

Robert Weatherington

6th Grade

Bethany School

(Orator)

What Memorial Day Means to Me

When I was younger I didn't understand Memorial Day. I was just happy to have an extra day of vacation. Now I know that this day is for us to remember the soldiers who died.

Countries must have war I guess. But I don't really understand it. Like the 9-11 attacks. The terrorist killed thousands of Americans who didn't have a gun, or hatred, or even the idea that they were going to war that day. The terrorist took families and made everyone cry but I don't understand how that helped them.

So I worry that I might someday be in a war. I think it would be hard. I would feel scared knowing that someone else is trying to kill me. I would want to put up my white flag and talk to them and sort it out. I know that wouldn't really work but that's how I would feel. So I know that I would have to be killed or kill them. I'm not sure which one would make me more scared.

So when I see those grave stones like my grandfather's that say this person died as a military person it makes me feel sad because I know they died maybe being scared. But I want to thank them because they did that scary thing so that I could keep living in America and be free.

I still like the vacation on Memorial Day. But now I understand that this day is for us to remember the soldiers who died. They must have been thinking of all of the future kids who could live in America because they were fighting. Now that I am one of those kids I want to look back at them and tell them thank you and that I remember them.

What Memorial Day Means To Me

By Elizabeth Woeste

(Best 4th Grade)

This year on Memorial Day I would like to recognize two of my grandfather's who served our country. First, my family will be honoring my grandfather Tom Woeste this year. My grandfather was a proud Marine who served his country during the Korean War. Grandpa Woeste was a champion of veteran's rights and was very involved in the American Legion. It was a year ago this May that my grandpa was diagnosed with liver cancer. My grandpa was a brave soldier as he battled liver cancer, he was always more concerned about his family even in his final days. Grandpa Woeste was Commander of the American Legion in Mt. Healthy and routinely performed military funerals for veterans. Although Grandpa Woeste delivered military funerals for veterans he chose to not have a military funeral because he thought it would be too hard on his family. So, Grandpa Woeste died on November 11th 2009, Veteran's Day. I think that was God's way of thanking my Grandpa for a life well served. This Memorial Day Grandpa Woeste does not have a say in a 21 gun salute that will be executed on his behalf at his grave sight. My family is proud that Grandpa Woeste will be recognized for his service to our country. Semper Fi Grandpa Woeste.

The second grandfather I would like to recognize is my Great Grandfather Lukatz. My great grandpa was born while his father Nicholas was fighting in World War One. My Great Grandpa was born on November 10, 1918 the day before World War One ended. My grandpa was named Victor in honor of the victory in World War One. It is probably good my Great Grandpa was named Victor because he would need to draw upon that strength as he served in World War Two. While serving in World War Two, my great grandpa was shot down in a field in North Africa were he laid for two days until he was rescued. As a result of his injury my great grandpa was awarded a Purple Heart. After World War Two, great grandpa Lukatz continued to champion veteran's rights and he served as the National Commander of the Purple Heart.

Both of my grandfathers served their country in our time of need and they continued to serve after the war by giving back to the veterans, that is what Memorial Day means to me.

Meredith Karbowsky
5th Grade, St Gabriel Consolidated School
(Best 5th Grade)

What Memorial Day Means to Me

To me, Memorial Day means celebrating soldiers that have served in war and risked lives for our country. Two years ago, I heard Mayor Hubbard speak on Memorial Day and he talked about his dad, who he never knew because he was killed in one of the World Wars. I looked next to me at my dad. I thought about how hard it would be without my dad. To me growing up without my father would be like having an unfilled hole inside of me; something or someone would always be missing.

A few years ago, I went to Washington, D. C. At the Vietnam Memorial, I saw all of those names. I thought about how many of these soldiers had kids. They became real people, parents that had lost their lives and the kids that had lost one of the two most important people in their lives. The same thing happened in Pittsburgh at the Korean War Memorial by the river. I again felt sadness and emptiness that so many of these people likely had children they left behind.

Hubbard. If your father was killed when you were *very* young or before you were born, you would never know what you were missing. It would be like your dad never really existed for you. You would see pictures and hear stories but never have any true feelings about someone you never even met. At least kids who are older have all their memories.

That is what Memorial Day means to me. It means honoring soldiers and sailors and airmen who sacrificed their lives for us. It also means honoring the families that have to go on and live with this sacrifice.