

# Remembering our veterans

The men and women who defend the liberties and freedoms of the countries they represent hold a special place in people's hearts and an eternal spot in their countries' histories.

Any opportunity is a good time to commemorate the bravery and selfless deeds of military personnel, but certain prominent

holidays in November make this an especially important time to thank veterans for their service.

November 11 is Veterans Day in the United States and Remembrance Day in Canada. It's also known as Armistice Day in other parts of the world. These holidays honor all military veterans who have provided service to their

countries, and that each falls on November 11 is no coincidence, as the day commemorates the anniversary of the end of World War I on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918.

Many places around the world pause and remember fallen veterans on November 11, but a good majority of Veterans Day and

Remembrance Day commemorative events focus on past and current veterans who are still alive. There are many ways to honor the military at home and abroad in time for the November festivities. The following are just a handful of ways to show appreciation for military men and women.

- When dining out, ask your server if you can pay the tab for a soldier or veteran you see in the restaurant.

- Attend a military parade with your family and explain the significance of the day to children in attendance.

- Draft letters and send care packages to soldiers currently in service far away from home.

- Ask your company if Veterans Day or Remembrance Day can be an observed holiday at your place of business each year to pay homage to servicemen and women.

- Visit a military memo-

rial in a city near you. Your town also may have its own memorial.

- Petition town officials to erect a memorial if your town does not already have one. Such memorials can be a source of inspiration for your community.

- Support a military family in your town who may be missing a loved one stationed elsewhere. Make meals, mow the lawn, help with grocery shopping, or simply provide emotional support.

- Volunteer time at a veterans' hospital. You may be able to read with veterans or engage in other activities.

- Get involved with a military support charity that can provide much-needed funds to struggling families or disabled veterans.

- Have children speak with veterans in your family, including grandparents, uncles and aunts or even their own parents. It can help them gain perspective on the important roles the military plays.

- Ask a veteran to give a commencement speech at a school or to be the guest of honor at a special function.

- Drive disabled veterans to doctors' appointments or to run any errands.

- Support a local VFW organization.

- Create a scrapbook for a veteran in your life.

- Cheer for or thank military personnel each time you see them.

- Visit the veterans' portion of a nearby cemetery and place poppies or other flowers on the graves.

- Always keep the military on your mind and never forget those who have served and didn't return home.

Armistice Day, Remembrance Day and Veterans Day are great ways to honor past and current military for their service and sacrifice.



## Tidbits about Veterans Day

The origins of Veterans Day can be traced to the ending of World War I nearly a century ago. Known at the time as "The Great War," World War I officially ended on June 28, 1919 with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in France.

But the fighting had actually ended seven months earlier when an armistice between the Allies and Germany went into effect on November 11, 1918. The following November United States President

Woodrow Wilson declared November 11 "Armistice Day" in honor of the cessation of the hostilities, and the day became a federal holiday in 1938.

That act was amended in 1954 after veterans service organizations, in recognition of the efforts of soldiers who fought in World War II, asked that the day be renamed "Veterans Day" so it honored all soldiers and not just those who fought in World War I.

