



Donald Law Office 2016 Memorial Day Newsletter

Founding Attorney, MAJ (R) Matthew W. Donald, Esq. was asked about a speech he gave on behalf of the VFW to the Village of Baltimore in May 2014. What follows is that speech in its entirety:

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Matt's May 2014 Memorial Day Speech

For those of you who know me, you know that I am not very good at political correctness or dancing around a point so you will have to bear with me. For those of you who don't know me, you will either be refreshed by my candor or offended by my lack of tact. Either way, it will be a short experience as I know very few people actually want to stand here today in the rain and listen to me talk.

Well, where to start. I guess I could stand here today and tell you all about how Memorial Day came to be after the Civil War, and how the name was changed and how it became law but I won't. Instead, I would like to share with you what Memorial Day means to Veterans who have served in war and to those of us who have lost loved ones and friends in war.

Too many times we, as Americans, get caught up in the commercialism of our holidays and forget what the holiday really means. Embarrassingly enough I am to blame as much as anyone. Just this past Tuesday my daughters, one a freshman and one in sixth grade, were talking about Memorial Day and didn't have a clue what it was about. I wonder sometimes what they are learning in school these days but that is another issue.

For me, today it is especially difficult because people have lost the true meaning of Memorial Day. Many friends and relatives will send me emails or cards or call me and say Happy Memorial Day or thank me for serving in our military. While these people are well intended, their sincerity is misplaced because Memorial Day is a day of remembrance. It is a day that we should stop and give thanks to those brave men and women that have died in service to our nation. It is not a day to give thanks to our living Veterans. That's what we have Veterans' Day for in November.

And since today is a day that we remember those who have died in service to our country, I want to call to mind four of my brothers in arms, LTC Kim Orlando, CPT Ramond Morales, SPC David Iszkiewicz, and SPC Jacob Jarrell. These four men died while in service to our country. Kim was shot and killed in Karbala, Iraq as he tried to negotiate with a radical cleric. Ray died of complications from a brain tumor. Izzy died as a result of a blood infection he contracted in Afghanistan and Jarrell had just returned home from Afghanistan when he was murdered by another soldier from another unit on Fort Bragg. My stories are not unique. It is likely that every man and woman in this crowd today has similar stories. Sure the names will be different and the circumstance will be different but the pain and emptiness from the loss of that person whom they forged a bond with in battle is the same.

These are not pleasant memories for me to share with you today and they are not pleasant ones to dig up for those in the crowd. They are painful and bring back some of the saddest memories I have in my life. I believe that the purpose of Memorial Day is to relive that pain to have it serve as a stark reminder to share the stories of our fallen comrades so that they are not forgotten.

These men I spoke of here today were my brothers and I would have gladly given my life to try and protect theirs. There is a bond that is formed between men and women who serve in combat together. It can't be quantified or qualified. It can't be explained and to be honest it really isn't even understood even by those of us that experience it.

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We put ourselves at risk, not for trivial things, such as money or fame. We put ourselves at risk for each other. Collectively we go to war because of a belief in something greater than us. It's a belief that in this world our country and our way of life are, and will continue to be, a role model for the world. When we see something wrong, we do not simply turn our backs and pretend that it will go away. We face the evil we see and despite the fear we feel, we march straight at that evil with righteousness in one hand and justice in the other. Undoubtedly some of us will be slain in battle as freedom carries a very heavy price.

But if you truly want to celebrate Memorial Day the right way, then when you see a Veteran, take a moment to know that the Veteran you are looking at doesn't consider himself or herself a hero. He or she doesn't want to be thanked for his or her service. Just take a moment to realize that each of us served with heroes that we can never thank enough for having given the last full measure of devotion.

So in closing I challenge each of you to celebrate Memorial Day in the right way by carrying the flag forward on behalf of those that can no longer carry the flag. Keep alive the memories of those who can no longer raise their cups with us in celebration of God, country and family. Rest in peace Kim, Ray, Izzy and Jacob. You will never be forgotten.

**MAY GOD BLESS THE FAMILIES OF OUR
FALLEN COMRADES AND OUR COUNTRY.**

-MAJ(R) Matthew W. Donald



2016 Memorial Day Events

Friday, May 27th

8th Annual Field of Heroes
Westerville Community
Center on Cleveland Ave.
Field Opens to the Public
1:00pm

Saturday, May 28th

**Field of Heroes Opening
Ceremony** 9:30am
Reading of Names 12:00pm

Sunday, May 29th

Field of Heroes
Memorial Ceremony 7:30pm
www.fieldofheroes.org
for more event information

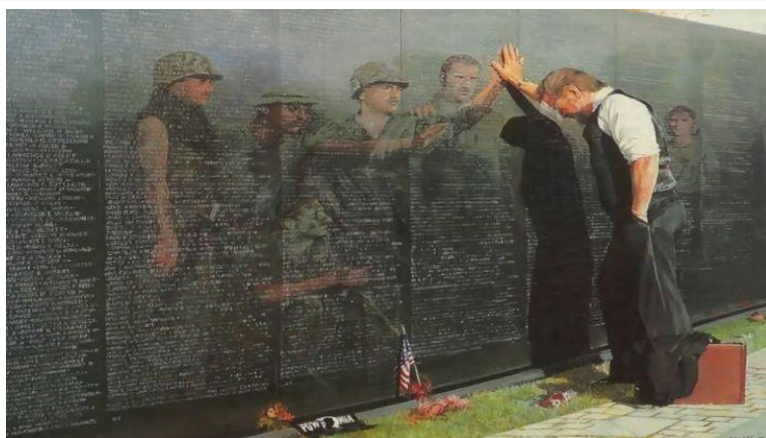
Monday, May 30th

Memorial Day Parades

Baltimore – 10:30am
Canal Winchester - 10:30am
Lancaster – 10:00am
Lithopolis – 10:00am
Pickerington - 9:00am

78th Annual Bloom Township Firefighters Annual Fish Fry

Village of Lithopolis
11:00am-6:00pm
Live music, vendors, food
and more.



You might be gone, but you're not Forgotten.