

Memorial Day is a day unlike any other. Since 1868 we have come together in our communities, cities and towns, to place flowers and flags on the graves of those who have given their last full measure of devotion to our country. We have come here to remember and honor those who have done their duty, and never asked for anything in return other than to be respected and remembered for doing their duty of protecting our freedom and our way of life. In doing so, millions of these soldiers paid the ultimate sacrifice, their life, for our freedom.

For most families, the Memorial Day weekend kicks off the season of barbecues, family get togethers, parties, and all sorts of other outdoor fun. But the true meaning of Memorial Day goes much deeper than this. The meaning of memorial is "in memory." With that in mind, we know the true meaning of Memorial Day, TO HONOR AND REMEMBER ALL THOSE AMERICAN SOLDIERS WHO DIED DEFENDING OUR FREEDOM. OUR RIGHT TO BE FREE!

It's the Soldier, not the reporter, who has given us the freedom of the press.

It's the Soldier, not the poet, who gave us the freedom of speech.

It's the Soldier, not the politicians, that ensures us our right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It's the Soldier who salutes the Flag, who serves beneath the Flag and whose coffin is draped by the Flag.

The American soldiers came from all walks of life and many of them were just ordinary citizens who did something extraordinary. Millions of them died defending our freedom and our way of life. They paid the ultimate sacrifice, their life, so that we could be free.

The total deaths of American soldiers who served in Major United States' Wars, which includes The Revolutionary War, Civil War, World War I, World War II, The Korean War, The Vietnam War, The Gulf War, The Iraq War and the Afghanistan War, is more than 1,345,600 soldiers lost their lives fighting for our freedom.

Memorial Day is not a day to honor the living, but to the contrary, it's a Day to Honor those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for us and this Country protecting our freedom and our way of life. Memorial Day is a time to remember and celebrate. Though sadness touches our hearts, the courage and bravery of those who gave their lives defending our country are two Memorial Day traditions that will carry on long after we are all gone.

On this Memorial Day, try and take some time, even if just a few minutes, to think and remember those men and women from our hometown and from across the Country who have served and died but who will never be forgotten. Because, the Real Meaning of Memorial Day is to honor and remember all those American Soldiers who died defending our freedom!

Thank you, and God Bless the United States of America.