

Have you thanked a veteran today?

By Gary Andrews

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Having just returned from a Veteran's Day program at one of our local schools, I am reminded about the sacrifices given by so many for America to be as great as she is and to be known as the land of the free.

Having served in a war zone, I can tell you first hand that this is a place where all

soldiers depend on the hand of God to get them through. You hear many prayers being said, many verses of the Bible being repeated, and Bible reading taking place. The program I attended showed a clip of soldiers reading their Bible and saying their prayers.

Through the ages the American Soldier, through God's grace and help, has preserved

our great nation to be the number one country in the world.

In today's society it seems that many Americans have forgotten what it takes to be a nation of free people who choose to worship and speak as they see fit. We are a

democratic society because of the sacrifices made by our military men and women.

During my tenure in the military I lost two very close friends to enemy fire in Vietnam. When it came my turn to also go to Vietnam, I was scared as is every soldier

who goes into a war zone. I was blessed and fortunate that I came home without a

scratch, but I remember the words of Jose Narosky, when he said, "In war, there are no unwounded soldiers."

I am a proud American and when I attend programs such as the one held at this school, it is great to see the faces of the children as they look across the audience and say thank you to the many veterans that came to be honored.

My hope is that with our country facing so much turmoil over issues that has made

Remember, our national parks belong to everyone and visiting them can be a marvelous experience.

James L. Cummins is executive director of Wildlife Mississippi, a non-profit, conservation organization founded to conserve, restore and enhance fish, wildlife and plant resources throughout Mississippi. Their web site is www.wildlifemiss.org.

America strong, that these people will understand that God is in control and without him and His saving grace we would be just another nation looking for help from others.

Cynthia Ozick stated, "We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude."

God Bless America and God bless our brave men and women who are serving or have served to insure that we are one nation under God.

Prayer: Oh God, you have blessed us in so many ways. You have made America a strong nation because it was built on your principles and under your leadership. Thank you for loving us. Amen.

Suggested daily Bible readings: Sunday - Deuteronomy 20:1-4; Monday - Psalm 27:1-6; Tuesday - Matthew 24:4-8; Wednesday - Isaiah 36:18-21; Thursday - Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; Friday - Numbers 21:31-34; Saturday - 1 Samuel 14:1-14.

Gary Andrews is the author of Encouraging Words: 30-days in God's Word. To obtain a copy go to his website www.gadevotionals.com.

Conservation Corner

by James Cummins
Executive Director
of Wildlife Mississippi

National Park Week, held April 15 through 23 this year, is a week in April annually proclaimed for the celebration and recognition of our national parks. Celebrations will be marked with special events and activities including National Junior Ranger Day on April 15 and Earth Day on April 22. Our national parks are living examples of the best this Nation has to offer—our magnificent natural landscapes and our varied yet interrelated heritage. Parks can provide outdoor opportunities, recreational experiences and places of quiet retreat.

"Our National Parks are our national treasure," said Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke. "My formative years were spent in Glacier National Park and one of my biggest mentors was a park ranger and football coach. The lessons you learn from the land and the park rangers cannot be learned anywhere else on earth. As we head into the next 100 years of the Park Service, I'm looking at ways to improve infrastructure and visitor experience while conserving the precious lands for generations to come."

Of the 417 national parks, there are eight in Mississippi. Some include: Brices Cross Roads National Battlefield Site is where Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest obtained a significant Confederate victory in 1864. However, its long-term effect on the war proved costly. This site is a perfect example of winning the battle, but losing the war.

Tupelo National Battlefield is where the battle of Tupelo was fought by more than 20,000 troops. Major General William Sherman successfully kept Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest away from the Federal supply line in Tennessee in June of 1864.

The Vicksburg National Military Park/Cemetery commemorates the campaign, siege and defense of Vicksburg. Its surrender on July 4, 1863, gave the North control of the Mississippi River. The Vicksburg battlefield includes 1,330 monuments and markers, a 16-mile tour road, a restored Union gunboat and a National Cemetery.

The Natchez National Historical Park is located in Natchez. From the magnificent antebel-

lum estate of John McMurran, to the downtown home of African-American barber and diarist William Johnson, to the French Fort Rosalie, this diverse Mississippi River town has lent itself to opportunity for hundreds of years.

The Gulf Islands National Seashore, which is open year-round, is located in Mississippi and Florida. You will find that bayous, historic forts, island beaches, recreational opportunities and sparkling waters abound here. Gentle breezes, hurricanes and tides continually reestablish this charismatic scenery.

The Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail is one of my favorite national parks. It stretches from Nashville to Natchez and encompasses numerous points of interest along the way, from bountiful wildlife, Indian mounds to other historical sites.

Obituaries

GLENNIE SUE MASKE THORNTON

Glennie Sue Maske Thornton, 82, died April 4, 2017 at the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson. Funeral services were held at 11:00 a.m., Friday, April 7, 2017 at Southern Funeral Home Chapel in Durant. Burial was in Mizpah Cemetery in Durant. Rev. David Cain officiated. Pallbearers were Chris Musselwhite, Scott Thornton, Casey Blackstock, Corey Thornton, Conway Horne and Kevin Blackstock.

Mrs. Thornton was a long time resident of McAdams and a member of the First United Methodist Church in Durant.

Survivors are her daughters, Kathy Blackstock (Phillip) of Kempner, TX and Shirley Steen Musselwhite of Byram; son Ricky Thornton (Shelia) of Brandon; nine grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren and three great great grandchildren.

Mrs. Thornton was preceded in death by her husband William P. Thornton; sons, Tommy and Eddie Thornton and grandson Phillip Anthony Blackstock.

ORA D. ALLEN

Mrs. Ora D. Allen, 52, of Sallis, passed away Sunday, April 9, 2017 at her residence. Funeral services will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 15 at Durant

PATTY HOOD MADDUX

Patty Hood Maddux, 65, of Lexington died Monday, April 10, 2017 at her residence. Visitation will be 11:00 a.m. until service time at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 13, 2017 at Southern Funeral Home in Lexington. Burial will be in Odd Fellows Cemetery in Lexington. Pallbearers are Jeff Martin, Landon Hood, Pat Hood, Paul Miles, Ricky Winstead, and Robert Wayne Carnathan. Honorary pallbearers are Michael Hood and Tim Meeks.

Patty was a county clerk for Holmes County Chancery Clerk and a member of First Baptist Church in Lexington.

Survivors are daughters, Christy James of Lexington and Katie Sanders (Jeff) of Brandon; brother Mike Hood of Ebenezer; sisters, Bobby Glover of Tuscaloosa, AL, Toni Miles of Morton and Kathy McLellan of Lexington; and grandchildren, Jeseca James, Branden James, Brewer Eldridge and Whitman Sanders.

Patty was preceded in death by her parents, William Travis and Jewell Johnson Hood and brothers, Bill and Arnold Hood.

First Baptist Church with burial in New Banyon Cemetery in Sallis. Winters Funeral Home in Kosciusko is handling the arrangements.



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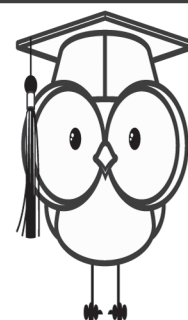
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