

My Pledge to Our Veterans

By Ethan Strasemeier

What is a veteran? A veteran is someone who served in the military and perhaps also went to war. Hundreds of thousands of people have not just served, but died to keep our country safe. C.K. Chesterson said, "***The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him.***" My pledge, Veterans, is to remember your sacrifices, to focus on others' needs and be kind to them, and not to judge others unfairly. I promise to follow your example.

Most importantly, I pledge to always remember your sacrifices. Some of you have wounds that will never heal. Some of you have lost limbs. Some of you have to suffer mental illness, such as PTSD because of the things you can never unsee. Perhaps you had to watch your own friends die and witness many of your comrades being killed right in front of you. When I stop to think of all you went through, the things you saw, and the things you lost, it breaks my heart.

Because of this, I pledge to serve others and be kind. I can cheer people up when they are sad. I can do good deeds – such as giving a gift and saying something nice to others. I can decide to make wherever I am a little bit better by cleaning up without being asked – like around school. There are lots of things I can do to help out, now that I think about it. I can help clean up my neighborhood and be sure to always throw my trash away when I'm done. If I do these things, then I am helping others in small ways like you did in big ways.

And then, to honor your sacrifices, I pledge not to judge others. We are all created as equals. I don't judge others by looks, skin color, clothing, or how others talk because it is just wrong to make others suffer. You wouldn't want us doing that. You've worked so hard to make our country a safe place to live. We should work hard to make it a good place to live.

Finally, this is my pledge. I'll keep being kind, cheering people up, and treating people fairly. But most of all I promise to never forget the sacrifices that you, our brave veterans, have made. Thank you for all you have done.

MY PLEDGE TO OUR VETERANS

By Kash Duncan

A lot of people say that, "We can't all be Washingtons, but we can all be patriots." And that got me thinking, how do I become like the veterans? My pledge to our veterans is to follow their example and become a patriotic American.

The first thing I know about being a good patriot is helping others – like how veterans help us keep our freedom and justice and liberty. So I thought of a way that I can help my family like veterans help theirs. I can help my aunt by doing chores around the house like washing dishes and cleaning the living room without her having to ask me. I can help my school by being kind and polite to my teachers and fellow students. I want to follow the veterans' example and serve others.

Veterans, since you protected our country on the outside, I promise to protect it on the inside. How, you're probably wondering? By voting I can do this! Voting is vital to the country because people want to choose someone trustworthy, like John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan. And JFK would have never been president if it wasn't for—you guessed it—voting! Voting would not exist if we did not live in a free democracy, and we have our veterans to thank for protecting this privilege.

Then there is RACISM – a dangerous disease in our country. Years ago, it took a civil war to be sure slaves were finally freed. But even though the Civil War ended on April 9, 1865, states down south like Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia still had slavery. Those states finally came to their senses and stopped slavery on December 6, 1865. I promise our veterans not to be prejudiced against anyone for their skin color, race, or physical appearance. Like our Constitution says, we are all created equal – no matter the color of our skin or the language we speak. Humans are and always will be equal no matter what.

Overall, the best way to honor my pledge to our veterans is to act like a patriot: giving charity to those who need it, helping our friends and others, teaching something to someone younger, taking care of animals (mainly strays), and volunteering to help people in nursing homes and orphanages. So... acting in these ways is my pledge to our veterans—to become a true patriot—like you! Thank you

My Pledge to Our Veterans

By Isabel Shepherd

“Victory comes from finding opportunities in war.”--Sun Tzu, The Art of War

Imagine that one day, you get an unexpected letter. You are about to be deployed. You feel a rush of adrenaline. You realize that you're about to do this thing – it's your time to fight. Knowing risk of illness, violence, death, and injury – nonetheless you go to war. You do your best to protect our rights by fighting on the battlefield, hearing the gunshots of defeat, and seeing comrades dying with great trauma. You have accepted the hardest thing you can experience, and ***you did it all for the sake of America.***

Veterans, I pledge to remember your willingness to risk your life to protect this country's freedom. Accepting you could be lifeless without saying good-bye to the people you love the most. Accepting death, if required, to preserve for others what you might no longer get to experience for yourself—the blessing of living in the USA. Accepting, perhaps . . . being unable to experience happiness before you die, and that's something hard to comprehend.

I also pledge to remember how much bravery it must have taken for you to decide to enlist—knowing you could be called upon to fight. I believe that most people don't have the courage to become soldiers, but you did. You were willing to risk everything: loss of life, loss of limb, chronic illnesses, loss of time with your family – just to protect America, its rights, and citizens. If you fought in Vietnam, then you had to fight in ways you could not ever imagine! In the aftermath, you might've experienced PTSD, anxiety, new fears, nightmares, extreme attachment issues, and worse. After experiencing all of that, it's difficult to go back to life as usual.

I pledge to understand how tough you had to become to answer the call, how tough you are . . . to still be here . . . after everything you have done and seen. About 22% of veterans did not hold up under the strain and committed suicide. I am so amazed that you could master your anxiety and accept the challenge to move forward to protect the comrades by your side.

Veterans, my promise to you is to remember everything you've endured to protect this country. I want to listen to your stories and understand you. Your strength inspires me and should inspire this generation and the generations ahead. God bless America and our veterans!

My Pledge to Our Veterans

By Silas Eaton

My pledge to our veterans is to stay grateful that they have risked their lives to protect our freedom. The United States is a beautiful country; so naturally, crooked people attempt to gain control of it. The only thing standing between us and such torment is the U.S. Military. Many soldiers have sacrificed their lives and sanity to protect this country. I am grateful that there are people that know the risks, and still defend this nation.

Essentially, the only thing standing between us and the horror of foreign control is the U.S. Military. We are the United States, and not any other country, because we have the best military in the world. In a perfect world, war would not exist. But it does, so we are forever grateful to the veterans who have defended us.

Also, many veterans have sacrificed their safety and mental health for the United States. My teacher tells of one man who lost his leg when he kicked away a grenade, just to defend his comrades. Many brave men and women have suffered injuries, mental health disorders, and even death, for the sake of the United States.

I am grateful that some people know the risks, and still serve in the military. It must take a great deal of willpower to enlist, especially considering the risks I have previously mentioned. For most people, it isn't worth it to join the military; but that's reasonable, as we need other members of society to function. There are still constant outside threats, so we need the military and the defense they provide us.

To conclude, veterans deserve even more recognition than what they already receive. They protect us from outside threats, and sacrifice their own wellbeing to do that. They continue to serve, even while knowing the risks. I pledge to continue acknowledging their bravery.

My Pledge to Our Veterans

By Ira Eaton

As John F. Kennedy once said, “*Wars may be fought with weapons, but they are won by men. It is the spirit of men who follow and of the man who leads that gains the victory.*” We should follow those inspiring words because if the U.S. soldiers can do it, we can too. So let's get to it.

Veterans have protected our freedoms; they kept America safe during the Revolutionary War. I think they did this because they wanted to put up our flag, not another country's. There was a reason we left King George's clutches. We left Great Britain for the freedom to govern ourselves, and we attained this because of our veterans.

I know veterans are heroes. They decided to protect Americans, and I want to be like them – a protector. Just last month, a massive flood came through. An elderly lady was stuck in her house, and a Volunteer Firefighter went to help her. When he jumped out of his truck, the water was at his knees. When he was banging on the door, it was to his waist. She didn't hear him. As he swam back to his truck, hay bales floated past. When he saw her house wash away, he thought he was dead. Somehow he escaped the flood. Though he couldn't save the woman, *he still tried*. We have people like that right here in our community – protectors; we owe them our respect and gratitude.

Veterans chose to risk their lives to protect the lives of people – not just American people, either. During the Vietnam War, 58,220 U.S. soldiers died trying to help the South Vietnamese defeat the spread of communism because they were afraid it would spread to all of Vietnam. Sadly we lost that war, even though our soldiers tried to protect the freedom of the Vietnamese civilians, as they were commanded to do. I am very grateful we have a powerful army and so many awesome veterans.

How can we even begin to show our gratitude for our veterans? We show our respect when we pledge allegiance to our flag. On November 11, we honor all veterans who have served in the military. But can we do more? My class is hoping to write to the veterans, visit them, and learn from their stories. Even though we can't all be veterans, we can all be patriotic, grateful, and respectful Americans.

My Pledge to Our Veterans

By Phoenix Vest

In 1975, Armistice Day became officially called Veterans Day to recognize veterans from all wars and conflicts. President Gerald Ford made a law returning the observation of Veterans Day to November 11th beginning in 1978. So I thought, ***what are we supposed to remember about the veterans from all of those wars? What is most important for young people to appreciate?***

To me, it is important to remember that our veterans risked their lives for our freedom. Lots of soldiers went to war and sacrificed their lives to save America , so that the people in America can be assured that we are safe. They could have stayed home with their families, but they chose to go out there and put their lives in danger just to save ours. They are very brave people.

In addition to being willing to risk their lives, soldiers also risked their quality of life. Once they returned home, their problems were not over. Lots of veterans have gone through PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), anxiety, depression, and/or thoughts of suicide. Carton de Wiart served in the Boer War, World War One, and World War Two. During the process, he got shot in the face and lost his left eye, and was also shot through the skull, hip, leg, ankle and ear. So, I believe we should be giving veterans support. Giving money to fundraisers could help veterans solve some of their problems.

Finally, our veterans have been protecting us and our country. Without their service, we would not have all the freedoms we have today. It is important that our veterans receive all of our support and gratitude and that we take time to show this. The soldiers do not only protect us and our country, they also provide services and aid for those who need it. During disasters, the U.S is the first on the scene providing medical aid, food, and water at a level no other country can come close to.

I appreciate what the veterans have done and what they had to do and go through to protect our freedom. I'm glad I live in America and know that I'm safe here. The quote that inspires me most is from Claudia Pemberton: ***"America without her soldiers would be like God without his angels."***

My Pledge to Our Veterans!

Leighton Moore

The famous General Patton once said, "***Wars may be fought with weapons, but they are won by men. It is the spirit of men who follow and of the man who leads that gains the victory.***" Patton is saying that it is a person's **will** that pushes to victory. My pledge to our veterans is gratitude that they preserved our freedom by their willingness to sacrifice their lives for us. What I respect the most is that veterans are ready to face fear to save everyone around them.

I know veterans preserved our freedom by being ready for action 24/7. No matter how tough the challenge, they kept trying. Because of our brave veterans we are defended from attacking countries! That is why I am so grateful for our veterans – for all of the lives that were lost to preserve our freedom. I love every single veteran because they have sacrificed so much to keep our country free. I want to be like them, to keep getting back up no matter what's holding me down.

Our veterans were willing to sacrifice their lives for us and our country. Now imagine what it took for young men and women who just signed up to willingly put their lives at risk. That is why I have the utmost respect for our veterans! I have veterans on both sides of my family, and I know they are willing to protect my life or others. Our veterans are protecting our rights with basically their own lives. That's why we don't have the Chinese flag hanging up. I want to have the courage to follow them.

Veterans are ready to face fear to save everyone around them. No matter how big the threat is, they face it head on. Even if the challenge is more than they can endure, they move forward. They try and try until they conquer it, or die trying. I admire this tremendously.

I'm saying that veterans live in a way that inspires me to do the same. I am only twelve now, but I can start in *very* simple ways to serve others. I can donate to a charity, volunteer to pick up trash, and look for ways to help out at school. Like veterans, I pledge to help people in need. I want to start now to face my fears head-on so I too can serve others, like you do.

