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4th Annual Simple Blessings Dinner Honors Nichole Phelps

by Priscilla Alvik

Donetta Phelps sponsors fourth annual "Simple Blessing" meal in Tingley. photo by Priscilla Alvik.

Tingley, Iowa- For the past four years Donneta Phelps owner of the Wagon Wheel Café, in Tingley has prepared dinners to share with towns people near and far on Thanksgiving Day. Phelps has named the gift of serving food to others "Simple Blessings". Phelps through her actions on Thanksgiving Day is doing what she has taught her children throughout their lifetime to consider, serve the community with a pure heart.

Simple Blessings is a mother's love played forward that was driven by the grief of her daughter Nichole Rose passing on December 18th, 2016. Nichole Rose Phelps had a passion for serving the Lord. For three consecutive years 2014, 2015, 2016 you would find Nichole spending her Thanksgiving Day serving meals to the homeless and less fortunate in the greater Des Moines area. Nichole's passion of serving the Lord through serving others was a gift of heart. Phelps realized one day that she played a big part in her daughter's love of giving. Phelps said, "It was like a slap in the face", realization. "It took five years of thinking, and talking to people before the first Annual Free Will Offering Thanksgiving dinner became a reality in 2022", Phelps explained.

Phelps annual dinners have served over 200 people each year for the past three years. This year 289 dinners were served, with the help of 22 volunteers. Phelps explained, "It takes a couple of weeks to prepare the food to be served." My observation of the event is that Phelps leaves no detail unattended to. Volunteers from Missio Church were on hand as greeters, food servers, and to help clean tables. The McFarland family not only hosted the event at the Hoover Angus Family Farm but also, provided all the yummy desserts. One couple came from North Carolina to help serve the meal after learning of the history of the annual dinner through conversations with Phelps over the last few years. Friends directed parking, accessibility into the barn, signing in, food to go for homebound residents, including delivery and the Jarred Trolley was used to bring residents from Clearview Home in Mount Ayr. All monies collected through the free will offering are donated each year to various charities in memory of Nichole Rose Phelps.

Various people in attendance commented on how Tingley as a community, "Gets together and has the spirit of getting things done." Kevin Kobbe and his dad commented, "That they came 40 miles to attend, and that the dinner was awesome." On behalf of many it is my honor to, "Thank Donetta Phelps", for a dinner well served."

A Very Vintage Christmas

Image provided by Mount Ayr Chamber of Commerce

By: Dalton Shadle

Mount Ayr Iowa- On December 4 the Magic Makers Night Out event will take place from 4-7p.m. This event is to support local business and boost holiday spirit. Participating businesses Country Blossoms, Daily Flair, H&H Outdoors, Good Vibes Nutrition, Ayra, Aunt Jennies Attic, And In The Ayr. Along with this holiday season event is another one right around the corner on December 6 A Very Vintage Christmas takes place. There will be a parade held, lighting of the community christmas tree, Santa Clause and Mrs. Clause, food drive, Mount Ayr high school choir performance, and the "Tour of Trees"

First snow of the season arrives

photo by Jeff Snyder

Area residents were greeted with the first blast of winter this past week as snow blanketed the area with a heavy wet accumulation. Snow fall totals varied by community but a general three to five inches could be measured.

Diagonal sets out holiday decorations.

Photo by Dalton Shadle

Red Bulls on the winter line

By: Dalton Shadle

Painting by Donna Neary "Red Bull on the winter line".

The 168th Infantry Regiment commemorated a historical day on November 29, The Battle for Monte Pantano. The battle lasted for 6 days 29 November – 04 December 1943.

On 29 November 1943 the 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry Regiment was tasked with seizing the four peaks of Monte Pantano, then held by a full battalion of heavily entrenched German defenders. 168th Soldiers, veterans of Operation Torch and the North Africa Campaign, quickly dislodged the defenders and found themselves under immediate and sustained counterattack. Company B stopped seven German assaults on their position while the commander of Company A, despite being wounded three times, led a bayonet charge to halt a German breakthrough. The Battalion took the fight to the enemy, engaging in hand-to-hand combat throughout the battle and hurling stones down the mountainside at attackers when their ammunition ran low. Despite brutal cold, dwindling supplies, mounting casualties, and constant enemy bombardment, the 168th was able to hold their position for six days until finally relieved. This battle marked the first crack in the German's "impenetrable" winter defensive line and opened the way to Monte Cassino, Rome, and Germany's soft underbelly. A painting was done by Donna Neary which commemorated this historical event and pays respect to those whose lives were lost during the battle. The painting adorns the walls of National Guard armories across Iowa and Minnesota. You can veiw local 168th iteams in the Ringgold county court house

Photo by Diagonal Community Development Corporation