

**MEMORIES of
MEMORIAL DAY**

**by
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My father was born at the time of the 30th anniversary of Memorial Day, and was given the name of a prominent Navy officer by his immigrant parents because their new country was engaged in military conflict. It was natural then for him to join the Navy, and when I served in the Navy during the Vietnam Conflict, I carried his “Bluejacket’s Manual” halfway ‘round the world. Memories of Memorial Day.

Today, we remember lives lost in service to our country – a country grounded in ideals; not on land claimed by birthright or bloodlines, but by those seeking a safe haven for freedom.

Today, we remember wars and their toll: in lives lost, dreams deferred, and principles postponed.

Today, we remember that we can serve our country in many ways, by donning a uniform, by voting and paying taxes so as to show our commitments, by serving in public office, by subscribing to its ideals and not allowing any one group to lay claim to our flag or to our notion of patriotism.

Today, we remember that the achievement of goals always requires teamwork and the recognition of interdependence – as shown in the major wars-- or else, as former Senator William Fulbright said, self-reliance can become arrogance.

Today, we remember that citizenship is not about taking but of giving, that citizenship requires stewardship, that we are responsible for the well-being of this country our children will inherit.

Today, we remember.

I do.

Thank you.