

Memorial Day 2020 Remembered

Memorial Day 2020 was not celebrated as we expected or wanted. We wanted to hold ceremonies as in the past, but the Pandemic forced us to cancel or modify those events. CDC guidelines on large gatherings were observed locally. The new National Veterans Cemetery north of Fargo planned on having a very large event as their first Memorial Day since opening. Instead a small number of people gathered there and held a brief ceremony. As part of the ceremony, politicians from North Dakota and Minnesota spoke virtually. You can view the ceremony virtually on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/Ceenuig7SLE>. It is a bit long, about 48 minutes, but very well done and worth viewing. Members of local motorcycle clubs formed a honor line on the road by the cemetery. Those same motorcycle clubs organized a Memorial Day ride to Georgetown where a brief ceremony was held including 22 seconds of silence in memory of the 22 Veterans who commit suicide each day. The ride was organized by the local American Legion Riders and I was proud to join the ride.

Our local Veterans' organizations, American Legion, VFW, DAV, Vietnam Veterans of America and others continued their traditions of holding ceremonies at local cemeteries to honor our Veterans. Sweetie and I did our annual trip to visit cemeteries near Newfalden, MN where many of my family members are buried. On my personal webpage, lesbkake.com, you can click on the Family Veterans Page tab and see some of those. I just learned of two additional family members who served. Bertil Larson was in WWII and wounded, came home and was called back into the Army for Korea. Bertil was killed in action in Korea on 14 September 1950. His son David Larson entered the Army on 20 January 1969, went to Vietnam where he was killed in action on 27 February 1970. We played TAPS at each of the three cemeteries and did a special honor for the two Larsons. We also visited Riverside cemetery in north Moorhead to honor Russell Lake, my Sweetie Bev Lake's father. He is a Navy Veteran having served in the Pacific during WWII.

The pandemic may have made this a better Memorial Day because we were not able to do things a lot of people do on holidays such as traveling, shopping, etc. As such, many of us had more time to remember and honor our Veterans. Having said that, I will be very happy when the pandemic is over and life returns to some semblance of normal.