

E-Newsletter from Congressman Steve Austria

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Dear Friends,

I am excited about the opportunity to communicate with you regularly through my e-newsletter to keep you updated on issues and events happening in Washington, D.C. and here in the district. **To become a subscriber simply click on the "click here" button in the blue e-mail updates box to the right.** Please feel free to encourage your friends and family who may be interested to sign up as well. Staying connected with you is my highest priority. I encourage you to contact me with any problems, feedback or comments you may have. [Click here](#) to visit my Web site.

#### **Quote of the Week:**

*"For love of country they accepted death, and thus resolved all doubts, and made immortal their patriotism and their virtue."* -**President James Garfield**

#### **Issue of the Week: *Remembering the Heroes that We Lost***

Decoration Day, now known as Memorial Day, was born in Waterloo, New York in 1866. Henry Wells, a local drugstore owner suggested that all businesses close for one day to honor, in a solemn and patriotic manner, the fallen soldiers who lost their lives during the civil war. A group of confederate widows placed wildflowers on fresh graves, townspeople made wreaths and crosses to place upon the headstones, flags waved proudly at half staff. And thus, an American tradition was born.

As Memorial Day approaches, I ask that you join me in celebrating the lives of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the freedom of this great nation. I would also remind you that there has been no other nation on earth whose sacrifice has been greater than ours. Nowhere in the annals of history has there been a country before ours that has given so much to purchase freedom for others. Sacred and hallowed ground at Arlington and in the cemeteries at places like the Ardennes, Normandy, Pearl Harbor and Manila are a testament to the price to achieve and maintain freedom around the globe.

The lives of our fallen soldiers, our fathers, our mothers, our brothers, our sisters, our comrades, were lives not lost in vain or anguish, for each life lost has contributed to the evolution of America as we know it today; a free nation, a strong nation, a nation that stands the tallest when we stand together.

This year, we are reminded that the cost of freedom comes with a high price in human terms. In fact, we now mourn the loss of more than 5,500 brave souls that have died most recently, fighting the Global War on Terror. As we as a nation mourn the lives lost, we celebrate the lives lived and are forever grateful. Above all, in an attempt to pay back our debt as American citizens we also must not only remember the fallen, but it is our responsibility to teach our youth that nothing comes without cost. And that sacrifices are meaningless without remembrance.

The courage possessed by the men and women that we honor on Memorial Day is something that cannot be taught. Rather, it is something that is felt. The willingness to die for their country truly makes America the home of the brave. Our service men and women leave the life that they have grown accustomed to and thrust themselves into unfamiliar and dangerous territories, eager to succeed in their endeavors.

No matter how different these soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen and coastguardsmen are from one another, one thing remains the same: from the white pine forests of Maine, to the white sandy beaches of Washington, this is the land of the free, and the home of the brave. And no matter their fate, America will always be their home, and a home worth dying for.

Though we cannot fully comprehend the weight of sorrow that these friends and families carry, we can, and must, carry the memory always, and teach those who will remain here when the time comes for us to join our fallen soldiers.

To each of our fallen heroes I say: we honor you this Memorial Day. We thank you, we love you and we celebrate your life. For it is you who have made the ultimate sacrifice giving us a past, and in giving us hope and memories that will propel us into the future.

God bless all of our departed heroes, their families, and God Bless America.