

DAR plans awareness local campaign for Constitution Week

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Certain businesses and schools in Crescent City next week will be flying banners reminding residents of Americans' rights and privileges. The banners, created by the Del Norte chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, note that Sept. 17-23 is Constitution Week.

Del Norte Office Supply, 240 I St., was one of first locations to post a banner in their window. "I was happy to put up their banner," said store owner Deb Stover. "DAR does a lot in the community.

"They promote education, give out scholarships, and even got a plaque dedicated to Rocky Peterson at Peterson Park, a Del Norte boy who got killed on the Arizona," said Stover, referring to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor Dec. 7, 1941 that sank four Navy battleships, including the USS Arizona.

Past president General Gertrude S. Carraway drafted the first resolution for the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution, in 1955. After it passed both houses of Congress, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued his proclamation on Aug. 19, 1955.

The following year, Constitution Week was signed into law as an annual observance.

Del Norte DAR regent Liz Freeman said the banners in Crescent City are meant to re-energize interest in the U.S. Constitution. "What we're trying to do is make people more aware of it, study it, know their constitutional rights and why we're so free," Freeman said.

The Del Norte DAR was formed in 2009 and has 20 to 25 members and prospective members, Freeman said, all of whom have traced, or are in the process of tracing, their family lineage to someone who fought in or supported the American Revolutionary War.

Projects of the county's DAR have included cleaning and preserving local monuments, and repainting headstones in the Veterans Cemetery on East Cooper Avenue.

The local chapter also was instrumental in raising funds to acquire the last 500 acres of Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park, located off U.S. Highway 199 near Hiouchi, for establishment of a World War II memorial there.

And the Del Norte DAR offers annual \$500 scholarships to graduating high school seniors. Freeman said that this year, enough money has been raised for three such scholarships.

In addition, she said, the DAR will be contributing pocketbook copies of the Constitution to schools as part of next week's celebration. "We'd love to see teachers become more aware of Constitution Week and make it a part of their curriculum," she said.

Looking ahead, the Del Norte DAR plans to join Wreaths Across America, with a goal of selling wreaths for \$15, made in Maine, to place at all of the national cemeteries across the U.S.

Locally purchased wreaths will be placed at Eagle Point National Cemetery, 2763 Riley Rd. in Eagle Point, Oregon, where Freeman said many veterans from Crescent City are buried.