



# Memorial Day *Tribute*

## More than names on a memorial



State Representative Ryan Bivens

of the United States Armed Forces and fight for freedom for us all.

Behind every name engraved on a headstone or a memorial wall was a real person with a unique story. An individual with their own interests, dreams for the future, and families waiting for them back home. Memorial Day reminds us that sacrifice is not just an abstract idea. It is deeply personal.

Over the years, I have spoken with veterans and military families who do not focus on politics or strategies when remembering those they've lost. Instead, they remember the personalities and stories of the fallen. They remember the light in the hard times, the letters sent home, the friendships formed during adverse circumstances, and the empty spaces left behind. Memories that remind us that the men and women we honor are not just symbols. They were brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, spouses, parents, and friends. The people whose absence was long felt after the headlines faded.

These individuals are why the small traditions on Memorial Day matter so much. Whether



it is the American flags placed carefully beside each grave, visits to military cemeteries, the reading of names during ceremonies, or moments of silence, every tradition serves the same purpose. It makes sure that each individual is remembered, so we do not forget about them in our fast-paced world.

I also believe remembering the individuals helps our younger generations better understand the true meaning of Memorial Day. It is one thing to teach our history through textbooks, lessons, and ceremonies.

It is another to tell the stories of real service members who never returned home and a family forever changed because of a loss. Personal stories have a way of making sacrifice real in a way history and ceremonies never can.

As Americans, we can never fully repay the debt owed to those who made the ultimate sacrifice. But we can ensure that they are remembered not only as part of history, but as real individuals. I urge you to remember their stories, support the families they left

behind, and live lives worthy of the freedoms they fought to preserve.

This Memorial Day, I ask you to take a moment to slow down and remember the true meaning of the holiday. Let us honor the men and women who gave everything in service to their country, and remember the human side of their sacrifice. These Americans, men and women just like us, gave their lives so that we can live in freedom.

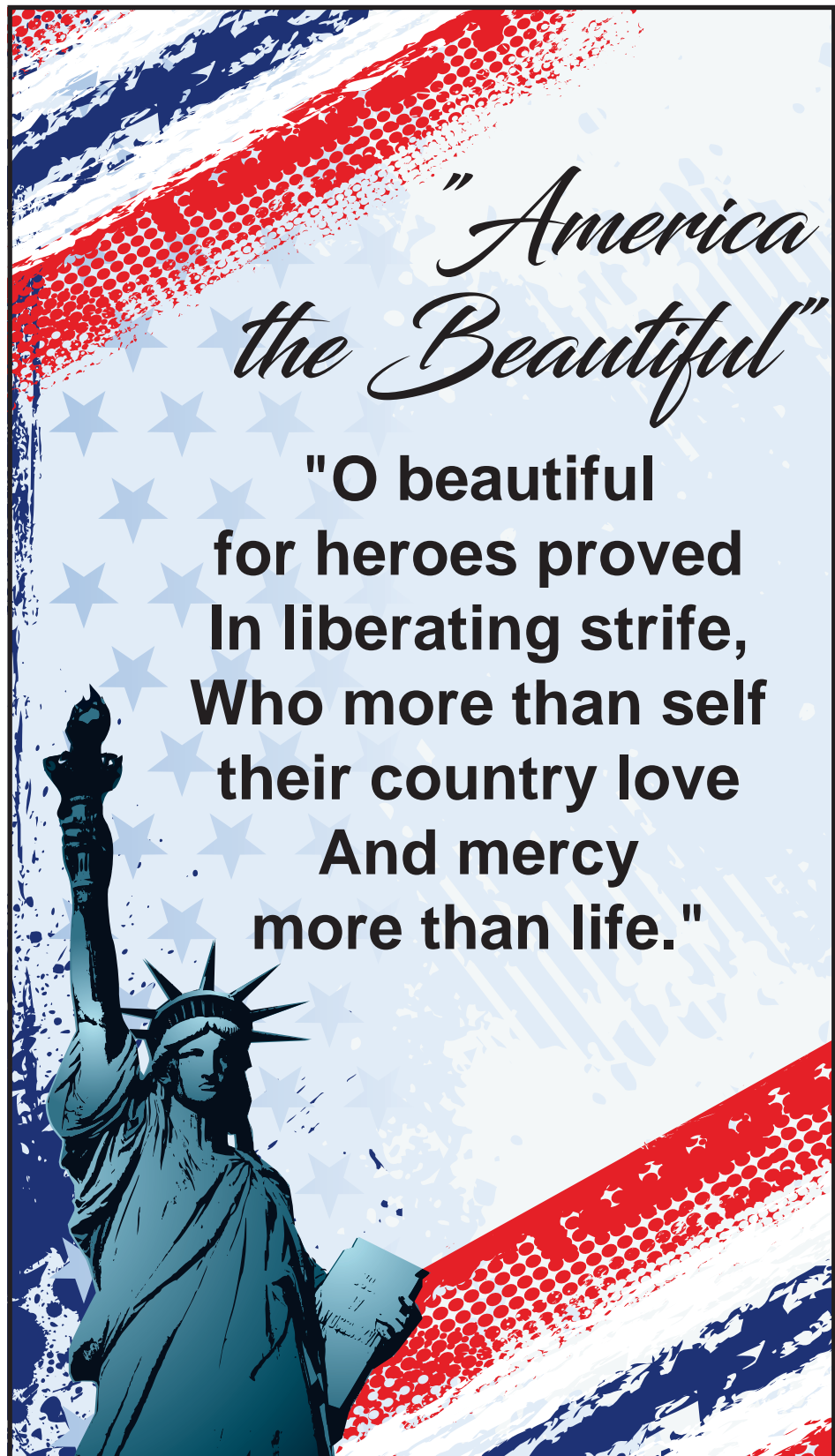
To close, I leave you with a quote from President John F. Kennedy,

a reminder for us to live with the courage and purpose that our service members fought to protect: "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter the words, but to live by them."

As always, I can be reached anytime through the toll-free message line in Frankfort at 1-800-372-7181. You can also contact me via email at Ryan.Bivens@kylegislature.gov and keep track through the Kentucky legislature's website at legislature.ky.gov.



Memorial Day...  
...is the day that's set aside to remember with gratitude and pride all those who served and died for our country and our freedom. May your days be filled with memories and peace.



*"America the Beautiful"*

"O beautiful  
for heroes proved  
In liberating strife,  
Who more than self  
their country love  
And mercy  
more than life."

**GOD BLESS AMERICA**

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