

Dominican Lit Center caps 25th anniversary with parade march

Everyone loves a parade.

Aurora's Dominican Literacy Center capped a yearlong 25th anniversary celebration with a debut in the Aurora Memorial Day parade May 27.

The nonprofit center, sponsored by Dominican Sisters of Springfield, mobilizes female tutors to teach women to read, write and speak English. Additionally, the center offers free classes to prepare women and men for the U.S. citizenship exam. Since the program's inception, 2,800 women have graduated.



The center's parade entry, one of 60, comprised about 60 tutors, staffers, students and their families.

Sister Kathleen Ryan, center founder and director, said "Being in the city of Aurora Memorial Day Parade was a fitting and fun-filled ending to our 25th anniversary year celebrations. Many thanks to the city of Aurora for such an excellent experience."

Heading the center's contingent were tutors Jaime Kaisershot of Aurora and Nadine Stadel, Naperville, who teamed up to walk with an eight-foot-wide banner.



Riding behind were center staffers Sister. Ryan, Alison Brzezinski, Oswego, center tutoring coordinator; Sister Jane Ann Beckman, Aurora, center instructor; Sister Ann Clennon, Springfield, former tutoring coordinator; and Dalila Alegria, Aurora, center citizens advisory board chair, who drove a vehicle loaned courtesy of Riverview Ford in Oswego.

Walking were about 60 center tutors, students and their families. In addition to a vehicle-mounted bubble machine, about 500 bubble-solution bottles with wands

were distributed to spectators by center volunteers.

Tutoring coordinator Brzezinski said about 30 students completed language classes in May. Female tutors are needed for the fall semester to open in September. Applications are being accepted for training sessions in August. Call (630) 898-4636.

Thousands lined the streets of downtown to pay tribute to those who lost their lives and to salute local veterans for their service. The holiday weekend in Aurora included the parade, a special memorial brick dedication ceremony and Veterans Market Place.

Hundreds were seated in front of the Aurora Grand Army of the Republic Memorial Hall and Museum on East Downer Place for a pre-parade program. Aurora Mayor Richard Irvin, a U.S. Army veteran who served in the Gulf War, gave a stark reminder of war.

Pre-parade remarks were also given by the grand marshal of the parade, lifelong Auran and Vietnam War veteran Ed Huss. He attended Holy Angels School and Marmion Academy, both in Aurora, before being drafted into the U.S. Army in 1965. In 1966, he was deployed to Vietnam and served with the First Battalion 7th Cavalry Regiment until 1967.