

MARTINSVILLE BULLETIN

Carver Memorial Day speaker

Service a small sacrifice

Tuesday, May 30, 2006

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Writer

On a day dedicated to those who made the “ultimate sacrifice for their country, 2nd Lt. Ancell S. Hamlin told those gathered at Carver Memorial Gardens’ 22nd Annual Memorial Day Service that they could follow the example of selflessness set by those veterans.

They could make smaller sacrifices every day through service to the community, he said.



Second Lt. Ancell S. Hamlin of Richmond was the guest speaker for Monday's service.

Hamlin, a truancy site coordinator for the city of Richmond Police Department, was the guest speaker at the event Monday evening. He said his brief military service had helped him see the value of the veterans who died for their country.

“We owe them a debt of gratitude we can never repay, he said.

Hamlin read from Cmdr. Kelly Strong's poem, titled “No, Freedom Isn't Free.

But there are many ways to serve, Hamlin said, and the challenge is to find the skills one has to help others.

Hamlin said the decline in service in community groups is not a generational problem. Rather, he said, it is a side effect of how busy and impersonal the world has become, a place where people may not even see their neighbors for days.

“But the needs are greater than ever he said.

Hamlin shared examples of how, in his work as a truancy officer, he has seen that taking an interest in a child can make a difference with the young person. He encouraged those present to mentor and make a difference in the life of a child in need.

“You have a lot to share, he said, “And I know some child out there will welcome your

interest and kindness.

State Sen. Roscoe Reynolds, D-Ridgeway, also appeared at the event. He said it is important to remember that about one million men and women, our “brothers and sisters, have died for our country in its more than 200-year history. He said that works out to more than 15 a day.

Many more than that have come home from war irrevocably changed by it, he said. The event also featured a special ceremony in which a table with a chair and white tablecloth and place setting was assembled and ceremonially draped with a POW-MIA flag to represent those missing in action or prisoners of war.

“The chair is empty. They are missing, Peggy Santuk of the Ladies Auxiliary AMVETS Post No. 35 explained. “Do not forsake them. Pray for them and remember.

The event also included the laying of a wreath, firing squad salute and the lowering of the flag by the Magna Vista High School JROTC, prayer and the recognition of other dignitaries including Curtis Millner, chairman of the Henry County School Board; Iriswood District Supervisor Paula Burnette; Horsepasture District Supervisor Debra Buchanan; members of the Henry County Sheriff’s Office; Martinsville Police Chief Mike Rogers; and the officers and members of a number of local veterans groups. The service was sponsored by Carver Memorial Gardens and residents of Henry County and Martinsville. Constance M. Martin is coordinator.