



STANDING AT ATTENTION to honor the newly installed veterans memorial statue in memory of Fred Magley and other local veterans at Cheyenne Valley Cemetery, south of Wheeler were (l to r) Pete Jensen, Ron Hill, Sam Miller and Jerry White. The annual Memorial Day service was held Monday morning. Herald staff photo by Douglas Sloper

Veterans honored at multiple ceremonies

By Carol Sloper

Freedom is not free. Our freedom is afforded by the many brave men and women who have served this country in the past and those that continue to sign on to protect that freedom today. This heartfelt message was conveyed this past weekend in the many county ceremonies and the "What is War" exhibit at the Quincy Street Gallery in honor of Memorial Day.

Special tribute was paid in several services to remember Medal of Honor recipient Army Sergeant Jack Weinstein. His wife, Nancy, and other family members were on hand at these ceremonies which recapped his exceptionally valorous actions on Oct. 19, 1951, during the Korean War where his platoon came under enemy attack.

Mr. Weinstein's decisions and actions that day to stay back and cover while his men withdrew from the line, killing six enemies, and ingeniously using enemy grenades when his own ammunition was out, earned him the Medal of Honor. This highest recognition for valor was delayed until March 18, 2014, after a congressionally mandated review was done to ensure that eligible recipients were not bypassed due to prejudice.

Hope Valley Cemetery

A group of 25 guests gathered at Hope Valley Cemetery, northwest of St. Francis, on Sunday afternoon in a brief but spirited service led by Larry Wilson and Althea Lebow.

Mrs. Lebow welcomed the guests and asked them to join in singing *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*.

"On this most solemn holiday, we must stop and consider the great sacrifices that others have made so that we may have the freedom and prosperity we enjoy," said Mr. Wilson in his address. "Let us consider what our forefathers here in this cemetery, and what those valiant service men and women, were fighting for."

Mr. Wilson urged Americans to take a look into their souls to see what they are doing with the bloodstained legacy those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice have left behind.

"For most, Memorial Day is a three-day weekend filled with barbeques and picnics, a time to get away from the normal humdrum of the week, a beginning of summer," he said. "But Memorial Day holds a special significance, not as a gesture endorsing any Nation and its current political or economic policy, but in honor of

brave men and women who gave their lives for others."

After the thoughtful message, Mrs. Lebow rounded out the ceremony by singing *You're a Grand Old Flag*. The caretakers of the cemetery invited all guests to stay afterward for homemade cookies and tea.

St. Francis Cemetery

The tributes continued on Monday morning when more than 100 people gathered at the St. Francis Cemetery east of the city at a service planned by the Lions Club and VFW Post 1528. Veterans were asked to stand: two from World War II, eight from Vietnam, five from the Korean War, and four who served in peace times.

Former Marine, Jerry White, led the ceremony and addressed those in attendance. "Today we pay our respects to all the veterans who have died. This is done by placing a small flag by the grave of every veteran."

He continued by stating that to be a strong nation, we need strong leadership. We need to continuously maintain a strong military of young men and women to serve in the armed forces. This year, he said, two of our local seniors have enlisted to serve our country: Lane Hoffman in the U.S. Marines
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RAISING THE COLORS were (l to r) Sam Miller, Pete Jensen, and Ron Hill. Playing Taps was Sydney Sundstrom. Herald staff photo by Douglas Sloper

Legislator in St. Francis Friday; old friend tells story

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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 everything 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 pickup.

"He came to St. Francis. I put him in the back of a pickup 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, she said. 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.

As one of Mr. Dole's biggest supporters, Bonnie Cram will be there on 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. "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."