



Memorial Day to Remain Sacred Holiday Thanks to VFW Member

May 25, 2010

Memorial Day is not a day for celebration. We are supposed to show respect and gratitude for our heroes who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom," states Mike Esmond, a VFW member and Vietnam War veteran.

In recent years, Esmond has been appalled to see fireworks being sold at his local Winn Dixie and Wal-Mart stores in the days leading up to Memorial Day. He decided something needed to be done to stop the "celebration" of this day.

"Over the years, Memorial Day seems to have lost its meaning. I think the younger generation is losing sight of what the holiday is truly for," Esmond said, "If we don't teach these young folks the true meaning of Memorial Day, who will?"

Esmond decided to start writing letters to the Wal-Marts and Winn Dixies of the U.S. explaining the importance of the holiday and what a disgrace it is to him and other veterans, to sell fireworks in "celebration" of a day that should be observed with honor and remembrance of those that gave their lives for this country.

At first, the stores' representatives responded to the letters by explaining that they have a responsibility to provide their customers with the products they want to purchase, but Esmond and other veterans who joined in on the campaign were not taking no for an answer. The letters continued to pour in and eventually, Esmond and his fellow veterans' efforts were rewarded.

It was a long battle, but through Esmond's letter writing campaign, beginning this year, no fireworks will be sold at any Wal-Mart or Winn Dixie in the United States until after the Memorial Day holiday. In fact, Wal-Mart even thanked Esmond for his persistence and guidance on the matter.

"If we don't remember where we came from, how can we know how to move forward?" Esmond concluded, "We need to remember the past and those sacrifices people made."

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