

VETERANS: Schools host Veterans Day activities in Sisters

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of the Year Award. Greaney placed third in regional VFW District 10 competition for the honor. Principal Joe Hosang (himself a Marine veteran) nominated Greaney for the award, which recognizes her as “a teacher who perpetuates patriotism, and excellence in education.”

Greaney was surprised by the award, which was presented to her in class on Friday, January 8.

In his nomination, Hosang noted that “Gail Greaney fully embraces the school community and works tirelessly to create meaningful experiences for our students, both in the classroom and out... Gail Greaney brings intensity and a personal determination

to inspire a learning environment that engages and prepares students with life skills, civic responsibility and patriotism that go well beyond the basic curriculum and is certainly deserving of the VFW Teacher of the Year Award.”

“I was really honored that he would do that,” Greaney said in reference to Hosang’s nomination. “It was really nice also that the kids were here and could be part of it, ’cause that’s what it’s all about. It’s just really nice also that what we’re doing in Sisters is getting recognized, because I think we’re doing some really great stuff. It really takes the whole school district and community to make that happen.”

At Sisters Middle School on Friday, veterans honored sixth-grade student Tatum Sitz, who won the VFW Post’s “Patriots Pen” essay contest. According to Post Commander Bill Anttila,



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Bill Anttila, Lance Trowbridge, John Miller and Jack Kinsey honored Teacher of the Year Becky Aylor.

there were a record 30 entries this year.

Writing on the topic “Why I Appreciate America’s Veterans,” Sitz wrote:

“I think we could all learn something from our veterans by being more like them — brave, generous, sacrificing for others, and loyal. We

can also learn from veterans by listening to their experiences.” (See Tatum Sitz’s full essay accompanying the online version of this story at www.nuggetnews.com.)

Anttila praised Sitz as he presented her with a check for \$100: “She’s an inspiration to talk to and a glimpse of a future leader of this nation,” he said.

Sitz told *The Nugget* that she was honored to receive the first-place award. She noted that her grandfathers and great-grandfathers fought in World War II and other conflicts.

“It means extra because I have veterans in my family,” she said.

Becky Aylor was honored as Teacher of the Year for the middle school, placing first in District 10 competition. Aylor is a key staff member in putting together the Veterans Day activities each year.

“It’s an honor, and it’s because of the people I work

with,” Aylor said. “They help me to be a better teacher, mentor. I’m surrounded by good role-models.”

The recognition of veterans’ service is part of a broader curriculum focus.

“The teachers spend a lot of time in the classroom teaching citizenship and what freedom means,” she said.

Asked why Sisters makes such an effort to honor its veteran community, Aylor said, “I think it’s just because we’re such a tight-knit community. I think we try to take care of each other.”

She said that in her leadership role, she always seeks “purposeful assemblies,” activities that are fun and engaging, but also have educational value. The annual Veterans Day assemblies fit that bill to a tee, and are broadly supported in the community.

“There’s so many people in the community that step up and help with that,” she said.



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Gail Greaney received Teacher of the Year honors from local veterans on Friday.

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