



Woodbury County Board of Supervisors

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September 11, 2018

To the Members of the USS Sioux City:

On July 18, it was our privilege to host Retired Navy Rear Admiral Frank Thorp who was an outstanding representative of the USS Sioux City. Admiral Thorp said that he was overwhelmed by the support in the Sioux City community, to which our response was, "We wish that we could do more." We asked him to convey on our county's behalf that all service personnel aboard that craft ought to know that we are behind you.

We were honored to meet some of you as a crew during your last visit and to establish a rich personal connection. Admiral Thorp told one of our supervisors that he would welcome those sentiments being expressed and so we as a Board of Supervisors wanted to collectively do so.

As you may know, Sioux City and Woodbury County have a long and rich tradition of military history. Our airport bears the name of the most highly decorated Soldier living until he passed away in 2017, General Bud Day, whose incredible service spanned amazing feats from World War II to Vietnam. We are also the proud home of the Iowa Air National Guard 185th Air Refueling Wing, the United States 960th Quartermasters Reserve Unit, and the Iowa Army National Guard's 1-113th Cavalry Squadron. From those units and others, we send from our families those, like you, who stand in harm's way.

Although we are far from the waters of the coasts, once in a while we also send the Naval Academy one of our own (most recently our Siouxland Chamber president's daughter comes to mind).

We recently celebrated the 100th anniversary of our Woodbury County Courthouse and had rich opportunity to call to mind the sacrifice of service, something less than 1% of the American populace will do in uniform. The designers of our National Landmark courthouse seemed intent on

interweaving into the very fabric of the building that the freedom of civil government comes at a price. There are battles that were raging at the time during World War I—Verdun, The Marne, Ypres, The Somme—and they are painted on the walls of our courthouse along with murals of Soldiers and the Red Cross. The first man to die in World War I, 22-year-old Edward Monahan, had the Legion Post housed there with his namesake. We shared with Admiral Thorpe that inside the Woodbury County Courthouse is a plaque made from the hull of the battleship USS Maine which was destroyed in Havana Harbor in 1898. It is as if the founders of courthouse 100 years ago whisper to us today to remember the battles and even the names. In opening up the time capsule this year that they emplaced in 1918, they even held hand-scrawled signatures, veteran lists of those who had fought in the Civil War. In hopes that this ship and your service is not forgotten, we emplaced in our time capsule (to be opened a hundred years from now) the coin of your ship, the USS Sioux City.

Our call, like theirs, is not for the remembrance of a ship, as powerful and impressive as it is: it is a call to remember the crew, all of you who stand upon the deck.

We remember you because we know that the cost of standing upon the deck of the USS Sioux City is in being apart from your families as well in order to keep us safe. **We remember you.** And if there is one sentiment that we can bear simply in a sentence it is this. **Thank you for the sacrifice and the love you display for this country and its people to stand upon waters in our defense.** You have put yourself in harm's way, but we also recognize that there are moments apart from families—birthdays, graduations, anniversaries, and just being there—those are the day-to-day living of sacrifice. It is not lost on this grateful community the sacrifice that it takes to complete your mission.

Know that just as you all are more than merely a ship, we are more than merely a community. Here in Sioux City and in Woodbury County, there are a people who pray for your protection and safety, your victory in battle as well as peace in your homes.

We desire these words serve as a reminder that we are behind you in the opportunity to encourage you by “holding the ropes,” opening our homes to you whenever you next come back and thanking the Almighty that you stand in support of protecting our freedom. May our God sustain and protect you wherever then your mission takes you until you come safely home.

Sincerely,



Rocky De Witt, Chairman



Marty Pottebaum, Member



Keith Radig, Member



Jeremy Taylor, Member



Matthew Ung