



THE PEN AND THE SWORD

Site features writings that honor sacrifices made by our troops

Memorial Day is set aside to honor service members who died in the line of duty. The website usmemorialday.org is dedicated to educating people about the day and providing a forum where they can share their thoughts.

The site has information about the history and traditions of the holiday, but the bulk of it is devoted to essays, poems, sermons and prayers honoring the sacrifices people make in times of war.

The home page features links to 31 pages of these writings. Some of them are historical, and



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some are contemporary. Some are written by veterans, and some by civilians. And some of them will leave you with a lump in your throat.

Good writing can transport you to another time and place, or let you share someone else's experiences. More than all other human endeavors, war has a way of bringing out the best and worst that people are capable of. Some of the pieces on

this site eloquently describe individuals rising up to be their best in order to confront an enemy doing their worst.

The site has a section called Date Restoration. Memorial Day was originally celebrated as Decoration Day on May 30. In 1971, Congress moved it to the last Monday in May to create the long weekend most of us are currently enjoying. Some people, including many combat veterans, think the holiday should be moved back to its original date. They argue that the day is somehow cheapened by people taking off work to kick off the summer with picnics and parties.

I understand their solemn regard for the fallen, but I don't think we should restore the original date. Maybe I just don't want to lose a three-day weekend, but I don't think a day of remembrance needs to be spent without joy. We can honor their sacrifice by remembering them and still enjoy the freedom they secured for us by spending time with family and friends.

U.S. Memorial Day has a clean, organized design that is easy to navigate. There's not a lot of imagery, but what is there is of good quality and used to good effect.

There's a section called Resources that left me scratching

my head. It has a handful of sub-sections that look like they should contain links to other resources, but clicking on them doesn't appear to do anything.

Soldiers, sailors and aviators are sent into harm's way by politicians and commanders who are far from infallible. The reasons they send troops into battle are not always just. But the men and women who answer the call, and sacrifice their lives to defend our freedom, deserve to be honored.

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