

## HONORING VETERANS

I placed a small flag at the station of each officer and we also sang the song "Almighty Father, Strong to Save."

### ALMIGHTY FATHER STRONG TO SAVE

Almighty Father, strong to save, whose arm hath bound the restless wave, who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep its own appointed limits keep: O hear us when we cry to thee for those in peril on the sea.

O Christ, the Lord of hill and plain o'er which our traffic runs amain by mountain pass or valley low; wherever, Lord, they people go, protect them by thy guarding hand from every peril on the land.

O Spirit, whom the Father sent to spread abroad the firmament; O Wind of heaven, by thy might save all who dare the eagle's flight, and keep them by thy watchful care from every peril in the air.

O Trinity of love and power, our people shield in danger's hour; from rock and tempest, fire and foe, protect them where so e'er they go; thus evermore shall rise to thee glad praise from space, air, land and sea.

### **History of Veterans Day** **"Giving Honor Giving Thanks"**

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."

An Act approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday. A day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as "Armistice Day. Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I, but in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen in the Nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended the Act

of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in its place the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

A law passed in 1968 changed the national commemoration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on October 25, 1971. It was quite apparent that the commemoration of this day was a matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens, and so on September 20th, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed a law which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978. This action supported the desires of the overwhelming majority of state legislatures, all major veterans service organizations and the American people.

## **DEDICATION**

Possibly give military history of one or more chapter members.

## **WHAT IS A VETERAN?**

Some Veterans bear the visible signs of their service...a missing limb, a jagged scar, a certain look in the eye. Others may carry evidence inside them: a pin holding a bone together, a piece of shrapnel in the leg, or perhaps another sort of inner steel-the soul's alloy, forged in the refinery of adversity. Except in parades, however, the men and women who have kept America safe wear no badge or emblem. You can't tell a Vet just by looking. What is a Vet? He is the cop on the beat who spent six months in Saudi Arabia sweating two gallons a day, making sure armored personnel carriers didn't run out of fuel. He is the barroom loudmouth, whose overgrown frat boy behavior is outweighed a hundred times in the cosmic scales by four hours of exquisite bravery near the 38th parallel. She - or he- is the nurse who fought against futility and went to sleep every night sobbing for two long years in Danang. He is the POW who went away one person and came back another--or didn't come back at all. He is the Quantico Drill Instructor who has never seen combat--but has saved countless lives by turning slouchy, no account rednecks and gang members into Marines, and teaching them to watch each others backs. He is the parade-riding Legionaire who pins on his ribbons and medals with a prosthetic hand. He is the career Quartermaster who watches the ribbons and medals pass him by. He is the three anonymous heros in the Tomb of the Unknowns, whose presence at the Arlington National Cemetery must forever preserve the memory of all the anonymous heros whose valor died unrecognized with them on the battlefield or in the ocean's sunless deep. He is the old guy bagging groceries at the supermarket--palsied now and aggravatingly slow--who helped liberate the Nazi

Death Camps and who wishes all day long that his wife were still alive to hold him when his nightmares come. He is an ordinary, and yet an extraordinary, human being. A person who suffered some of his life's most vital years in the service of his country, and who sacrificed his ambitions so others would not have to sacrifice theirs. He is a Soldier and a Saviour and a Sword against the darkness, and he is nothing more than the finest, greatest testimony on behalf of the finest, greatest nation every known. So remember, each time you see someone who has served our country, to just lean over and say, Thank you. That's all most people need, and in most cases, it will mean more than any medals they could have been awarded, or were awarded. Two little words that mean a lot, "THANK YOU".