

November Edition: The Importance of Veterans Day



Remember Veterans Day



Much like the modest veterans it honors, Veterans Day tends to quietly arrive and exit before the general public even takes note. Veterans Day is November 11. Are you ready?

With the inspiration and information held in this edition, you can be ready and able to encourage the veterans in your path. This should be a priority for every American.

It is time to honor and thank our nation's heroes. So many heroes are humble. They often look into the

distance and say the real heroes are the "ones who didn't get to come back home."

When veterans say that to us, we frequently try to reply with this affirmative fact: We believe that all of the men and women who were willing to risk their lives for the sake of our freedom and safety are heroes.

As millennials on a mission, we are passionate because our veterans urgently need our appreciation and encouragement. Post traumatic stress, depression, and suicides are on a tragic rise among veterans of all ages. In addition to professional help, every honorable veteran deserves our encouragement, appreciation, and prayers -which make a big difference! Most Americans want to encourage veterans, but they don't know how. We make it easy for busy families to honor heroes. And it warms our hearts to hear how much it means to veterans and their families. Please join us and let us make it easy for you to reach out to veterans. Reaching out may even help to save a life of a veteran who fought for our lives. [Click here](#) to see ideas on how you can thank veterans.

This Veterans Day, do not let it go unnoticed. Do not let any veteran enter and exit your path without your acknowledgement. Thank them. Share a gift with them. Pray for them. (Join our prayer group at PrayingPals.org.)

Take time to thank them. And take time to thank God for them.

In God we still trust,
Carrie and Stacie Stoelting
Co-Founders of
UnitetheUSA.org

We're Sending Cards to Veterans



[Stacie and Carrie are sending handwritten cards](#) to every veteran whose address is shared with them. Give Stacie and Carrie the opportunity to send a thank you card to a veteran in your family or, if you're a veteran, let them send you one. It's easy. Fill out a quick form [here](#) so Stacie and Carrie can send a handwritten thank-you card. They would be honored to have the opportunity. (Yes, it's that simple.)

We'd be honored to send a card to a veteran in your family. Thank you for giving us the chance to thank them!

-Carrie and Stacie

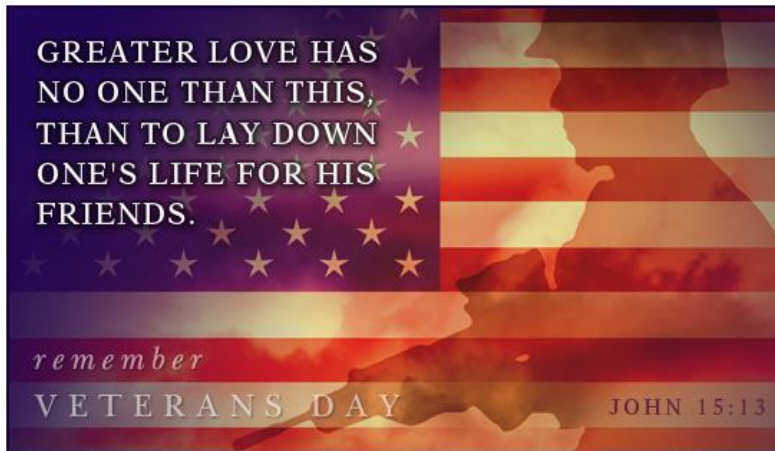


5 Ways to Honor Heroes



- 1. Let us help you honor the heroes in your life.** If you have a loved one who is a veteran or who is currently in the military, send Stacie and Carrie his or her picture, name, military branch, rank to info@unitetheusa.org. Unite the USA will post the information online as a way to honor and thank them.
- 2. Be sure to set aside time to thank our heroes. Thank them in person, on the phone, in a card, or through an e-mail.**
- 3. During the summer months, many veterans and servicemen and women march in local parades. A good time to reach out and thank them is after the parade. Watch for their military distinctions on their jackets and hats.** Just earnestly thank them. They will appreciate your appreciation.
- 4. Don't forget our hospitalized heroes or elderly veterans in nursing homes.** Send a colorful card, send a gift, or stop by and visit. Note: In God We Still Trust and Unite the USA make great gift ideas! :)
- 5. Invite a veteran to dinner, send a gift card to their favorite restaurant, or order/deliver a meal for them.** Take him or a her a gift. Just do something to show that you care and that you are grateful for their service.

This Month's Bible Verse



Featured Quote and Meme to Share



"We remember those who were called upon to give all a person can give, and we remember those who were prepared to make that sacrifice if it were demanded of them in the line of duty, though it never was. Most of all, we remember the devotion and gallantry with which all of them ennobled their nation as they became champions of a noble cause."

-Ronald Reagan

A Veterans Day Salute



Leo Thorsness, Medal of Honor, Vietnam War

Col. Leo Keith Thorsness (February 14, 1932 - May 2, 2017) served in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War. He earned the Medal of Honor for his heroism and bravery. He was also a POW in North Vietnam for 6 years. Watch this video to hear his story. It reflects the heart of what it means to serve our country.

This Month's Historical Video



15,000 American Soldiers Return Home to New York (1945) | War Archives

This month's historical video features footage from 1945. You can see 15,000 American servicemen returning home to New York aboard the Queen Elizabeth. It shows the excitement to have our heroes come home!

I'll Be Home for Christmas

By

Kathi Macias



Home for Christmas. Isn't that where we all want to be at that very special time of year? Yet there are thousands of men and women serving in our military who would consider it Christmas *any* time of year if they could just come back home.

My dad served in the Army in World War II, and though he's been with Jesus now for more than fifteen years, I still feel the sting of tears in my eyes and the swell of pride in my heart when I see pictures of him in his uniform. I will never forget the many stories he told me about those years, especially the warm welcome they received when they finally returned home.

Sadly it wasn't like that for my husband, who served in the Air Force from 1966-1970, including a year in Thailand and Vietnam. His homecoming wasn't nearly as warm or memorable as my dad's. So many of our military members during the Vietnam war era came home to boos and jeers and taunts of "baby killer." Some of the vets from that time have never really "come home," instead finding themselves struggling to maintain jobs or relationships-or even a roof over their head.

My son's experience was quite different from both my father's and husband's. He was in the Army on 9-11. Dressed in his uniform, he flew home for a visit a few weeks later. He said everywhere he went people came up to thank him for his service and to encourage him in facing the dangerous unknowns that lay ahead.

Over the years, our support for our servicemen has run hot and cold, with our Vietnam vets receiving some of the worst treatment. But even today, when active military and veterans are applauded and appreciated, there are many who come home in body only-and often those bodies are damaged and changed forever.

PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) has been around for as long as there have been wars (or other extremely stressful situations). Until fairly recently, however, it wasn't officially recognized as a distinct disorder. Instead we referred to vets coping with PTSD symptoms as having "shell-shock" or "battle fatigue." We assumed that, with time, the symptoms would disappear and the vets would move on with their lives. We have since learned that isn't always the case.

Technically, PTSD is described as "an anxiety disorder that can develop after a person is exposed to one or more traumatic events, such as major stress, sexual assault, warfare, or other threats on a person's life. Symptoms include disturbing recurring flashbacks, avoidance or numbing of memories of the event, and hyperarousal, continuing for more than a month after the occurrence of a traumatic event."^[1] It is easy to see why military personnel returning from combat could fit into that description.

Today, when many members of our military serve multiple deployments, often in war zones, it is highly likely that a great number of them will come home with emotional issues. Not all those issues are severe enough to qualify as PTSD, but these brave men and women may need resources beyond those provided for them by the VA (Veterans' Association).

John was serving his second deployment in Afghanistan when his father died of a heart attack. It took several days for the news to reach him, and then several more until he could get home. Though everyone assured him there was nothing he could have done to help his father avoid the fatal heart attack, he couldn't shake his feeling of guilt for not having been there to help his mother through those first difficult days.

Julie had been in the Navy for less than two years when she was deployed for six months. Though she didn't serve directly in a combat zone, the stress of being away from her two young children-even though she knew they were in the loving care of their father-led her to change her plans of pursuing a military career. Instead she opted out of the military when her initial term of service was fulfilled. To this day she struggles with the guilt of not being there for her children during those six months.

Manny's issues ran a lot deeper. He was a Marine serving his third deployment in the Middle East when he found himself not feeling well during his shift on guard duty. When his sergeant noticed how pale he looked, he sent him to get checked out by a medic. In the meantime, another Marine came to take Manny's place.

Just minutes after Manny left his post and another stepped up to finish Manny's guard duty, the post was hit by a car bomb. The two suicide bombers in the car were killed, but so were three Marines, including the one who had taken Manny's place. Three years later, Manny still struggles with guilt over the incident. He has been on medication and in counseling ever since. In addition, his marriage has fallen apart and he has trouble finding and keeping a job.

John, Julie, and Manny all came home from deployment with varying degrees of guilt and anxiety. Whether or not their symptoms qualify as PTSD, all three need help and encouragement to readjust and resume civilian life. So how can we help?

One of the simplest ways I've found to encourage returning military or veterans is to make a point to thank them for their service. This is especially helpful with Vietnam vets who, for the most part, did not receive warm welcomes or words of gratitude when they returned.

Another means of helping our military (while they're away on deployment and/or when they return) is to get involved with an organization such as the USO (United Services Organization). This long-standing group has a proven track record of helping our military, and they offer various ways to get involved in giving that help. Many local churches and Christian organizations also provide numerous ways to assist our military. An excellent Christian organization that ministers to vets and active military personnel is "Operation Heal Our Patriots," a part of Franklin Graham's Samaritan's Purse ministries. Some of these opportunities are as simple as writing letters to lonely soldiers on the other side of the world, or packing and sending a box of treats to let a few sailors know how much they are appreciated.

If you or someone you know has a loved one serving in the military and away on deployment, you might ask about their plans when they return. Will they continue serving, or are they looking to end their military service and transition back to civilian life? Rather than waiting until they're back to start looking for resources that might fit their particular needs, why not search online and within your community to pull those resources together before they return?

We all love those heart-tugging pictures or videos of soldiers coming home to their families, don't we? The soldier steps out of a plane and crosses the tarmac into his or her loved one's arms; the sailor stands on deck as the ship steams into port, scanning the crowd until he sees his family, eagerly waiting for that special moment of reunion.

But what about those who have no one waiting to welcome them home? Perhaps a loved one died or even deserted them; perhaps there never was anyone to see them off, let alone welcome them home. At a time when most in our country seek to honor our military and show appreciation for their sacrifices and commitment, how can we effectively do something to help those who have no one waiting when they return?

First, speak with your pastor/clergyman and ask if he/she is aware of any such ministry or local organization that makes a point to encourage the military while they're away and then welcome them home at the end of their deployment. If you are unable to find anything local, the USO would be a perfect place to get the information you need to get involved. Not only would you be cheering up a service man or woman by writing to them while they're away on deployment, but you could request that you be assigned someone who lives near enough to you that you could welcome that soldier or sailor home when the tour of duty is over.

Then, of course, there are the veterans' homes and hospitals around the country that would welcome a group or an individual to come and cheer up these men and women who gave so much to protect and defend our country and its unique freedoms. If there is a veterans' home or hospital

in your area, there will certainly be a church or organization already visiting there on a regular basis, which you could join. If not, perhaps you're the one God will use to initiate such a ministry.

None of these methods of helping our active military and veterans is difficult or overly time-consuming, and they can be tailored to meet your abilities. It could be as little as a couple of hours per month, but those few hours can mean more to a hurting soldier or sailor than we could ever imagine.

Christmas is nearly upon us. Wouldn't this be the perfect time to reach out to our present or former military personnel and welcome them "home for Christmas"? And because we know the Christ of Christmas, we can extend that Christmas welcome all year long.

[1] American Psychiatric Association (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing. pp 271-280. ISBN 978-0-89042-555-8.

About Kathi Macias



Kathi Macias (www.kathimacias.com) is an award-winning writer with nearly 50 books to her credit, including *Return to Christmas*, a novel about a serviceman with PTSD.

A former newspaper columnist and string reporter, Kathi has taught creative and business writing in various venues and has been a guest on many radio and television programs. Kathi is a popular speaker at churches, women's clubs and retreats, and writers' conferences. She won the 2008 Member of the Year award from AWSA (Advanced Writers and Speakers Association) and was the 2011 Author of the Year from BooksandAuthors.net. Her novel set in China, *Red Ink*, was named Golden Scrolls 2011 Novel of the Year and was also a Carol Award Finalist; her October 2012 release, *Unexpected Christmas Hero*, was named 2012 Book of the Year by BookandAuthors.net. A wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, Kathi lives in Southern California with her husband, Al.

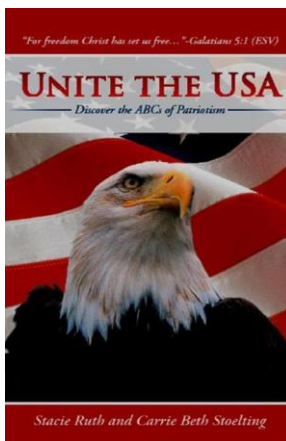
Featured Founding Father

Benjamin Franklin (January 17, 1706 to April 17, 1790) was a very accomplished American scientist, inventor, politician, philanthropist and business man. He is best known as one of our Founding Fathers and the only one who signed all three documents that freed America from Britain: The Declaration of Independence. The American Constitution and The Treaty of Paris.

As a scientist and inventor, his accomplishments included inventing bifocal glasses. Franklin is also credited for publishing the *Pennsylvania Gazette* and *Poor Richard's Almanack*.



Order Now



Unite the USA: Discover the ABCs of Patriotism is a new book by **Stacie Ruth and Carrie Beth Stoelting**. It's a book that empowers patriots to make a big difference in the land we love. With 100+ ways to make a positive difference in America, *Unite the USA* is a must-have tool for patriots. *Unite the USA* will inspire and educate Americans to defend faith and freedom. (Important Note: All proceeds go to fund the mission of UnitetheUSA.org.) [Order it here today!](#)

In God We Still Trust
an inspiring album dedicated to God and veterans
by Stacie and Carrie Stoelting



Per request from veterans who love patriotic and inspiring music sung by Stacie and Carrie, [In God We Still Trust](#) was recorded. From the National Anthem to "God Bless America" you will be inspired and uplifted about our God-given freedoms. All proceeds go to Unite the USA. Help promote faith and freedom in America. Your support is important and appreciated. [Buy or download a copy today.](#) God bless you as you celebrate the red, white, and blue!

In God We Still Trust Video

Our country needs to turn to Jesus. Listen to "In God We Still Trust" for inspiration to keep "fighting the good fight". For hope and encouragement, listen to Stacie Ruth and Carrie Beth sing "In God We Still Trust".



Share and Sign Up

Be sure to share this edition with your friends. Sign up for Unite the USA's free monthly e-mail [here!](#)

Booking Info



Celebrate the true spirit of America with Carrie Beth and Stacie Ruth. Book Stacie and Carrie for concert or conference! E-mail info@unitetheusa.org for more information.

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