

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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DOLE SALUTES WEST POINT GRAD

FIRST COED APPOINTED FROM KANSAS

WASHINGTON -- Cadet First Class Victoria Lynn Nilles is the first female appointed from Kansas to graduate from West Point. She was nominated by Senator Dole in 1979 after successfully competing for a place on his slate.

Gaining an appointment to the Academy had been the goal of the daughter of Jerome and Doris Nilles of Andale since her freshman year at Andale High School. She entered the United States Military Academy at West Point expecting to play basketball for the Army Mules' womens team. Today, a 1983 graduate, on the Dean's List and with a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army, she is headed for the team handball 1984 Olympic Trials at Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Nilles served a leadership role in her company of 127 cadets this year. The group, including ten females, shared one floor of the barracks, which is comparable to a coed dormitory. While meeting the stiff academic demands of her political science major, Cadet Nilles simultaneously trained for military service. Last summer's activities included the Air Assault School at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where they learned to repel from helicopters.

Following graduation and commissioning ceremonies at Michie Stadium, the new Lieutenant Nilles plans to accompany her parents and three of her six brothers and sisters in attendance to Washington, D.C., for sightseeing. Back home in Andale for a brief visit, time will pass quickly until she leaves for the Olympic Trials. Next is Army Airborne at Fort Benning, Georgia, and 22 weeks of training in her Military Intelligence specialty at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. In March, 1984, she reports to her first assignment with the First Armored Division in Aushach, Germany.

When questioned about her experiences in what was formerly a man's world, Cadet Nilles commented, "I had no problems. It's been a positive experience."

She commented on the friendships she has established, particularly with the team handball members, and on the feeling of mutual respect experienced in classes. She added that her four years at West Point were all that she expected and more.