

INDEPENDENCE DAY MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING GENERAL

July 4 is Independence Day, a holiday which celebrates the establishment of the United States of America as a sovereign nation populated by free people. Independence Day should have special meaning for all Americans, but it is especially meaningful for those of us who are on active duty in the military, are members of the Reserve or National Guard, or are veterans of military service.

Those who serve in uniform learn the true cost of earning and maintaining independence and of defending freedom. Our nation became independent thanks to the courage, skill and determination of the Continental Army. We are still free today because succeeding generations made the sacrifices necessary to defend our hard-won independence, and willingly joined the fight against fear and tyranny and for the cause of freedom.

The fight is not yet over, so the call to service has gone out to another generation of Americans. They serve on our behalf in Iraq and Afghanistan, at other distant outposts, and aboard aircraft, ships and submarines. They exemplify the same courage, skill and determination shown by the members of the Continental Army, and the same willingness to risk their own lives for the sake of a higher cause.

As we celebrate Independence Day, remember that others have sacrificed much so that we can enjoy the benefits of peace and freedom.

Please celebrate safely this Independence Day, and keep safety foremost in your mind as you enjoy summer activities. Kathy and I wish you the best, and we thank you for all the work you do in helping to keep this great nation strong and free.

Yves J. Fontaine
Major General, US Army
Commanding