

Memorial Day 2016

Village of Moreland Hills, Ohio

There is a special honor that stands tall with all of veterans who have been honored to serve this wonderful country, to be asked to speak on Memorial Day on behalf of their fellow veterans. This year I received that honor when I was asked by Susan Renda, Mayor of the Village of Moreland Hills, if I could speak at the Village Memorial Day Ceremony.

Less than a mile from this spot is the birthplace of James A Garfield, the man who gave the very first Memorial Day recognition in 1868 to those who gave their final measure of dedication during the Civil War.

During my three years of active US Army service and twenty-five years in the Army reserves I never saw combat but it is with deep appreciation that I thank all those who gave the ultimate sacrifice so we can all live in this great country. These men and women took up the cause of freedom of our country for 250 years. Their names are on stones both in our country and throughout the world.

One request I made when asked by Mayor Renda was to also recognize those who died not in combat but who died following their return from combat. These individuals returned from our nation's conflicts and died following their return from such problems cancer from Agent Orange, PTDS, drugs and suicide.

We know that some of the injuries these returning veterans suffered from are not visible but are carried with them inside. Only now are we have a better understanding of their pain, a pain that might not appear for five, ten or even twenty years later.

The number of veterans who are choosing suicide is reported to be 22 deaths per day.

Last evening at my high school reunion I spoke with a wife who is living with watching her husband leave her a little bit more everyday as he suffers through the affects left by Vietnam. The number of potential Agent Orange victims could be tens of thousands of the 2.7M Vietnam Veterans who everyday are developing one of the VA's 14 listed cancers.

On a personal note, one such veteran who returned from Vietnam died of cancer as result of Agent Orange was my brother, COL Courtney C. Schron, USMC. Though his name and thousands of other Agent Orange Vietnam veteran's names will never appear on the "Wall" in Washington D.C. their deaths were the direct result of that combat. Cork left for Vietnam from our Moreland Hills Village and returned eighteen months later after two tours to that same Moreland Hills home. As a fitting tribute on this Memorial Day on behalf of our family and the community we placed a granite stone at the base of the Moreland Hills Veterans Wall in front of the Marine Corps flag in Cork's and all the other veteran's honor, who died following their service to our country.

Today we have the honor of Cork's wife, Pat Schron and two of his children Kirstin Schron and Cameron Schron being with us.

The stone marker was beautifully made by Rick Tichy, owner of Sheffield Monuments in Chagrin Falls. Rick, a fellow veteran. He and his wife Darlene told me it was their honor to make the stone to remember Cork and they asked to donate it his name and his fellow veterans.

So today when you see our flag flying or drive by a cemetery where small flags are marking one of our fallen heroes, remember those brave souls who came from small Villages like Moreland Hills, farmlands like Geauga County and Cities like Cleveland. They gave the ultimate sacrifice to preserve our freedom.

May God Bless the United States.

Jack H. Schron, Jr. LTC, USAR (ret)