



BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP
MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

SPONSORED BY

DENNIS J. BECKER

AMERICAN LEGION POST 205

MONDAY - 27 MAY 2024 - 11:00 A.M.

COMMANDER - TERRY MOSHER

GUEST SPEAKER MAYOR LARRY TOOMER

History of Memorial Day

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in service of the United States of America. Over two dozen cities and towns claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day. While Waterloo N.Y. was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, it is difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day.

Regardless of the exact date or location of its origins, one thing is clear – Memorial Day was borne out of the Civil War and a desire to honor our dead. It was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his General Order No. 11. “The 30th of May 1868 is designated for strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land,” he proclaimed. The date of Decoration Day, as he called it, was chosen because it was not the anniversary of any battle.

On the first Decoration Day, General James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, and 5,000 participants decorated the graves of the 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers buried there.

The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890 it was recognized by all the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war).

It is now observed in every state on the last Monday in May with Congressional passage of the National Holiday Act of 1971 (P.L. 90 – 363). This helped ensure a three-day weekend for Federal holidays, though several southern states have an additional separate day for honoring the Confederate war dead: January 19th in Texas; April 26th in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi; May 10th in South Carolina; and June 3rd (Jefferson Davits’ birthday) in Louisiana and Tennessee

Program

Master of Ceremony-----3rd Vice Commander Bruce Kaiser

Presentation of the Colors--- Bluffton Township Fire Department Honor Guard

Amazing Grace Bagpipers

National Anthem-----James Gilliard

Invocation-----Chaplain Courtney Peeples

Welcome by -----Commander Terry Mosher

Reading of Memorial Day Poem-----1st Vice Commander-Paul Rhinehard

Placing of the Wreath-----Past Commander Robbins and Kay Ranta-Unit 205

Introduction of Speaker-----Commander Terry Mosher

Speaker-----Bluffton Mayor Larry Toomer

Raising of the Flags----- Bluffton Jr. ROTC Cadets

Taps by -----Chris Kroemer

Benediction----- Chaplain Courtney Peeples

Retiring of the Colors

Amazing Grace Bagpipers

Bluffton Township Fire Department Honor Guard

Audio & Visual by MXM Productions



Larry Toomer: Mayor 2024-2028

Larry Toomer was elected mayor for the 2024-2028 term after serving as a Town Council member since 2012. Toomer is also the owner of the Bluffton Oyster Factory, the last hand-shucking oyster factory in the state, and the Bluffton Oyster Company, a seafood restaurant located in Bluffton's Historic District. As a fourth-generation fisherman and May River mariculture farmer, he employs more than 50 people. His priority as a member of Town Council is protecting Bluffton's May River and the region's natural environment.

OUR MEMORIES

by Lenore Hetrick

If we remember those who are gone
Then they live again.
They are here once more, they smile and speak,
Just as do living men.

So let us give our thoughts to the brave,
Upon this Memorial Day.
In spiritual fellowship let us speak,
And listen to what they say.

For a soldier who died for his country must know
Much that he could tell,
And if we caught the message it might
Serve us oft and well.

So in our memories let the dead
Linger often and long.
Recollections of that kind live,
And are like a springtime song.





In Flanders Fields

*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.*