

Dept. of Military Affairs: Warrant officer candidate class constructs Sparta park improvements

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by Spc. Nathan Metz

SPARTA, Wis. — Wisconsin National Guard warrant officer candidates with the Wisconsin Military Academy's class 20-001 and local volunteers organized and carried out a community construction project for the city of Sparta last month.

The class of aspiring warrant officers decided to help with the construction project because it would leave a lasting impact on the community.

Warrant Officer Candidate Vanessa Pederson said that the class wanted to avoid any risks during the COVID-19 pandemic so they chose an outdoor project that would last well into the future.

“Community service means going above and beyond what a normal citizen is expected to do,” said Pederson. “The class wanted to find a project that was safe to carry out but still leaves a lasting impact and by doing this construction we will make something that will be around for many years to come.”

The warrant officer candidates spent most of their time assisting local volunteers in the construction of a retaining wall near Love Lock Bridge in Sparta.

Sparta resident Reinhard Mueller, who's a member of a local volunteer group, said that he has helped build upwards of 30 structures for Sparta. He said that he appreciates the work the warrant officer class has put into the project.

"Well, it's absolutely inspiring," said Mueller. "It's rare we have this much labor and I am really thankful for it."

Mueller also said that he appreciated the group coming together and interacting with each other and members of the community to complete the bridge project.

"In this park setting here the opportunity for people to walk and sit and ponder is very ripe here," said Mueller. "The bank here was a little steep, this project terracing the bank will improve the bridge and park."

Warrant Officer Candidate Brain Reier said that he enjoys being out in the community helping with a project that will be around after the class has graduated their training.

"It's been awesome," he said. "I think we have a really good class, and we've really come together to make things happen in spite of the challenges we faced with COVID. Hard work brings the class together, and it's been good getting to work with classmates outside of the classroom setting."

The warrant officer class is the most recent class to participate in Warrant Officer Candidate School at the Wisconsin Military Academy and administered by the Wisconsin National Guard's 426th Regional Training Institute housed at Fort McCoy, Wis.