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Thanksgiving 2011

Martha Cothren is a teacher at Little Rock's Robinson High School. Back in 2005, on the first day of school, she taught her students a lesson that directly relates to Thanksgiving. Let's go back in time to her classroom to peek in and listen:

Students: *Miss Cothren, where are our desks?*

Miss Cothren: *You can't have one 'til you tell me how to earn one.*

Students: (Excitedly) *Good grades?*

Miss Cothren: *Nope.*

Students: (A little calmer) *Good behavior?!*

Miss Cothren: *Nope.*

(Puzzlement and silence)

First Period came and went: no chairs. Second, Third, and so forth: still no chairs. By Seventh Period, all the kids plopped on the bare floor. That's when Miss Cothren gathered them to her: "Throughout the day, no one has really understood how you earn the desks. Now I'm going to tell you." With that, she rose and opened the classroom door. In walked 27 U.S. veterans in full uniform. Each carried a desk.

"You did not earn your desk. These guys paid the price and did it for you. Never forget that! Now your responsibility is to learn to be good students and good citizens."

These soldiers and others like them have for centuries paid the high price for freedom that you and I enjoy each and every Thanksgiving. They paid for the chairs 'round the table set with turkey, dressing and all the trimmings; they paid for the couch and easy chairs we will flop on to cheer our favorite team; they paid for the seats in the cars we will drive to go shopping in the pre-dawn on Friday. Now our responsibility is to be good citizens.

This year, as part of our traditional Thanksgiving letter, and in observance of Veteran's Day, we are including some ideas how you can personally show your support in tangible ways.

One in particular is close to home and is one that has recently caught our interest and support. The Central Florida Veterans Memorial Park Foundation is building a Memorial to honor the fallen soldiers of Central Florida located adjacent to the new VA Medical Center at Lake Nona. Their project is worthy of all of us who cherish our freedom and wish to honor those that make it possible. Please review the attached information regarding this project, and again, it is a very worthy and local way to tangibly express "Thank you," to support our troops this Thanksgiving.

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There are also a number of Internet sites with ideas and opportunities to do something for our soldiers overseas:

- <http://www.soldiersangels.org>
- http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/391694/how_to_adopt_a_soldier.html?cat=48
- http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/436963/support_our_troops_send_a_thanksgiving.html?cat=74

So thank you, Miss Cothren! Thank you for teaching us all, young and old alike, the lesson of thankfulness.

From all of us at Certified Financial Group, Inc.