



Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

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Flag, Medals and Remembrance

Be a Part of National Celebrations

(FRANKFORT, May 21, 2009) – Flying the flag, wearing your medals, honoring veterans at local events and enjoying a nationally televised concert are all ways Kentuckians can join millions of their fellow citizens in observing Memorial Day.

Flying the Flag on Memorial Day

On Memorial Day the flag should be flown at half-staff from sunrise until noon only, then raised briskly to the top of the staff until sunset, in honor of the nation's battle heroes.

Veterans Should Wear Their Medals

To show their pride in military service and teach younger generations about the value of serving our nation, Commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs Ken Lucas urged veterans across Kentucky to pin on their military medals on Memorial Day, May 26.

"Display your medals proudly," said Lucas. "Be a symbol and reminder to everyone you meet, especially young people, of the sacrifices our veterans have made for our freedom."

He encouraged veterans to display their medals no matter what they are doing on Memorial Day, but especially when attending public events. Lucas said he hopes the wearing of medals by veterans will become a tradition. It began on Veterans Day 2006 under a national program called "Veterans Pride Initiative."

About 24 million living Americans have served in the armed forces, with nearly 18 million wearing the uniforms of the U.S. military during times of war and conflict.

Lucas encourages veterans to wear their medals on Memorial Day, the Fourth of July and Veterans Day, and when attending other patriotic events. Major U.S. veterans organizations have endorsed the Veterans Pride Initiative.

Additional information about the initiative is featured at VA's Web site at <http://www.va.gov/veteranspride/>, where veterans can also learn how to replace mislaid medals or confirm the decorations to which they are entitled.

Ceremonies at Kentucky's State Veterans Cemeteries and Veterans Cemeteries

Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West in Hopkinsville, Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Central in Radcliff and Kentucky Veterans Cemetery North will hold Year of Honors Remembrance ceremonies at 11 a.m. local time on Memorial Day.

Kentucky Veterans Cemetery North: KVCN's First Memorial Day Event will take place at 1 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on Monday, May 25. It will honor all the veterans and dependents interred since the cemetery opened on August 22, 2008. The Adjutant General of Kentucky, Major General Edward Tonini, will be the guest speaker. Grant County High School Jr. ROTC will sing the national anthem and escort family members of recently interred veterans to place the wreath. Grant County veterans will provide the honor guard. Refreshments will be provided by Williamstown Women's Club. 205 Eibeck Lane at the Williamstown exit off I-75.

Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West: KVCW's Memorial Day ceremonies begin on Monday, May 25th at 9 a.m. CDT at the Riverside Cemetery, then moves to KVCW at 11 a.m. Ceremony Host VFW Post 1913 secured local radio personality Leo Wilson as guest speaker. He is a WWII veteran and charter member of VFW Post 1913, and helped several area radio stations on the air. At KVCW, VFW Post 1913 and Fort Campbell American Legion Auxiliary unit 233 will present the wreath. Fort Campbell American Legion Auxiliary unit 233 will provide the cemetery with a new KY State Flag, POW/MIA Flag & the five service flags. (These flags will be changed out before the service starts, but we will recognize their donation on the program) 5817 Fort Campbell Boulevard in Hopkinsville.

Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Central: Monday, May 25, 11 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time. Guest Speaker: Brigadier General (USA, Ret.) Leslie E. Beavers. Honor Guard: North Hardin High School Jr. ROTC. Placing of Wreath: Howard Hill, Cmdr VFW Post 10281. 2501 North Dixie Boulevard, Radcliff.

Thomson-Hood Veterans Center, Wilmore: Memorial Day Service, 10:30 A.M. on 25 May. This service is held each year to remember our deceased veterans and their families. The guest speaker is Chaplain Dean Cook, Colonel (USN Ret.)

Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center, Hazard: 4th Annual Veterans Memorial Ride, Saturday, May 23rd. Registration starts at 9:30am with ride leaving at 11am. Cost: \$20.00 per Bike. Fish Fry open to the public starting at 2 p.m.

Western Kentucky Veterans Center, Hanson: Friday May 22, 1:00 p.m. Patriotic Theme Dress. Annual Memorial Day Program with Hopkins County Central High School Junior ROTC Cadets. Saturday May 23, Blue Star Mothers of America Chapter will be visiting our Veterans at the Center. Sunday May 24, 2:00 Reverend Danny Lutz Memorial Day worship service. Monday May 25, Resident-led American Legion sponsored activities and family visits.

National Moment of Remembrance

Monday, May 25, at 3 p.m. local time, Major League Baseball games will stop, Amtrak train whistles will blast across the country and hundreds of other nationwide participants will encourage Americans to pause for the Memorial Day **National Moment of Remembrance**. The

‘Moment’ was established by an act of Congress, to honor those who died in service to our country.

All citizens, alone or with family and friends, wherever they may be at 3 p.m., local time, are asked to pause for a **Moment** of reflection and rededication to give something back to our country in memory of our Nation’s fallen. The goal is to put “Memorial” back into Memorial Day. A Gallup poll revealed that only 28 percent of Americans know the meaning of this noble holiday.

The White House Commission on Remembrance was established in 2000 by Congress in Public Law 106-579. Its purpose is to promote the **‘Moment’** and the values of Memorial Day by acts of remembrance throughout the year.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has partnered with the Commission to bring recognition to the National Moment of Remembrance and encourages every American to attend Memorial Day events and to participate in the **Moment**. When we honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, we are honoring those who have served and those still serving.

Other participants in the Moment include, NASCAR, the National Constitution Center, Liberty Bell, Pennsylvania Turnpike Authority, schools, universities, hospitals, United Spinal Association, retirement communities, shopping malls, National Parks, National Grocers’ Association, airports, bus lines, and the International Space Station.

National Memorial Day Concert

As the war in Iraq and Afghanistan wages on, PBS unites our nation with the award-winning ***National Memorial Day Concert*** honoring the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform, their families at home and all of those who have given their lives for our country. The event, which has become the memorial service for our entire nation, is co-hosted for the fourth year by **Gary Sinise** (*CSI: New York*) and Tony Award-winner **Joe Mantegna** (*Criminal Minds*), two acclaimed actors who have dedicated themselves to veteran’s causes and supporting our troops in active service. The top-rated show will be broadcast live on PBS from the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol on **Sunday, May 24, 2009 from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m. ET** (check local listings) before a concert audience of 300,000, millions more at home, as well as to our troops serving around the world on the American Forces Radio and Television Network.

History of Memorial Day

The origins of Memorial Day as a national celebration are more than 140 years old, dating to the end of the Civil War and organized efforts to decorate the graves of the war dead with springtime flowers.

For more than a century, communities around the country celebrated Memorial Day on May 30 to honor local veterans who fought in the Civil War. It was not until after World War I, however, that the day was expanded to honor those who have died in all American wars. In 1971, Memorial Day was declared a national holiday by an act of Congress, though it is still often called Decoration Day. It was then moved to the last Monday in May.

To ensure the sacrifices of America’s fallen heroes are never forgotten, in December 2000, the U.S. Congress passed and President Clinton signed into law “The National Moment of Remembrance Act,” P.L. 106-579, creating the White House Commission on the National Moment of Remembrance. The commission’s charter is to “encourage the people of the United States to give something back to their country, which provides them so much freedom and opportunity” by encouraging and coordinating commemorations in the United States of Memorial Day and the National Moment of Remembrance.

The National Moment of Remembrance encourages all Americans to pause wherever they are at 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day for a minute of silence to remember and honor those who have died in service to the nation.