

## Veterans Recognition Ceremony Synopsis

June 28, 2009

Well we had good weather for our ceremony at Wichita Veterans Memorial Park today. I didn't count but there was a decent crowd, much more than the "dozens" reported on KAKE.

The program went smoothly; Bagpiper Charles Liles once again donated his services and it was a pleasure to hear him play "Amazing Grace" and "Taps".

Singer Jennifer Weiman sang the National Anthem acappella and did a beautiful job. She was easy on the eyes too with her red hair. Got some good pictures of her on the photo page.

Our first set of speakers; Rick Babinger, CCSM John Kimball and Craig Hansen all did great jobs of giving patriotic speeches.

City Councilman Jeff Longwell was a surprise guest speaker on the subject of the current park issue before the City Council.

John Wilson by all accounts did a good job with his speech. I can't comment too much since I am John Wilson.

Dennis Scuffham gave a rousing speech outlining the KSVAC Mission & Facts concerning the current park issue. The audience spontaneously broke out in applause several times during his talk.

Linda Kirby was outstanding in her closing speech and had to stop several times to let the applause die down. I'm glad she is on our side in this.

Post 4 did a great job in providing road guards for the motorcycle ride-in and opened their post up early to accommodate us and provided us a place to gather after the ceremony.

As usual there wasn't much coverage from the TV news networks. KSN & KAKE showed up and filmed for an hour and a half to give us about 30 or 40 seconds of coverage on KSN and less on KAKE.

On the 10'oclock news both channels aired their coverage giving us token lip service as well as the Mayor's Vietnamese Community Town Hall Meeting they had later in the afternoon.

The Mayor stated on both networks (I'm adlibbing as I don't have the exact text) that we need to be better "neighbors" to the Vietnamese demands and likened our situation to the 1960's. I'm assuming that we were being compared to having a racist attitude of the 60's since that seems to be the only thing they can argue against our position that "The right to memorialized in the Veterans Memorial Park is earned by honorable service in the United States Military, and by nothing else."

That doesn't seem to be too hard a concept to grasp but apparently since they keep playing the "racial" card every time they get in front of a reporter they can't think of anything else to debate their position.

John Wilson