



VERNETTA HAACK and Melvin and Mary Jo Haack decorate the grave of Norman Haack on Memorial Day.

## Pastor gives speech on nation's war

In observance to the heroes of our country who risked their lives in our nation's wars Pastor Tom Bailey gave the following speech that seemed worthy of extending to the Bird City Times readers.

Of course there is sadness in remembering the dead and injured of our nation's wars. May this Memorial Day be a celebration of hope that the ideals of peace, freedom, and prosperity will shine forever bright in the life of our nation... and in the lives of her individual people.

We will not forget what these heroes have done and what their loved ones have lost. Like you, I am proud of our American Legion here in Bird City who has always shown great pride in honoring our nation's fallen heroes and unending support for those America sends to continue the fight for freedom in many corners of the world. And I am equally proud of the Disabled American Veterans who have long been dedicated to the idea that we honor the dead by serving those who lived...but returned from military service sick and disabled.

We can never repay the debt we owe them, yet we can strive to glorify their sense of honor, duty and dedication to the principles and freedoms by which we live. As we observe this Memorial Day, we ensure that their memory and spirit lives on.

Captain Derrick Heyl flew his Cobra gunship helicopter over the remote terrain of Afghanistan searching for 12 Marines who had radioed that they were surrounded on the ground by enemy Taliban fighters. When he found the Marines, they were, indeed surrounded by no less than 70 Taliban. Immediately the Taliban raised their guns and shoulder launched rockets toward Captain Heyl's Cobra helicopter. Evading their fire, he pointed his Cobra directly at the Taliban and he and his gunner directed their fire at the enemy. In three swift passes, Captain Heyl's Cobra killed all 70 enemy. Not one Marine was killed.

For his bravery, Captain Heyl was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross at a special ceremony later at his home base in New Orleans. That night, before leaving home to receive his award, Captain Heyl told his wife, two sons, and visiting parents that he had to attend what he called a "boring meeting" on the base, that he'd be back home in a couple of hours. No need for them to go to this event. Truth be told, Captain Heyl did not want his wife, his sons or his parents to hear the details of how he had earned the Distinguished Flying Cross. He showed the award to them when he got home and told them he flew "a few missions" to earn it.

Captain Derrick Heyl is my nephew, my sister's son, of whom our family is obviously proud. I saw Derrick a few months later and asked him what was going through his mind during that mission. Derrick said, "Uncle Tom, I saw the enemy surrounding my Marines. It looked bad. I did what I was trained to do. But as I pulled the trigger on my automatic machine gun on that Cobra, I prayed for the souls of the 70 enemy I killed. For they too were fathers and sons. They were caught up

in the wrong cause. It bothered me for a while to have killed so many in such a brief time but I rejoiced with the Marines whose lives were saved. And rejoiced with their wives and parents and children as well."

Derrick is a brother to Captain Brent Heyl, also a Marine pilot, also my nephew, also with two children and a young wife, is also much decorated for his valor. Brent flew giant troop helicopters in Iraq, flying Marines into battle before dawn and late that night flying out the wounded and the Marines who were killed in combat. He had to wash the blood from the floor of his helicopter after each mission. Each of my nephews has gone through three tours of Iraq and two tours of Afghanistan. They know honor. And they know sacrifice for too many of their friends have given their lives.

Somewhere today, Derrick and Brent and their families are doing what we are doing on this sacred day: honoring and remembering the fallen and wounded in all our branches of service to our beloved country.

But that alone is not enough. Those who died not just for their country, but for their comrades serving with them. The United States would have continued to survive had Captain Heyl and his Cobra gunner retreated away from the danger they found, but the Marines serving on the ground in their company would not have. They protected those with whom they served.

The bond is strong. Shakespeare wrote of the bond between warriors in Henry the Fifth. "We few...we happy few...we band of brothers. For he shed his blood with me, shall be my brother".

The lives our soldiers saved are their legacy. The lives of the many who have not survived are our legacy.

Today, we honor the memory of America's veterans whose remains consecrate the soil throughout the world. Let us resolve to renew our commitment to lead the world toward greater peace, freedom, and prosperity.

I have presided over dozens of military graveside services. At each service my eyes fill with tears of patriotic pride as taps is played and the folded flag is presented on behalf of a grateful nation to the spouse or family of a fallen warrior. We remember their sacrifices, that families continue to live with holes in their hearts, and we must continue to love and support these families and honor their memory.

It is our sacred obligation to our dead and wounded a sacred obligation to their children and our children to never forget what they have given.

We will continue to pray for our country and all who serve and have served. For their families, who also serve by losing precious days, weeks, months and years spent while their loved ones are far away serving, preserving the peace and the freedom we enjoy in this country. We will continue to pray for the families who paid the ultimate price, whose loved ones have died, or were taken captive and never returned. We will pray for anyone who may still be held in captivity and thinks perhaps they are forgotten. We shall NOT forget!

God bless our veterans, our fallen, and God bless America.

## Thirty-five veterans attend service

By Norma Martinez  
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The previous days strong winds died down for Mondays Memorial Day service at the Bird City Cemetery attended by 35 Veterans and family members.

The program began at 10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance, Star Spangled Banner, and prayer.

Just as Pastor Tom Bailey started to give his speech the group was highly honored to have a duplicate of a P-51 Airplane fly over the cemetery. The sound of the engine made a perfect background setting as an introduction to Pastor Bailey's words of introduction thanking Charles Coleman Bird City's American Legion Commander, and Hulda Dorsch the Legion Auxiliary President, honored guests, and proud Americans for the opportunity to speak on this special Memorial Day.

Pastor Tom began by saying our nation has been getting together in communities and towns, and placing flowers and flags on the graves of those who gave their lives and devotion to our country since 1868. Remembering the dead and injured of our nation's wars brings sadness but it is a way of celebration and hope that the ideals of peace, freedom, and prosperity will shine forever bright in the life of our nation, and the lives of individual people.

He went on to give a personal homage to the service men who



GUIENEVERE BURR decorated the graves of her great-grandparents at the Bird City Cemetery on Memorial Day.

Times staff photos by Tim Burr

are presently serving in the war by recognizing his own nephews who are distinguished Marines that miraculously survived the recent wars. (See full story in Pastor Tom's Memorial Day speech).

Joy Anderegg and Wanda Dowdy placed a wreath of red carnations on the stone of Everett Nelson as a memorial tribute to the first Bird

City person lost in the war.

Norman Dorsch the Sergeant at Arms and the Comrade Squad: Jay Gordon, Bob Brubaker, Charlie Damn and John Hoevel recognized Steve Sanders as the Deceased Comrade at Arms with the gun salute.

The service was concluded with Walker Janicke playing Taps on

the Bugle. Everyone then went to the Senior Center for coffee, juice and rolls which were donated by Brenda from Hometown Market.

Charles Coleman, Don Jackson, Gary Leach, Norm Dorsch, and John Hoevel returned to the cemetery at 5 p.m. to take down the flags ending the day with beautiful clear skies.

## Football seniors to play in game

Two Cheylin football seniors and their coach will be participating in the 27th Kansas 8-Man All Star Games.

Jeremiah White and Ethan Young, graduating Cheylin seniors, will be playing in the game and Max Keltz will be a coach for the West squad. The Division II game will be held on Saturday, June 9, in Beloit at Trojan Field, North Hersey Ave. The game will start at 1 p.m.

In 2010, Cheylin was league, district, bi-district champions, and regional runner up with a 10-1 record; in 2011: league, district champions, and bi-district runner-up, with an 8-2 record.

White ran 2,006 yard for the Cougars in 2011. He lettered in football, basketball, track and golf, qualifying in the 4x100m relay. He was also selected as 1A Division 1 All League running back.

He is the son of Loren and Wendy White, Bird City.

Young was team captain, 2009 and 2011; 2010 Western Kansas Liberty League All-League Second Team, tight end and defensive line; 2011 All-League First Team defensive end and tight end; and Kansas 2011 All-State 8-Man Football Honorable



White



Young

Mention defensive line.

Other honors include lettering in basketball for four years, and selected to the All Tournament Team at the Sagebrush Basketball Tournament.

Ethan is the son of Jane and Rod Young and plans to attend the University of Nebraska-Kearney and major in athletic training.

Mr. Keltz started teaching at Cheylin in 1988 and has spent the last 24 years at the school teaching and coaching. For 13 years, he served as assistant football coach under Michael Green and has been head coach since Green left. He also coaches middle school boys basketball, is the track coach and athletic director.

He was an assistant coach for the All Star game in 2002 and head coach in 2003.

## Annual Bird City alumni banquet held on Saturday

The annual Bird City High School Alumni Banquet was held last Saturday, May 26, at the Cheylin Schools cafeteria. The Banquet committee, under the direction of volunteers Dave and Marcia Hickert, John and Darla Deeds, Steve and Jan Busse, Mike and Belinda Boyson, and Ned and Deb Smith, sold seventy three tickets. The tables were covered in Cardinal red and white paper. Background music was in the theme of "Music of their Times", and was music from the years of the honored classes.

Kent Chapman, Cardinal alum, filled the position of emcee for the occasion. Honored classes were recognized, and there were short presentations from some of these classes. Honored classes were the classes of 1937, 1942, 1947, 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967 and 1972.



The group, as a whole, discussed the future of the banquet. It was decided, with continued and increased help of more volunteers, that the annual event would continue to be held on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend, and it will be held next year.

After the conclusion of the banquet, attendees recounted Cardinal history and glory, while enjoying their desert and a time to visit.

## Swimming Pool opens

