



Editorial: Thank You, Veterans

by Loretta Graham
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This month is National Military Appreciation Month. We also celebrate Military Spouse Day, Mother's Day, Armed Forces Day, and Memorial Day. Let me begin by sincerely thanking our veterans for the work they do and have done for this great country we live in. I am humbled when I say anything to them to express my gratitude for their successful journey while serving in this country - not just for this month, but also every

time I explain to my children about this great and free country in which we have to enjoy all of our lives. When I think about patriotism and what it means to me, it consists not in the waving of the flag, but in striving that our country shall be righteous, as well as strong. I think patriotism is like charity. It begins at home.

I do not apologize for my support of our military, our country, and my devotion to God. You see, our country is not the only thing to which we owe our allegiance. It is also owed to justice and to humanity.

We honor those who are serving and those who have died. Although many lives were sacrificed, they have always prevailed over the land of the free and the home of the brave.

The true American is motivated by a sense of responsibility. Our Girl Scout Promise reflects that, saying, "On my honor, I will try to serve God and my country."

We teach our girls duty, honor, and country. These words will build courage when courage seems to fail, they will regain faith when there seems to be little cause for faith, and they will create hope when hope seems to be lost.

Our determination to win, which lies at the very root of this country, is inspired by the confidence displayed by our men and women in uniform.

Many of us will gather this month at parks, rec centers, schools, and cemeteries, all over the country. We will take part in parades and other events to celebrate. We do this because we want to honor the loyalty and bravery of our fallen military men and women as well as our veterans that are still with us. Our history is defined in a simple phrase, "These are ordinary people who do extraordinary things."

So, this month as we raise the stars and stripes, and as they move briskly against the wind, we must remember the more than one million who gave their lives in service of this country.

This month I invite you to join Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois as we partner with Veterans Honor Flight of Southern Illinois to ensure that our veterans get the recognition they deserve. We want to carry on the understanding that the soldiers gave of themselves as a sacrifice for the sake of freedom. We want to give them a sweet taste of our delicious Girl Scout cookies. We want to carry on this message by raising up their memory like never before. We want to also honor the families of those veterans as well. We are grateful for the support you are giving them as they carried out the mission of protecting all of us.

Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois has a goal of donating 800 cases of Girl Scout cookies to our area veterans. Girl Scouts will proudly welcome veterans home from the Honor Flight at the Welcome Home Celebration in Marion on June 7 and offer them Girl Scout cookies as a small token of appreciation for all they have done for our great country. For a \$60 donation, you can cover the cost of a case of Girl Scout cookies and thank a veteran in the process. To donate, visit bit.ly/givehonor or call 800.345.6858.

It is our patriotic responsibility as citizens to remember America's brave men and women. Never forget the men and women who know the cost of our freedom and who know that their service to this country is the greatest gift of all. Will you join me as we show our appreciation to those who put themselves in harm's way so we can have a beautiful life in this great nation?

God bless these United States of America.