

Memorial Day service honors country's heroes

Written by Darci Tomky

Red, white and blue flags were flying in the breeze on a nice Memorial Day morning, Monday, May 27 when a special service honored veterans at Holyoke Memorial Park southeast of town.

Over 300 flags marked servicemen and women's graves at the cemetery and greeted a large crowd as they gathered for the service.

They were welcomed by Terry Barth, commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars, Colorado Post 6482 and commander of Colorado American Legion Post 90.

"Memorial Day is more than a day off work," said Barth, noting its significance in honoring those who have served and continue to serve their country. "I still hear them marching behind me, and I cannot fail them," he said.



Terry Barth (at left), commander of VFW Post 6482 and American Legion Post 90, salutes the American flag while sister and brother Ella and Luke Stewart sing the national anthem.

—Enterprise photo

Richard Brown gave the opening and closing Memorial Day prayers. Siblings Ella and Luke Stewart provided special music for the service by singing the national anthem and "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

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Holyoke native and World War II veteran Glen Stenson was Monday's guest speaker while in town celebrating his 70th class reunion. March 12 this year also marked the 70th anniversary of his joining the Navy in 1943.

"Our history is built on the sacrifice of men and women," he said, noting he wants to make sure today's young people are aware of and respect that sacrifice.

While on his Honor Flight to Washington, D.C., Stenson marveled at the respect his group of veterans received from students touring the nation's capital. He wishes all students would have the chance to see the memorials in Washington, D.C., to see the magnitude of lives given in sacrifice to the country.



World War II veteran Glen Stenson speaks to a large crowd during Monday's Memorial Day service.

—Enterprise photo

"Do our school children know how many vets are buried in these hollowed grounds?" he asked the audience. How many students have interviewed veterans about their experience in the

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service? What is today's society doing to make children aware of America's war history?

Stenson noted WWII was the last war American soldiers were allowed to win, with the wars following being settled by political agreements. "If we're going to send our young men into battle ... for God's sake, let them win!" he said.

Stenson concluded with, "God bless those who have served and continue to serve."



Jim Gribben is one of seven to serve in the color guard for the service at Holyoke Memorial Park.

—Enterprise photo

The Memorial Honor Roll was read by Barth and Brown at Monday's Memorial Day service. The audience also got to hear from Maj. Gen. Kenneth L. Hagemann, the second-highest ranked person to serve from the Holyoke community.

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Monday's color guard included Jim Gribben, Steve Millage, Gene Kleve, Gary Snodgrass, Richard Miles, Alan Minton and Connley Hale.

To conclude the service, taps was played by Camille Elliott on trumpet.

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