

Scottsdale DAR pays tribute to WWII veteran

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Maserati of Tender Little Hearts Equine Mini Therapy, with founder Terry Holmes, wish Stella a happy 100th birthday.

Courtesy of DAR

The Scottsdale Piestewa Peak Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution participated April 21 in a celebration for a WWII veteran who turned 100.

Working with the DreamCatchers Foundation and other organizations, the DAR celebrated with Stella Sgro, who during the war was a drill sergeant and air raid warden in the Army.

“The DreamCatchers Foundation organized a beautiful tribute and birthday celebration with a drive by parade,” a DAR spokeswoman said.

Also participating in the celebration were Tender Little Hearts Mini Tales and Equine Mini Therapy horses, representatives from Veterans Affairs and the American Legion, the Arizona Patriot Guard Riders, Arizona Military Vehicles Collectors Club and hot rod cars.

Lydia McLaughlin, Sgro’s daughter, said her mom is still called “Sergeant Stella.”

McLaughlin became emotional thinking about the parade and people coming out to celebrate her mom:

“My mom has never been honored or acknowledged for her service, so this would be a dream come true for her,” she said. “Everyone loves her and she has always thought of others.”

When McLaughlin asked Stella why she served in the war, she replied, “I did it for the love of my country.”

Stella was presented a DAR WWII Commemorative Certificate by Chapter Regent Joyce Layton Bertilson in recognition of her valor, service and sacrifice during World War II.

Honorary Regent and retired Army COL Sandy Lanter Raynor also wished her a happy birthday and thanked her for her service.

Sgro was struck by lightning at the age of 12 – which the centenarian said made her stronger and turned her into a rebel.

Her family says they are most proud of her service to our country, her involvement in civil rights marches like the Selma to Montgomery March and her great kindness.

The event was organized by the DreamCatchers Foundation at Grand Canyon University.

The DreamCatchers Foundation, an Arizona-based nationwide nonprofit, is a network of high school and college student clubs dedicated to fulfilling the end-of-life dreams of hospice patients in their communities.

The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution was founded in 1890 to preserve the memory and spirit of those who contributed to securing American independence. To learn more about the work of today’s DAR in Arizona, visit arizonadar.org.