

Memorial Day 2007 ~ Eagle River Wisconsin

By Dan Wiedenfeld

The *American Legion Riders* for District 11 were out in force for this year's Memorial Day Ceremony held in front of the Vilas County Court House in Eagle River Wisconsin. Members from both Post 114 and Post 480 being present and accounted for.



There was a large turn out from the General Public as well, as everyone wanted to show their support for our Troops overseas. There were many Veterans in the crowd wearing Caps and Jackets from their old uniforms to help show their pride for their past service and our country.



The ceremony opened with the crying wales of a lone Bagpipe heard from far off in the distance as Linda Bassler slowly marched onto the ceremonial

grounds wearing a full parade dress Scottish Uniform and playing the bagpipe. The soulful notes of the bagpipe pierced the morning air and gave visions of soldiers marching off to war.

Opening remarks were by our very own Vilas County resident 1st Sergeant Retired Scott P. Jenson, who also gave tribute to and explained the ceremony for the POW/MIA Table.



Master of Ceremonies this year was United States Army CW3 Retired Donn Provin.



His speech reminded everyone that our wars today were being fought equally by both men and women, and that because of this; our country's troops were starting to see the highest number of female battle injuries ever in our nation's history.

Margaret Tekus sang musical solos of both the Star Spangled Banner and God Bless America. The 'Northland Pines High School Marching Band' played several musical selections including a medley for all Branches of Service. One by one all Veterans stood as the song for their Military Branch of Service played... Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, Navy and Marines, it was truly surprising to see how many past veterans were present in the crowd.

Dick Klug was instrumental for the displaying of...

'The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier'



This powerful symbol brought home the true solemn meaning of the Memorial Day Ceremony and was also used in part of the ceremony by the Eagle River Boy Scout & Girl Scout Units. Each of the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts passed by the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier placing a Poppy Flower on the Tomb, this was a quiet and heart tugging part of the ceremony.



A Rifle Salute was made by the sharp dressed and tight unit of V.F.W. Post 3637's Honor Guard. The sound of their rifle shots echoed off the distant buildings, the metal clinking of the spent brass rifle cartridges could be heard as they hit and bounced together in the grass. The smell of gunpowder was now heavy in the air.

'Taps' played from a lone Northland Pines High School Marching Band Member... the sad notes of this single trumpet sounding out from somewhere far behind us, as if calling the Soldiers home from a great distance. This ceremonial song so somber and mournful brought a tear to even the most hardened veteran there.

<http://usmilitary.about.com/library/milinfo/milsounds/taps-2.ram>

As a final point the Memorial Day Ceremony came to an end much like it began with Linda Bassler in Scottish Uniform playing the bagpipe to 'Amazing Grace' as she slowly marched off the ceremonial grounds. The lingering sounds of the bagpipe haunting in the distance.

This was a day to give tribute to our fallen hero's and a day to come together and meet and share memories with other veterans, family and friends. This was a Memorial Day to remember with pride. To be able to say, "I am a United States Citizen!"

