PHOTOS BY DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

After Mayor Jeff Gowing hosted the virtual portion of the Memorial Day ceremony (left), a 21-gun salute and performance of "Taps" was held in Veterans Park (above).

Grove *from A1*

commissioned from 1985 to 2015, delivered a speech on the broadcast.

Main spoke of his memories of past Memorial Days growing up in Cottage Grove and told the story of his neighbor, Joe King, who served as a sailor on the USS Ward. Main recounted how, on Dec. 7, 1941, the Wickes-class destroyer sunk a two-man midget submarine tailing a cargo ship off the entrance to Pearl Harbor, thus becoming responsible for the first American-caused casualties of World War II.

"I looked for a person to talk of this Memorial Day of the soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen and Coast Guard, who I served with, or whom had died during Panama, the First Gulf War, Somalia, the Second Gulf War, Afghanistan and then back to Iraq.

"Not mention those that died in other conflicts peacekeeping, providing peace enforcement, humanitarian assistance, or security assistance, during my time in service," said Main. "I choose a man who has died during peace, but served his country well during the Second World War from our community. May he and others not be forgotten."

Main also encouraged the public to examine the multiple lists of war casualties for Lane County.

"Those we memorialize on Memorial Day, some will fade in time from Cottage Grove and the surrounding community when families move. Or the fallen perhaps were the only sons or daughters and they slip from our memory," he said. "They should never be forgotten, as they have made the ultimate sacrifice to allow us to continue to live with the rights and privileges we enjoy."

Meanwhile, an Oregon Air National Guard flyover of the PeaceHealth Cottage Grove Community Medical Center was performed by F-15 Eagle pilots from the 173rd Fighter Wing out of Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls.

"The flyovers are … aimed at supporting and thanking healthcare workers, first responders and other essential workers who are working to keep Oregonians safe and healthy each day," the Air National Guard said in a statement. "The tribute also hopes to unify and boost the spirits of Oregonians and to recognize military members who have lost their lives in service to our country."

The flyovers were part of "Operation: American Resolve," aimed at saluting those at the forefront of the COVID-19 response. Twelve other flyovers were performed in the area.

VFW Commander Kristine Sweezy then read a list of fallen veterans from the community, which was followed by a 21-gun salute and a performance of "Taps" at Veterans Park.

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