

A Very Special Flag



Pictured from left to right: Johnston Mayor Paula Dierenfeld, Johnston Public Library Director Willona Goers, Webelo I Jake Wicks, Lt. Col. John Perkins, U.S. Army, Pack Master Tim Hansen

During the summer of 2010, nearly 3000 Iowa soldiers and airmen were deployed to serve our country in Afghanistan. Among those who were called to duty was Johnston resident, Lieutenant Colonel John Perkins. Lt. Colonel Perkins was the battalion commander for the 334th Brigade Support Battalion, Company A, of the Iowa National Guard, better known as the Red Bulls.

While in Afghanistan, the Red Bulls participated in a mission called Operation Bull Whip. Operation Bull Whip involved the transportation of fortification supplies into Guluch Valley, a new outpost in Afghanistan. An American flag, provided by Lt. Colonel Perkins, was carried by the Red Bulls as they performed their mission.

As a thank you for the many letters and packages received by the Red Bulls from Johnston Cub Scout Pack 29, the Red Bulls presented the flag carried in Operation Bull Whip to the Boy Scout troop. Lt. Colonel Perkins joined Pack 29 in presenting the same flag to the City of Johnston to be placed on permanent display at the Johnston Public Library.

The flag will serve as a constant reminder of the selfless sacrifices our Iowa National Guardsmen and women and their families make time and again to protect our freedoms and to keep us safe. A special thanks to Lt. Colonel Perkins for his service to our country and for bringing the flag back home to Johnston.

Thanks also to Pack 29 for sharing the flag with our community. We will display it proudly and be reminded every time we see it of the many young people in Johnston who love our country, who value community service, and who will grow to be our future leaders.

The next time you're in the Johnston Public Library check out this very special flag.