

Memorial Day Service at the Silver Bay Veterans Home

By Haley Searls

The wind blew swiftly and the sun shone brightly as townsfolk gathered in the Silver Bay Veterans Home parking lot May 30th to commemorate Memorial Day. All seemed to be glad to come together to honor those who gave their lives defending our freedoms. Among those gathered were nine girl members of the American Heritage Girls Troop MN2931. The girls were excited to again be part of the ceremonies. For two of the youngest members, this was their first experience in being part of a service at the Veterans Home. Their individual flags flew and their faces glowed with pride for those who paved the way for them to be at this service.

Volunteer Service Coordinator Randall Walz welcomed the guests and residents of the Veterans Home attending the outdoor service. Later he commented on how respectful everyone was - both for the service and for the COVID-19 protocols. Walz says, "We so ap-

preciate our community and their ongoing support." Walz then invited retired Master Chief Petty Officer Dennis Claflin (Navy) to open the service with prayer.

Master Chief Petty Officer Claflin started the service by explaining the difference between Memorial Day (observed on the last Monday in May) and Veterans' Day (observed on November 11). The chief difference is that Memorial Day is to specifically honor those who have died in service to the United States, while Veterans' Day is to honor all those who have served in the United States Armed Forces.

However, another difference between the two holidays that may not be so obvious is the reason for their origination. Memorial Day was founded to honor Union soldiers killed in the American Civil War, while Veterans' Day is observed on November 11th, commemorating

the anniversary of the end of World War I.

After prayer, the Honor Guard stood at attention while Master Chief Petty Officer Claflin gave a message emphasizing that, while it is always proper to thank a veteran, this service is to honor those who paid the ultimate sacrifice. Those military heroes who gave their lives for our freedom. This juxtaposed with the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our freedom and forgiveness of sin.

Following the message, a bell was tolled ten times - one time for each veteran who had passed away in the previous year at the Silver Bay Veterans Home. Taps was played and the Honor Guard was dismissed.

Thank you to all those who have sacrificed their lives for the United States of America. Your sacrifice is remembered and appreciated.

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