

Nurse won Star for Gulf service

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"I DIDN'T have time to waste on getting homesick — people needed me," explained the Farmington Hills resident, a wife and mother of two who most people call "Nikki."

"I'm very glad for the experience," she added. "There is honor in duty done."

Newman is a 22-year Michigan National Guard veteran who serves with the 207th Evacuation Hospital of Detroit. She was the first nurse to join the Michigan National Guard.

Her prior active duty was at Brooke Army Medical Center in Ft. Sam Houston in Texas and with the 11th Evacuation Hospital in Pusan, Korea during the Vietnam War.

She was the first chief nurse of the 207th for 13 years before assuming the position of operating room head nurse.

While in the Persian Gulf, Newman and her staff provided support to two host nation hospitals in Saudi Arabia, caring primarily for Saudi soldiers and Iraqi prisoners of war.

"We saw more casualties from the

war than any other unit over there," she said.

Giving medical aid to enemy troops caused some distress for the American soldiers, she said, in addition to the general stress caused by the war effort. Much of the troops' anxiety started before they even left the States.

"They (the problems) ran from personal needs and anxieties, including single parents . . . and those with no marriages. Some of these people never expected to go to war," she said.

THE NEWMAN family's born-again Christian values kept her confidence up and her family strong, Newman said. Others didn't have that religious base, but were seeking comfort.

"There was a lot of spiritual interest," she said. "Bibles were going like hotcakes."

Living in Saudi Arabia at the King Faud complex was a lesson in patience, and she was pleased to get home to the many freedoms which she missed while there.

Although American women did not have to cover their heads, they wore long skirts and shirts of dark material while not in uniform. Women were not allowed to drive.

Most frustrating for her was the

religious restriction. "We had to pretend we had no religion," she said. So people held services under the guise of "moral support meetings" in married housing units, walking there in small groups to avoid suspicion.

Newman said it is good to be home, back to her husband Richard, daughter Andrea, 15, and son Jeffrey, 14 and friends. Here, she works as a nurse at the Veterans' Hospital in Allen Park and plans to continue her military career in the National Guard.

She holds a diploma in nursing and a bachelor of arts degree in Management of Human Resources.

While overseas, Newman said she was touched by the outpouring of support from the United States, and spoke to a few groups upon her return in May.

"I never saw so many school kids get involved," she said. "I got a lot of letters from strangers, and I made it a point to answer every one."

"Their writing made a difference and their love counted."



Farmington Hills resident Ruth Ann (Nikki) Newman, a lieutenant colonel in the Michigan National Guard, was recently awarded the Bronze Star for her leadership during Operation Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia.

School brainstorming 'uncorks' 2 key issues

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perceived inequities between boys and girls sports.

Although Cotton said "you certainly don't want the whole arena to be put into the political scene," the retired district athletic director said it would be "appropriate (for the board) to take a look at it now. Nobody's mad, but we need to take a look at it."

FLANAGAN SAID a special

Auto dealership picketed

By Branda Dooley staff writer

Skip Sampson says he practically grew up "without a father" and doesn't want his son to experience the same type of parental absence.

For that reason, Sampson joined a group of 40-50 picketers Saturday morning to protest in front of Bob Saks Oldsmobile in Farmington Hills. The protesters, most of them employees of local car dealerships, picketed to voice their opposition to Saks' being open Saturdays.

"We're trying to keep dealers closed on Saturdays so we can spend time with our families," said Sampson, who works at Pat Milliken Ford in Redford. "My father worked at a dealership when they were open six days a week, and I never saw him. I want to be with my son on weekends."

Fellow picketer John Hillman of Livonia agreed.

"We're showing our disdain for the number of hours dealers think we should work," Hillman said. "I've got three daughters, and they've had

school board meeting would likely be set up in early 1992 to discuss the athletic issues with the athletic director, Ron Holland, school principals and other involved in sports programs."

All seven members of the Farmington school board attended the study session, and all contributed to the 4- to 5-hour discussion, Cotton said. "It's just a question of where are we going? What have we got to look at?" he added.

a father — I'm able to do things with them on weekends, and I don't want that to change. As it is, we work 55-60 hours a week."

BOB SAKS, owner of Toyota, AMC-Jeep Eagle and Oldsmobile dealerships, said the picketers have valid concerns and should spend time with their families. He said Saturday hours are strictly voluntary at his dealerships, illustrating his sensitivity to families.

At the same time, Saks argued that Saturday hours simply make good business sense.

"I don't think the economic conditions are such we can dictate when customers can come in," Saks said from his office Saturday afternoon.

Picketers said they targeted Saks because he owns three large dealerships and pulls a lot of weight in the car sales business.

Saks accused the picketers of following a "double standard" by drawing attention to his business and ignoring other dealerships also open on Saturday.

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