

Memorial Day, 2010

Yesterday I was privileged to be part of a true Memorial Day celebration. The city of Florence, KY, the Boone County Veterans Association and the Northern KY Chapter 5 Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. joined together to honor veterans from all branches of the military.

The parade was great and I have to say the Blue Star Mothers float was outstanding with our big red, white and blue star and the flags of all the military branches and POW/MIA billowing in the breeze! It made its way from Boone County High School to the Florence Government Center with townspeople and friends lining the way.

The ceremony that followed was truly awe inspiring! It honored three present day heroes from Boone County who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country in the War on Terror, Corporal Christopher "Tyler" Warndorf, Jr., Lance Corporal Adam Daniel Peak and Technical Sergeant Anthony C. Campbell. The three Gold Star Mothers were escorted to the Florence Government Center lawn by an honor guard of US Marine Riders who are ever near to protect and honor the families. To each family was presented proclamations and citations from the city of Florence, Boone County, the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the United States Senate. The honors were presented by last year's honoree, Gunnery Sergeant Brandon Bailey, who, much to our amazement, was resplendent in his full dress uniform and "walking" among us! His progress was an inspiration to all present.

We all marveled and were deeply touched by the story written and read by Katelyn Warndorf, sister of Tyler, telling of her experience on hearing of her brother's death and finding that he still had the first letter she had ever written him. Her moving story was titled, "The Crumpled Piece of Paper".

The Kentucky Chapter 5 Blue Star Mothers ceremoniously laid wreaths at each of the monuments to honor all those who have lost their lives or are currently POW/MIAs in all wars. They also participated in the ceremony in which the three Gold Star Mothers were presented with a paver brick by HB Deatherage and Gunnery Sgt Bailey. Each Gold Star Mother laid her son's paver brick in the "Walk of Honor" next to the War on Terror memorial.

Each veteran in the audience was asked to come forward as Gary Griesser, city of Florence, sang the song representing their branch of service. To each veteran was given a small flag and a token of appreciation from the city. The Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force and Marines were honored.

And finally, on behalf of the Blue Star Mothers and the US Marine Riders Association, Lorene Friedman, President of the Blue Star Mothers, made a special presentation to a veteran and friend who has done so much to make sure that veterans from Florence, Boone County and veterans everywhere get the recognition they have so dearly earned. Harold "HB" Deatherage was presented with a Verdun Veteran's Bell for his service to those veterans.

This is what Memorial Day is all about and I was extremely proud to be part of this celebration of honor and respect to the men and women who have given so much, often like these three young men who gave their lives, so that we can have the freedom to live our lives in the way that we choose.

God Bless Our Troops and Our Veterans!

Peggy Eubanks

Parliamentarian

Northern KY Chapter 5

Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.