

HONORING VETERANS



Photos by TONY BRITT/Lake City Reporter

A pair of youngsters hand out American flags to veterans and others during Saturday's Veterans Day parade in Lake City.

Annual Veterans Day parade a hit with veterans, residents.

By TONY BRITT

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Columbia County veterans were the guests of honor Saturday afternoon as American Legion Post 57 and the VFW hosted the annual Veterans Day parade.

As local residents lined Marion Avenue to watch the parade, several participants like the Columbia High School Marching Band stopped in front of the Lake City VA Hospital to perform the national anthem while

PARADE continued on 8A



Members and family of American Legion Family Post 57 wave to the crowd during Saturday's parade.

PARADE

Continued From 1A

other entries stopped to present veterans with candy, Thank You cards, flags, roses, wristbands, well-wishes and hugs.

Corey Conklin was with a bunch of youngsters from Cub Scout Troop 85 which attended the parade with 10-15 members in attendance.

"It's not our whole troop, but we did have a good turnout today. We got to pass out a bunch of flyers to the veterans just thanking them for their service," he said, noting the young Cub Scouts like the event and interactions with the veterans. "It's important to bring them out to an event like this to show support for our troops, to show there's more to all of this than looking at the cool cars. We're going to teach them about the flag."

Judi Conklin talked to her son, Corey, as well as his young charges after the parade ended.

"I loved it," she said of attending the parade.

She said continuing the tradition of having a Veterans Day parade is important.

"It's important to show to the veterans, especially in a time like this with America like it is," she said. "I felt it was important to come and support all the military."

Austin Thomas and Debra Thomas had their entire family at the Veterans Day parade.

"I think it was great," Debra Thomas said of the parade. "It was a lot bigger than last year. It was very well organized and put together. We enjoyed it."

Austin Thomas liked continuing the tradition of having a Veterans Day parade.

"It's important to show our vets as much appreciation as we can," he said.

Joseph Barfield, a Vietnam veteran and resident of the Robert H. Jenkins Veterans Domiciliary, said he enjoyed the parade.

"I liked it, but I got here a little late and I missed the motorcycle (Legion Riders)," he said. "I think they ought to continue to have something like this next year. When you think about Veterans Day, every day is Veterans Day, not just one day out of a year. The prices we paid when I was over there in Vietnam, there was a lot of them 18 and 19 years old that had young girls at the airport when they got on the plane — they didn't come back."

Joanne Whitehead presented Barfield with a rose as the parade ended and spoke to him about being blessed and alive after the conflict.



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ABOVE: Members of the newly formed American Legion Post 423 wave to the crowd during Saturday's Veterans Day parade. **BELOW LEFT:** Members of the Columbia High School JROTC drill team present the colors during Saturday's Veterans Day parade. **BELOW RIGHT:** Joanne Whitehead (right) presents a rose to Joseph Barfield, a Vietnam veteran, during Saturday's Veterans Day parade.





ABOVE: Thomas "AKA Cheesecake" salutes the audience as he and other American Legion Riders participate in the Veterans Day Parade on their motorcycles.

BELOW: Kenneth Bowen (standing), a retired U.S. Navy veteran, served as the Grand Marshal during Saturday's Veterans Day parade.

