

Memorial Day Message

As I stood with other Sons of The American Legion on the hallowed ground of Arlington National Cemetery last February, I gazed at the acres of grave markers and said, "We stand here because they lie there." The mortal remains of thousands of men and women who gave their lives while in service on faraway battlefields and on the homeland so that we could breathe the air of freedom, lie in repose under those stones. They rest in eternal peace in cemeteries in every state across our nation, as well as other countries across the world. To those heroes we owe a debt we can never repay.

Every year we set aside one day to honor their memory. We call it Memorial Day. It is not appropriate to say happy Memorial Day. It is meant to be a somber day of remembrance. It is a day to pay homage to those who didn't come home. This Memorial Day take time to think about the service members who risked and ultimately lost their lives fighting on behalf of our country.

Memorial Day is a day that is special to the Sons of The American Legion. Our membership eligibility is made possible by the military service of our fathers, mothers, grandfathers, and grandmothers. Many are no longer with us except in memory. They put their lives on the line for people they never met and for a unique concept referred to as the Great Experiment, that has endured and persevered through trials and tribulations for the past 249 years.

Memorial Day is a federal holiday and the unofficial start of summertime. Americans celebrate with cookouts, picnics, pool parties, and every other activity that brings them joy. There's nothing wrong with that. Our deceased heroes fought the despots of tyranny and oppression so that we could live freely and enjoy life in every town and city in the United States of America. So, on this Memorial Day visit a veteran's grave, place a flag or a wreath, and say, "Thank you." Then go enjoy the day with friends and loved ones!

George Alva
Commander,
Sons of The American Legion
Detachment of Texas