

Good morning/afternoon, I'm NAME, POSITION with
DAV – Disabled American Veterans.

Before I begin, I'd like to RECOGNIZE ANY SPECIAL
GUESTS. Thank you for being with us today.

<PAUSE>

“Take good care of the children.”

Those were the last words Isaac Davis spoke to his wife as he headed off to war. Hannah Davis later recalled how serious her husband was earlier that morning as he and his men made final preparations for the impending fight.

As if he already knew his fate.

Mere hours later, he was shot and killed on the battlefield.

A British musket ball struck him in the heart in the early volleys of the Battles of Lexington and Concord.

On April 19, 1775, he was among the first Americans to die in the Revolutionary War.

<PAUSE>

He was a regular man—a blacksmith by trade—driven by a belief that what he had was worth defending.

In the months leading up to the inevitable fight, he trained his men hard—setting up a rifle range behind his home and rehearsing drills. He labored to make bayonets for his unit.

As word spread through the villages and towns that the British were coming, Captain Isaac Davis gathered the Acton Minutemen in his home to eat an early breakfast and prepare for the march to Concord.

He knew the cost of freedom, and he was willing to pay for it. And for 250 years, others have done the same.

They left their families.

They left their homes.

They left behind people who loved them.

People like Tech Sergeant Ashley Pruitt of Bardstown, Kentucky.

She was a 34-year-old mother—raising a 3-year-old daughter and a stepson with her husband, Gregory, who described her as radiant.

“If there was a light in the room, she was it,” he said.

Sergeant Pruitt was a boom operator on an Air Force refueling aircraft that crashed this past March in western Iraq as it was supporting military operations in Iran.

She was one of six service members to die in that crash. The most recent among the more than one-point-three million U.S. service members who have died in American conflicts since the opening shots of the Revolutionary War.

From Isaac Davis to Ashley Pruitt, we pause today to remember and reflect on each and every life sacrificed for this country.

We honor a promise to never forget their service.

We mourn. And we carry on.

To do otherwise is a disservice to their legacies.

The legacy of Captain Davis and his meticulous preparation and determination to stand and fight even when the odds were stacked against him and his men.

The legacy of Sergeant Pruitt, whose pride in her near-decade of service showed through in all she did. She was a master at her military occupation, both as an instructor and through four deployments and 900 combat flight hours.

They, and all those who've died in service, answered their country's call.

They served.

They sacrificed.

And in doing so, they entrusted us with the most important things they left behind: Their children. Their families. Their legacies. Our freedoms.

They are who we honor today. That's the promise we keep—not just on Memorial Day but every day—to take good care of what, and who, they gave everything to protect.

On behalf of DAV and our nearly 1 million members, I thank you for the opportunity to speak and the time you have taken today to remember our heroes and their survivors and to pay tribute along with their brothers and sisters who were forever changed in service.

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