

C/2nd Lt. Andrews, Ava A

November 10th, 2021

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Veteran's Day Article

Veteran's Day Air Force JROTC Newsletter

On November 10th, Merrill F. West High School held a POW MIA (Prisoner of War, Missing in Action) table ceremony for those who served our country. Merrill F. West High School's JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps), Choir, and Orchestra were a part of this event, all of them putting this event into action.

The Ceremony started with the National Anthem performed by the West High Choir and Orchestra, along with West High's AFJROTC Color Guard, led by Cadet 1st Lieutenant Christopher Rodriguez. Once everyone was seated, Cadet Major Seymour Dalit Cornell gave a brief welcome to our distinguished guest, staff, students, and our Veterans in the past and present before the POW MIA table ceremony began.

The table was set for 5, each set for one branch of the military. For each set seat, one cadet honored the branch. Cadet Chief Master Sergeant Kyle Vernon honored the Army, Cadet Captain Timothy Miles honored the Marine Corps, Cadet Major Valery Rincon honored the Navy, Cadet Captain Dallin Silcox honored the Air Force, and Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Carli Turner honored the Coast Guard.

Cadets performing the missing man table ceremony raised their hats from the honored branch, placing it on the table before them. The table was set with symbolic items, the hats from the five

branches resembling unity with our comrades, one table resembling frailty, the table was round to show our concern for our missing men. The table was set with a white tablecloth to show purity, a single rose reminding us of the life of each of the missing and the loved Americans who have served us, a vase with a yellow ribbon to symbolize our determination, a pinch of salt for the tears, a slice of lemon on a plate, to symbolize the bitter fate, and a candle lit in hope of their return alive or dead.

Each cadet who originally held a hat raised an item. Cadet Chief Master Sergeant Kyle Vernon raised a Red Rose, Cadet Captain Timothy Miles raised a vase with a yellow ribbon. Cadet Major Valery Rincon raised a lemon, Cadet Captain Dallin Silcox raised a saltshaker, shaking it onto the table, and Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Carli Turner lit the candle in the middle of the table. Once all the items were raised and placed down, they raised up a glass, flipping them over to show their inability to share this moment with us. Once they finished, they lined up in the back of the guests, while the West High FFA (Future Farmers of America) placed a wreath. After a moment of silence, taps were played by the West High Orchestra. Cadet Major Seymour Dalit Cornel recognized the veterans that worked at Merrill F. West High a welcome along with an overall recognition for those whose family members are serving currently or previously.

After recognizing our veteran families or members, Congressman Josh Harder gave a speech regards to the appreciation and honor for our military veterans.

Cadet Major Seymour Dalit Cornel brought the ceremony to a close, explaining the gratitude we owe to our veterans who risked their lives for our freedom and even safety while the Orchestra played America the Beautiful. Merrill F. West High's Air Force JROTC Unit CA-20161 gave Dr. Brown thanks for bringing Merrill F. West High's JROTC unit and the positive impact on campus.

Veteran's Day for many people is a day off. But what many people don't understand is the honor and gratitude we should give our veterans retired or currently serving on this day. Veteran's Day is a

holiday in which we honor those who served us and helped us gain the freedom we have to this day, but even those who are still working to build our country. This helped many people understand the importance and honor that we owe to our fellow veterans.