

Memorial Day program honors vets

By Norma Martinez
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The weather was perfect on Monday for the Memorial Day program at the Bird City Cemetery. There was just enough wind to allow the flags to gracefully flutter in the breeze. Between 30 to 40 people came to participate in the program sponsored by the American Legion 352 Commander Charles Coleman and the Auxiliary President Hulda Dorsch.

The program service began with everyone saying the Pledge of Allegiance and singing the "Star Spangled Banner." Pastor Dan Carson gave the opening prayer and after the group sang "America," Mr. Coleman introduced Mr. Carson as the speaker.

The memorial roll call was given by Mr. Coleman for Glenn Glasco and Hal Sager the two veterans whose flags were retired to the post collection this year.

After a moment of silent prayer remembering the dead, Joy Anderegg placed the memorial wreath on the tomb of Everett L. Nelson. "God Bless America" was sung by the group and Pastor Carson gave the benediction prayer.

Norman Dorsch gave the commands to Charley Damm and Charles Coleman and then joined them for a gun salute to the deceased. Walker Janicke, Devon Janicke and Jordan Janicke played "Taps" as they stood spread out amongst the trees just off the road leading to the cemetery.

Following is Pastor Dan Carson's speech:

It is a privilege and honor to stand before you today and to give a message of our Great God and of our Great Nation. It is such a beautiful backdrop with all of the flags waving. As we gather here we are so grateful to the veterans that have fought and have given their lives so that we could gather here today.

Isaiah 26:2,3 reads; "Open the gates that the righteous nation may enter, the nation that keeps faith. You will keep him in perfect peace him whose mind is to stead

fast, because his trusts in you."

It is wonderful to have peace amidst in the current threat of war in Ukraine, Iraq and Afghanistan, Israel. God promises to give us peace as we trust in Him. As our National song so adeptly says, "America, America God shed His grace on thee."

I love reading about the history of traditions. Celebrating Memorial Day began in 1865 when Henry C. Welles who was a druggist from Waterloo, New York mentioned at a social gathering that honor should be shown to the patriotic dead of the Civil War, by decorating their graves.

In the spring of 1866 he mentioned this again, this time to General John Murry the Seneca County Clerk. General Murry truly embraced the idea and a committee was formed to plan a day devoted towards honoring the dead. The townspeople of Sereca wholeheartedly jumped right in. Wreaths, crosses and bouquets were made to decorate each soldiers grave. The town itself was decorated with flags flown at half mast and draped with evergreen boughs along with black streamers in memory. The idea began to grow and spread and the first official recognition of Memorial Day came on May 5, 1868 by General John A. Logan.

Logan was the Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic which was a Fraternity of veterans of the Armed Forces. It has been calculated that there have been approximately 650,000 battle deaths that continues since the Revolutionary War and each one represents a precious God given life. But we all know it is more than those who gave their lives in battle.

Memorial Day is also about those that were left behind. It is about the wives that lost their husbands. There have been so many sons and daughters that lost their parents. It is about remembering the tremendous sacrifice that was paid by all clear across this nation.

Veterans - We honor you, we



NORMAN DORSCH gave the commands to Charley Damm and Charles Coleman, then joined them for a gun salute to the deceased during the Memorial Day program at the Bird City Cemetery.

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez.

thank you, and Veterans we enjoy our Freedom today even as we gather here today - because of You!

How great it is to be living in the United States of America where we can gather wherever we like without fear, without compulsion. As Isaiah speaks to how we will remain in such a free country He tells us, "Open the gates that the

righteous Nation may enter, the Nation that keeps Faith. You will keep him in perfect peace, him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you." Righteousness, Faith and Trust in our Lord - all determines whether we will live in God's perfect peace. The blessing of God we noticed in everything we do and how wonderful it is to live in such a great nation. We all

have so much to be thankful for, especially on a day like today. The other day I was walking around here in the cemetery and I was amazed at the number of markers for the Auxiliary and the Veterans next to the headstones, some of the people we may have never known. Some of them have dear friends and family and one thing is certain, everyone of them and ev-

ery one of you Veterans gathered here today have given of yourselves for our Freedom.

We salute you all today and again Thank You! May we continue to live in a Righteous Nation filled with righteous people thru the blood of Jesus Christ and May God continue to shed His grace on us.

Cheylin says goodbye to teachers



TONY AND KARA RODRIGUEZ, above, enjoy cake during the Cheylin reception for departing teachers. Mrs. Rodriguez taught Title 1 at Cheylin. Below, Anthony Blair visits with students and friends. Mr. Blair taught P.E. and health for Cheylin. Attendees wished the two luck in their new adventures.

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez.

Senator Bob Dole to visit Cheyenne County

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Politics is something that St. Francis resident Bonnie Cram has always taken seriously and been involved in. For that reason, she has had the opportunity to meet and campaign for some well known Republican legislators, including Bob Dole.

This week Mrs. Cram is excited to have the opportunity to see her old friend once again. At the age of 90, Mr. Dole is visiting 105 counties in Kansas on a tour to say thank you to all the people that have supported him for so long. He will be stopping in Cheyenne County on Friday, May 30 at the St. Francis Public Library from 11 a.m. to noon.

Bonnie Cram and her husband, Dick, both became involved in the Cheyenne County Republicans when they moved back to their home town of St. Francis in 1954. After attending her first meeting, Mrs. Cram's enthusiasm earned her a nomination to be vice chairman that evening. In the years that followed, she became county chairman.

"I was county chairman for 35 years and vice chairman many years before that," she said.

In 1960, Mrs. Cram got word that a man named Bob Dole was running for United States Representative. To help, she arranged a panel discussion with him and Robert Cram as the speakers at the legion hall in St. Francis. Mr. Cram was her father-in-law who served in the Kansas State House of Representatives for 11 years. After listening to him speak, Mrs. Cram said she thought he was wonderful.

"Afterwards, I said to Bob Dole, 'I like you! Is there any way that I can help you?'"

Mr. Dole told her that he needed a county chairman for Cheyenne County. She eagerly accepted the position and was Mr. Dole's chairman from 1960 to 1996 when he retired after running for president.

Mrs. Cram said she has done every-

thing from handing pamphlets out to organizing meetings with Mr. Dole and Cheyenne County residents. One time, she even drove up and down Main Street with Mr. Dole in the back of a pick-up.

"He came to St. Francis. I put him in the back of a pick-up with a loud speaker system," she said. "With Bob Dole in tow, we drove up and down Main Street, yelling 'Vote for Bob Dole!' with the loud speaker!"

Campaigning was a family affair, with her children lending a hand as well. Mrs. Cram said she would type up letters to send out, and use carbon-paper copies. There were no copy machines available back then. Her children would help by licking the stamps and stuffing envelopes.

Throughout the years, Mrs. Cram has remained a supporter of Mr. Dole. Every year she sends him and his family one of her handmade Christmas cards. When Mr. Dole retired, he made a point to call her and request that she continue sending her cards because he enjoys them so much. She said that really meant a lot to her.

One of Mr. Dole's biggest supporters, Bonnie Cram, will be there this Friday with many members of her family to welcome him. She said that three of her children, Ione Slattery, Darris DeGood and Richard Cram are all coming to St. Francis to meet with the former Senator. Her brother-in-law, Jim Cram of Lakewood, Colo., will also be coming to St. Francis to meet with Mr. Dole. Mr. Cram is a 98 year old World War II veteran.

"I'm making my way across the state of Kansas during several trips this year," Mr. Dole is quoted in a news release as saying. "I hope to see friends and former supporters of mine, and I am looking forward to enjoying lots of cookies along the way - preferably oatmeal raisin and chocolate."