

May 9, 2014

Record-Journal staff **MERIDEN** — The Lincoln Middle School auditorium was filled with military veterans and their friends and families Friday afternoon, as more than 100 veterans received ribbons and medals for their service in the armed forces.

In an effort to honor people who served in the armed service during a time of war, the state legislature passed a law in 2005 that allows veterans to be awarded a ribbon and medal for serving during a war era. The ceremony Friday honored more than 100 people who served during various wars and conflicts including the Vietnam War and Desert Storm. The veterans contacted for the ceremony were from Meriden and Middlefield.



“It’s truly an honor to publicly thank the veterans that have gathered here today for all you have done and all you have sacrificed for the American people,” said state Sen. Dante Bartolomeo, who contacted the veterans and arranged the event.

Dr. Linda S. Schwartz, who serves as the commissioner for the state Department of Veterans Affairs, said it used to be typical since the Civil War for all members of the armed services to be honored with a medal for their service. Since World War II, she said, it had “fallen by the wayside” until 2005.

“It’s just a small token of our appreciation,” Schwartz said.

During the ceremony, the Antique Veterans of Meriden World Post No. 1 were honored with citations for their efforts.

Since 1997, the group has honored deceased veterans with burial ceremonies at funerals.

Most recently they were honored after being named the grand marshals of the Daffodil Festival parade.

The parade carried on through the rain, and they have been asked to also serve as grand marshals for the Memorial Day Parade.

Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman personally thanked the Antique Veterans with a citation and thanked all of those in attendance for serving in the military.

“You have given our friends, our families, our children the freedom to grow up in this wonderful country,” she said. “We can get a good education and good health care and we want you to know it’s because you fought for our freedom.”