

MARTINSVILLE BULLETIN

'The future ... is bright'

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By LES TRACEY - Bulletin Staff Writer

To Dottie and Jim Barrow, Memorial Day is a time to think of all those whose graves it has been their honor to visit.

Jim Barrow is the commander of the Martinsville-Henry County Veterans Memorial Honor Guard, which provides services at veterans' funerals throughout the year, and Dottie Barrow serves as president of the American Legion Post 42.

"When you're in the service or married to someone in the service, you always think of those who have died in the service (on Memorial Day)," Dottie Barrow said. "My husband was in Korea and Vietnam and all the other skirmishes, and he came home. A lot of others didn't."

Carver Memorial Gardens sponsored its 18th annual Memorial Day service Monday with the theme of "Beyond 9-11: Where do we go from here?"

In making the keynote speech, Lt. Col. Oliver Pryor Jr. asked the crowd of about 65 to observe a moment of silence for those servicemen who have died during the current war in Afghanistan.

Pryor, who is currently the commander of the field training group of the 29th Infantry Division at Fort Belvoir, has served in Somalia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Bosnia and many other countries.

He said he was in a firefight in Somalia and thought about having to make the ultimate sacrifice for his country.

"I picked up my weapon and was prepared to fight to the end," he said.

In talking to many young people entering the military since he came home from that tour of duty, he said, he believes the future of the military is in good hands.

"I can tell you today the American spirit is strong and it's great," he said. "The future of this country is bright, and the future of the armed services is strong."

Samantha Mullins, a junior at Magna Vista High School and a member of the school's JROTC, laid the wreath to commemorate those missing in action or prisoners of war. She said her grandfather is a retired serviceman and her father is currently stationed

in El Paso, Texas

"We celebrate Memorial Day a little differently sometimes," she said. "My dad's gone a lot, so we do something to think of him."

The flag at the cemetery was lowered by the Magna Vista High JROTC Color Guard and presented to Pryor at the end of the service.