



## Governor, Fine Weather, Produce a Strong Turnout

By Corissa Jansen of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel staff

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Waubeka -- The scene behind the old Grandview School Sunday looked a little like a battlefield.

Soldiers dressed in military gear marched in line to a drum cadence. Camouflaged jeeps made tracks through the grass. A cannon boomed in the distance. To the casual observer, it might have seemed as though war had been declared in Waubeka.

But then there were the tutus. The baton twirlers from the Kettle Kountry Twirlers of Kewaskum, dressed in glittery red, white and blue costumes, signaled the true nature of the gathering -- a Flag Day parade.

The parade was part of the National Flag Day Foundation's double celebration of the patriotic holiday and Wisconsin's Sesquicentennial. More than 100 marching and military units performed in the parade, which was led by Gov. Tommy Thompson.

"Yesterday I rode a Harley. This morning I canoed down the Wisconsin River," Thompson said. "Today I get to come to a real highlight."

Thompson said he was honored to be a part of the festivities in the birthplace of Flag Day. Bernard J. Cigrand, a teacher at a rural school on Schumaker Hill, held the first Flag Day celebration at the schoolhouse on June 14, 1885.

Though the Flag Day Foundation has sponsored a parade and celebration every year since 1946, the foundation's president said Thompson's presence and Sunday's good weather made this year's event a particular success.

"Turnout was fantastic this year," president John Janik said. "Far superior to normal."

Debbie Nelsen of Fredonia took her three sons to watch the parade. "We go to it every year -- it's patriotism," she said. Members of the Sons of the American Revolution color guard march every year in the parade. Each member is a descendant of patriots who fought in the Revolution, said commander Harold Klubertanz of Madison. Ancestors of two color guard members fought at Valley Forge with George Washington.

The group marches in re-creations of Revolutionary War uniforms. "We've got quite a group," Klubertanz said. "There's an attorney, a state trooper, a retired dentist -- we're a good mix."

Jajuan Harris, a member of Boy Scout Troop 181 of Racine, marched in the parade with his troop's drill team.

"Flag Day's a good way to celebrate your country. It's fun," Harris said. The celebration's newest feature was the National Flag Day Foundation Americanism Center's Avenue of Flags. The walk depicts how the star configuration of the American flag changed over the years as states joined the union.

"It's a historical lesson as you go down the line," Janik said.

The goal of the foundation goes beyond just learning about the flag, he said.

"Our mission is to have people both young and old realize the contributions of those before them," he said.

The Americanism Center is open to the public the third Sunday of every month.

More than 100 units, including color guards and military vehicles, took part in the Flag Day parade Sunday in Waubeka. The town celebrated the first Flag Day in 1885.