

# OPERATION WILDFIRE

*Good things happen when Republicans vote*

Issue Three

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## Happy Independence Day!

*"We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness – That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed ..."*

On July 4, 1776, the Second Continental Congress issued a unanimous declaration: the thirteen North American colonies would be the thirteen United States of America.

The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States are the two most important and enduring documents in our Nation's history. It has been said that the Declaration of Independence was the promise of a representative government; the Constitution was the fulfillment of that promise. More than 200 years ago, our Founding Fathers set out to establish a government based on individual rights and the rule of law. The Declaration of Independence, which officially broke all political ties between the American colonies and Great Britain, set forth the ideas and principles behind a just and fair government, and the Constitution outlined how this government would function. Our founding documents have withstood the test of time, rising to the challenge each time they were called upon.

Over the years, the political importance of the holiday would decline, but Independence Day remains an important national holiday and symbol of patriotism for all Americans. There are many ways in which we celebrate our independence:

- **Flying the American Flag**

All across the country, people show their love for America by displaying flags along streets, hanging them from porches and proudly carrying them in the town parade. Old Glory is everywhere. Before you fly the American Flag, please remember:

When the Flag of the United States is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the window sill, balcony, or front of a building, the union (blue portion with stars) of the Flag should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the Flag is at half-staff; or, to the observer's left.

When the Flag is displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall or hanging from a garden staff, the union should be uppermost and to the Flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left.

Always keep the Flag clean and safe, not torn, damaged or soiled. When the Flag is no longer a fitting Emblem for display, the Flag should be destroyed in a dignified way. You may take your Flag to the Pennsylvania Military Museum or American Legion for proper retirement.

- **Fireworks**

The tradition of setting off fireworks on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July began in Philadelphia on July 4, 1777, during the first organized celebration of Independence Day. Ship's cannon fired a 13-gun salute in honor of the thirteen colonies. That same night, the Sons of Liberty set off fireworks over Boston Common. Whether you're watching from your porch, the lake or beach, gathering together to declare our freedom is something to be celebrated.

- **Parades**

The tradition of patriotic celebration with parades became even more widespread after the War of 1812, in which the United States again faced Great Britain. Even today, no matter where you are, there's always a small parade somewhere on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Parades are perfect for young and old alike; besides, who doesn't want to see fire trucks, police cars, horses, vintage cars and high school bands? In 1870, the U.S. Congress made July 4<sup>th</sup> a federal holiday.

- **Red, White and Blue Everything**

From American flags flying from homes, cars and trucks, even bicycles, we all know those certain shirts or pants that only come out on the 4th of July. Everyone is decked out in their best red, white and blue attire to celebrate our liberty and freedom.

- **Patriotic Music**

Country, classic rock or traditional patriotic music is typically heard on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Classics like Kate Smith's "God Bless America", Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the USA," or "Independence Day" by Carrie Underwood are heard in concerts, parades and picnics across our nation. And don't forget music by John Philip Sousa, Aaron Copeland, George M. Cohan or John Williams.

- **Picnics with Family and Friends**

Did you know that Thomas Jefferson was the first president to celebrate Independence Day? The 1801 White House celebration featured horse races, parades, food and drinks, not unlike our celebrations today.

Regardless of the food, clothing and patriotic music, having your family and friends come together makes this day amazing. You get to celebrate with the people who make you laugh; the ones you've grown up with and created fond memories. We celebrate America, home of the brave, with those who encourage us to be strong.

American strength lies in the hearts and minds of each of our citizens. We learn the story of America from our earliest age. The Statue of Liberty stands as a beacon to those who wish to live free. Those who immigrate to our great land wish to become citizens are required to take a citizenship test that includes the lessons each of us learned growing up. Can you pass the test today? Click on this link to take a sample test: <https://citizenshiptests.org/tests/us-citizenship-practice-test/>

As we celebrate our independence, let us remember the words of President Ronald Reagan:  
"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same."

May God continue to bless America. Happy Independence Day!