

I have been given a special honor today to speak to all the Sponsors, Coordinators, Guardians, Volunteers, children, family and friends assembled here.

It is my honor to speak for and address so many thoughts and feelings of these veterans you have so lovingly supported in all the activities necessary to have given us this **Day of Honor and Appreciation**.

We were called **to do our duty** a long time ago, in a faraway land.

Separated by an ocean and hostility, from our friends and family.

We WENT and WE DID THAT DUTY,

BUT MANY OF US lost some dear friends along the way. Friends we think of often at night, before going to sleep.

HOWEVER, when we came back home WE WERE **NOT honored** men and women.

We were silenced and abandoned by the '*National Will*' of the land, due to the trying times our Nation was experiencing.

**BUT today, YOU have restored that PRIDE, that HONOR and LOVE to us.**

**TODAY, YOUR** financial support, volunteer efforts, loving kindnesses, contributions, cards, letters, and so much more, have told us **WHAT WE HAVE LONG WAITED TO HEAR...  
THAT WE MATTERED.**

That what we sacrificed in body, mind and spirit all these many years, **was and is appreciated.**

It is OK to hate War, but the lesson for the nation will always be **NEVER hate the Warrior.**

**TODAY, YOU** have shown that to be true.

Today **WE ARE RESTORED and TRULY 'WELCOMED HOME and WE ARE FOREVER GRATEFUL**

On behalf of all these Veterans assembled, WE sincerely thank all of you.

**THANK YOU FOR HELPING US HEAL.**

**GOD BLESS YOU ALL**