

Post 57 hosting MIA/POW ceremony

American Legion
holding event
Friday at 6 p.m.

By **TONY BRITT**

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American Legion Post 57 members will pay homage to Prisoners of War and the Missing In Action during a new ceremony at the Post later this week.

Post 57 will hold a ceremony for National POW/MIA Day beginning at 6 p.m. on Friday at Post 57, 2602 SW Main Blvd. in Lake City.

"It's a recognition ceremony,"

said William Bell, Post 57 chaplain, noting the event will include a speech and feature the Post's Honor Guard. "We're going to have riflemen guarding the table and this time the Honor Guard is going to build the single man Prisoner of War table."

Each item on the table is symbolic and while each item is added to the table, Bell will state what each item represents.

According to Bell, it's the first time American Legion Post 57 has held a separate POW/MIA ceremony.

"The last two years I have not seen it performed, so it may be

the first one," he said of the ceremony. "This one is real important because since World War II there has been 81,000 prisoners and individuals missing in action, so these are people we should not forget. I don't believe there's any active Prisoners of War, but there's still those that are missing. So, until they're all found and brought home, we should remember this day."

With it being National POW/MIA Day, Bell said he thinks other American Legion Posts around the country are also holding ceremonies to commemorate the occasion.

"I have seen advertisements for people to recognize it," he said, noting Legionnaires from the area are optimistic to participate in the program. "The Honor Guard is really excited about doing this one."

The ceremony is open to the general public and Bell is anticipating that a fairly large crowd will attend.

"It seems like every time we do these events that they get bigger, so I'm hoping that this is a good turnout like it was for the Patriot Day," he said, noting he expects the program to last around 20 minutes.