serving the public beyond the terms of their enlistment.

Scott Rybodt directed the DHS Band in a medley entitled "A Tribute to the Armed Services." The medley included the theme song of each branch of the armed forces and veterans as well as enlisted military stood in honor while their respective anthem was in tune.

The Sisler-Eskew-Parker Monument Wreath Presentation to Delois Gales, American Legion Auxiliary member, was conducted by Dr. Tom Sharp, Dexter Schools Superintendent. The assembly concluded with a moment of silence for the playing of "Taps" and retiring of the colors.

The active participation of the student body in the events leading up to yesterday's ceremony allowed students to gain appreciation for the armed services. Students in various grade levels participated in several activities designed to accentuate the Veterans Day program.

June Lawrence, the art teacher at Central Elementary, along with Sheila Alsup, representative for the American Legion Auxiliary, hosted a fifth grade poster contest. Applicants were asked to design an all-original poster representing Veterans Day.

SPC Katie Alsup addressed each classroom with details regarding the competition. Katie lent knowledge of the history and importance of US Veterans. Alsup states, "It is amazing to see the hard work the kids put into their posters. For some students, the poster contest has allowed them to explore the history of veterans in their own family. I feel it is important to instill gratitude and respect for our veterans at a young age."

While each fifth grade student participated, only a select few works of art were chosen as honorable mentions. One winner from each classroom was then selected as a winner. Classroom winners were announced at the event;

recipients were as follows: Hayden Hillis, Spencer Warren, Jayden Cato, Sebastian Conner, Shay Baker, Ann Marie Long, Rebecca Trough, and Netee Patel.

Eighth graders prepared for the Veterans Day event by participating in an essay contest. Melinda Sweeny, eighth grade teacher, assisted in organizing the essay competition. Each student was asked to write an essay in the theme “Freedoms I Enjoy Most.” Maci Urhahn was awarded second place for her submission and Kelly Ash was given third place for her composition.

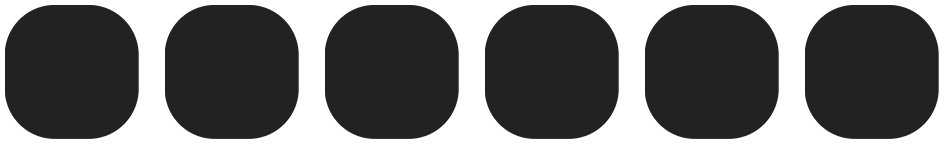
However, the essay written by Olivia Sitze entitled “Freedom of Assembly” stood out above the crowd, winning first place. Sitze was asked to read her amazing essay at the Veterans Day ceremony. Many were moved by her thoughtful words of gratitude for the freedoms American veterans had given her. Sitze will continue on to be a contender in the state wide essay contest.

Programs such as these allow our youth to better understand the commendable role American veterans play in ensuring our protection and freedom. We look forward to next year’s event!

LAST UPDATED ON NOVEMBER 13TH 2012 BY STAFF WRITER

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