



# Veterans Day, responsibility and sacrifice

By James Cunningham  
Brigadier General (retired), USAF

On this Veterans Day I might be expected to focus on the many sacrifices military members have delivered while performing services to our nation. We expect, sometimes as a matter of fact, sacrifice to be part and parcel of their mission. We expect them to step forward in our stead to be delivered up into harm's way.

We send our best, our brightest, our youngest, and our poorest forward to defend this nation. Evidence of their commitment, their sacrifice, has been left in the fields of Gettysburg, in trenches of France, on the beaches of Normandy, in the jungles of South East Asia, and most recently in the streets of Baghdad. They have never failed to respond when called to carry our colors.

However, how often do we consider our responsibility to sacrifice so that our military is able to pursue our interests, often under extreme conditions? Today many people use this holiday as a vehicle to usher in the winter season and get ready for the holidays. Little thought is given to the day's true meaning.

For me the meaning and importance of this day can be found in the lines of a poem written by a Canadian army captain serving in a small field hospital near Flanders, Belgium in 1915. He stepped outside the confines of the hospital and gazed upon the disheveled countryside littered with freshly covered graves of so many soldiers and within five minutes scribbled down the now famous words of "In Flanders Fields."

The last verse, reads, "Take up our quarrel with the foe:

To you from failing hands we throw

The torch; be yours to hold it high

If ye break faith with us who die

We shall not sleep, though poppies

Grow, in Flanders Fields."

The verse clearly expresses the tragic human experience and consequences of bitter conflict and the price often paid by those, who step forward to defend a nation's way of life. The verse is often omitted when read in public because it suggests a

controversial demand to uphold the honor of the fallen. I, however, see the fallen soldiers calling me to remember my duty to take personal responsibility to sacrifice, to do my part to ensure that my country's liberties, its values, and its mores remain intact for all to enjoy.

In doing so I affirm the tenant that freedom's price is eternal vigilance; that it is every citizen's civic responsibility to sacrifice, to maintain our liberties through proactive engagement with our communities, state, and nation.

It's not important *how* we assume this responsibility, only that we *do* accept the responsibility. I, and many fellow Oregonians, choose to take responsibility by serving in the armed forces. We serve our nation, states, and communities in times of war, in times of natural disaster, and civil strife.

Others may choose a different path to follow in an effort to sustain our liberties. It matters not what path is taken only that we make the conscious decision to take the steps and stay the course.

Thomas Paine wrote, "Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must undergo the fatigue of supporting it." The veteran has chosen to fight to secure freedom, however its maintenance is a shared community responsibility in which every citizen must participate.

We must personally sacrifice, by engaging in and supporting community activities if we are to maintain our freedoms. In light of this country's current circumstances I believe it's time for everyone to make a commitment to take personal responsibility, make sacrifices to help develop our communities' health and sustain their well-being.

In doing so we take up the quarrel with the foe, the foe of indifference, the foe of ignorance, the foe of apathy and neglect. In effect we take up the torch dropped on Flanders Fields, dropped on the sands of Iwo Jima, dropped in the jungles of Vietnam and in the deserts of Iraq by those who gave their full measure so that we should remain free.

If we accept the mantle of responsibility and sacrifice just a little, the fallen will continue to sleep where poppies grow.



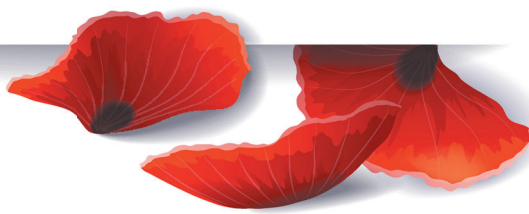
## In Flanders Fields

John McCrae ~ 1872-1918

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.*



## Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Partly Cloudy 43/24	PM Showers 45/34	Rain 44/35	Rain/Snow Showers 42/32	Rain/Snow 48/34	Rain/Snow Showers 46/32

# The Nugget Newspaper, LLC

Website: [www.nuggetnews.com](http://www.nuggetnews.com)  
442 E. Main Ave., P.O. Box 698, Sisters, Oregon 97759  
Tel: 541-549-9941 | Email: [editor@nuggetnews.com](mailto:editor@nuggetnews.com)



Postmaster: Send address changes to  
The Nugget Newspaper,  
P.O. Box 698, Sisters, OR 97759.  
Third Class Postage Paid at Sisters, Oregon.

**Editor in Chief:** Jim Cornelius  
**Production Manager:** Leith Easterling  
**Creative Director:** Jess Draper  
**Community Marketing Partner:** Vicki Curlett  
**Classifieds & Circulation:** Lisa May  
**Owner:** J. Louis Mullen

The Nugget is mailed to residents within the Sisters School District; subscriptions are available outside delivery area.  
Third-class postage: one year, \$55; six months (or less), \$30. First-class postage: one year, \$95; six months, \$65.

Published Weekly. ©2020 The Nugget Newspaper, LLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. All advertising which appears in The Nugget is the property of The Nugget and may not be used without explicit permission. The Nugget Newspaper, LLC. assumes no liability or responsibility for information contained in advertisements, articles, stories, lists, calendar etc. within this publication. All submissions to The Nugget Newspaper will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication and copyrighting purposes and subject to The Nugget Newspaper's unrestricted right to edit and comment editorially, that all rights are currently available, and that the material in no way infringes upon the rights of any person. The publisher assumes no responsibility for return or safety of artwork, photos, or manuscripts.