

VFW Commemorates Memorial Day

Originally called Decoration Day, this solemn day is set aside to remember all those who died in service to their country

May 26, 2023

WASHINGTON — This Memorial Day, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) joins a grateful nation in honoring and remembering the soldiers, Marines, sailors, airmen, guardians, and Coast Guardsmen, who, as President Abraham Lincoln so eloquently put during the Gettysburg Address, “gave the last full measure of devotion.”

Originally called Decoration Day, the holiday was officially proclaimed in 1868 to honor those who died during the Civil War. After World War I, the solemn day was expanded to honor those who died in all wars. It became an official federal holiday in 1971, set aside to remember all those who died in service to the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Memorial Day honors more than 1 million men and women who have died in military service since the Civil War began in 1861.

President Harry S. Truman established a tradition through Proclamation 2889, proclaiming Memorial Day, May 30, 1950, and each succeeding Memorial Day, as a day of prayer for permanent peace. The 2023 White House Proclamation: Prayer for Peace, Memorial Day can be found [here](#).

The 1.5 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary asks each American to take time this Memorial Day, and every day, reflecting on those who paid the ultimate sacrifice supporting and defending the Constitution of the United States.

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