

The mood was solemn at today's Peace Officer Memorial Ceremony in Avery County as citizens gathered to remember and appreciate sacrifices law enforcement officers have made in the High Country.

Among those honored was Deputy Glen Hicks who was killed answering a call on Old Beech Mountain on February 20, 2003. His son, Deputy John Hicks, was an honored guest at the ceremony. His children, the slain deputy's grandchildren, read a poem as the youngest child released a balloon.

The children were not the only poets to express loss and appreciation for Hicks' sacrifice. His son, John, had words as well.

Tears and proud smiles were contagious as the Pat Ray Post of the VFW performed its 21 gun salute. To the bagpipe background of Ella Markland, Avery County Sheriff Frye thanked his officers for their service, and encouraged High Country citizens to do the same.