



TONY BRITT/Lake City Reporter

Jason Massey, American Legion Post 57 Adjutant, adds the list of recently deceased Post members during the Post Everlasting ceremony on Monday.

Post 57 remembers fallen on Memorial Day

Guests observe 'respectful' day to reflect on service members' sacrifices.

By **TONY BRITT**

tbritt@lakecityreporter.com

More than 100 people, including members, guests, supporters and well wishers, gathered at American Legion Post 57 in Lake City to honor fallen comrades, servicemen and military heroes during a Memorial Day program on Monday.

The ceremony, which took place at 11 a.m., featured a program that encompassed three phases to honor troops who have lost their lives while serving in the military, as well as other Post 57 members who died recently and a flag disposal ceremony.

Bill Huggins, Post 57 commander, served as the master of ceremony for the program as well as the event's keynote speaker.

During his brief address, Huggins detailed the history of Memorial Day and gave several examples of soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Huggins noted the program was a Memorial Day observance following the Post Everlasting ceremony, celebrating the lives of everyone who was affiliated with the Post who died during the year and

MEMORIAL

Continued From 1A

transferred their membership to the heavenly post. A dignified flag disposal ceremony rounded out the occasion. Post staff then served lunch to the crowd.

"Why we're here, it's not just about barbecues and picnics, it's about remembering all those that sacrificed everything that we have the freedom that we have today," Huggins said.

Huggins said Post 57 has held a similar program for many years. He noted that attendance appeared to be larger than at past events.

"Each time we do an event, we seem to be getting a little better turnout," he said. "Unlike years past where they tend to come in for the food, they're actually coming in for the celebrations or ceremonies and everyone was very respectful today... We've got an amazing post here. In the past year we've seen attendance at these things grow significantly, more importantly we've seen something you don't see in these organizations — typically you have four or five people who do everything in the post, now here I've got people I've never seen before cooking, serving and what have you. Our membership

is actually getting more involved in the day-to-day operation and the support of this post."

William Bell, American Legion Post 57 chaplain, noted that the event had a really good turnout.

"These people offered the ultimate sacrifice for us, for our freedom and it the least that we can do," he said of the Memorial Day ceremony.

Jason Massey, American Legion Post 57 adjutant, was also pleased with the event's attendance and noted he liked the program.

"I did like this year's program," he said. "I thought it was very considerate and it demonstrated to everyone what Memorial Day was really about — not about the parties and the food, but it was actually respecting those who never came back and who died for this country."

Massey, an Army veteran who served three tours in Iraq, noted the importance of a ceremony where veterans honored other veterans.

"It means a lot of me. I lost some comrades overseas," he said. "It means a lot of me to see this much support and know that I'm not alone in losing friends and fellow soldiers overseas in wars in defense of this country."



Photos by TONY BRITT/Lake City Reporter

ABOVE: The American Legion Post 57 honor guard presents the colors during the organization's Memorial Day ceremony on Monday. **BELOW:** Post 57 chaplain William Bell leads members in prayer.

