

MARTINSVILLE BULLETIN

Veterans urged to share stories

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By DEBBIE HALL - Bulletin Staff Writer

Veterans of World War II were encouraged at a Veterans Day Banquet on Saturday to share their stories with younger generations.

State Sen. Roscoe Reynolds, D-Ridgeway, said he hopes "veterans who served in World War II are telling their story to the current generation" so the sacrifices of veterans and their families can be better understood.

To the younger generations, "I hope you'll learn," Reynolds said, and remember their sacrifices. "We must always remember their sacrifices ... And those returning, we must make sure their needs are met," Reynolds said.

Lt. Col. John Michael Evans, U.S. Air Force Reserves, was among the guest speakers at the banquet that was organized by American Legion Homer Dillard Post No. 78. It was held at the Smith River Missionary Baptist Association Center.

"For some, this is just another holiday," Evans said. "But it's much, much more." The day is intended to honor those "people who have answered the call to defend" the liberties we enjoy, he said.

Surveying the crowded room, Evans said "it makes my heart proud" to see the veterans attending. "I know everyone of you have your own story."

On Dec. 8, 1941, the day after Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese, many military personnel enlisted to fight in Word War II, "the war to end all wars," Evans said. Recalling that "Pearl Harbor ... Great Britain ... France ... Iwo Jima ... Roosevelt ... and ... Churchill. Those were big names" during that time.

"But there are so many others," Evans said of the many veterans, their families and friends.

"This is the day we honor the men and women who served" and their selfless acts,



Lt. Colonel John Michael Evans , guest speaker for Homer Dillard Post #78 2006 Veteran's Day Banquet, delivers his message to veterans Saturday night.

Evans said. "No one group deserves to be honored more than the veterans of World War II. God bless America and God bless all those who have helped her."

Martinsville Mayor Kimble Reynolds said he was thankful for the opportunity to "sit down and break bread" with veterans attending the event. "... A big, big, big thank you to all veterans who have served," he said.

Blackberry District Supervisor Jim Adams said his father is a World War II veteran. As a child, Adams said he recalled asking his father "to tell me about the war."

His father relented a few years ago, and told Adams about serving on a transport team in Germany, moving supplies from one area to another.

"Little kids used to run along the side of the supply truck," Adams said, and when there was extra candy, his father and others riding on the truck would toss candy to them.

Adams, who worked at Bassett Walker for a number of years, related that story to another employee, Bernie Westendorff. It turns out that Westendorff was one of the children who ran alongside the supply truck.

"World War II veterans, you honor us with your presence here today. ... Please tell those stories," Adams said.

John H. "Johnny" Philpott performed several songs during the program, including "The National Anthem" and "His Truth Is Marching On."

When it was time for the chorus, many sang along ... "Glory, glory, hallelujah. His truth is marching on."