

MARTINSVILLE BULLETIN

Speaker honors sacrifices

Millner: Honors are fitting for veterans

Tuesday, May 29, 2007

By MICKEY POWELL - Bulletin Staff Writer

Too few people take time to recognize soldiers who sacrificed their lives while serving in the military, protecting the freedoms all Americans enjoy, according to retired Navy Lt. Col. Timothy L. Millner.

"The 'memorial' in Memorial Day has been ignored by too many of us" who have reaped the benefits of their sacrifices by continuing to be able to live in a democratic nation, said Millner, the keynote speaker during the 23rd Annual Memorial Day Service at Carver Memorial Gardens on Monday.

He mentioned that local veterans now buried in the cemetery likely "never received the honor and respect they earned." "Men and women who were put in harm's way deserve more than the overly used term 'hero,'" he said, adding that they deserve a day honoring them. More than one million U.S. soldiers have died since the Civil War, and "each loss of life contributed to a better nation," Millner said.

A list of deceased Martinsville-Henry County veterans was read during the ceremony. Prisoners of war and soldiers listed as missing in action also were honored. Millner noted that achievements generally cannot be made without sacrifice. Today's soldiers serving overseas want to be home with their families, but they trust that the sacrifices they are making will benefit their nation, he said.

He speculated that people today might not take time to recognize veterans' sacrifices because they do not have a great interest in history. He indicated that may be because they don't think they will make a mark on history.

"Please know your life is important," he told the crowd of about 100 who attended the Memorial Day service, emphasizing the point to young people. Being that everyone is important, Millner encouraged those in attendance to "make sure your voice is heard" in government, such as by voting and calling or writing lawmakers with concerns.

"Let us not forget ... we can all make a difference" through our words and actions, he said. A Martinsville native, Millner is the son of Beverly J. and Katherine R. Millner of Martinsville. He graduated from the former Carver High School and earned degrees from Chowan College, Howard University, the University of Florida and Temple University School of Law. He served



Members of the St. Paul High Street Baptist Church Children's Choir lead the Pledge of Allegiance at the Carver Memorial Day Service on Monday.

in both the Army and Navy.

His Navy career took him throughout the world. Before retiring from the Navy earlier this month, he served as head of the Facilities Management Branch at the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, responsible for the management of all Navy and Marine Corps medical facilities worldwide.

Millner now lives in Alexandria but is part-owner of J&K Bottled Water Co. in Henry County. He received a plaque from the Carver Memorial Committee to commemorate his speech. Among other highlights of the service were the Laying of the Wreath by the Magna Vista High School JROTC Color Guard, a 21-Gun Salute, the Pledge of Allegiance led by the St. Paul High Street Baptist Church Children's Choir and songs performed by Erma Preston, including the National Anthem.

The Magna Vista High School Band also performed during the service.

There was a moment of silence to remember the victims of last month's massacre at Virginia Tech.



Navy Lt. Col. Timothy L. Millner



Saluting the flag at the end of Monday's service are members of the Homer Dillard American Legion Post 78 (front, from left) Harry L. Holland, Ed Keen Jr. and George Flood.