

Giving thanks for America's blessings

America is a blessed nation. As we approach the Thanksgiving season — amidst the political debates, the holiday preparations, the 24-hour news cycle and the routine of our daily lives — let us take time to reflect on 25 things for which we as a nation are grateful.

We are grateful:

- ▶ For a country that has remained united and free from tyranny, beginning with the American Revolution, through the Civil War to the Great Depression, and from World War II to the tragedy of September 11.
- ▶ For men and women like Bruce Fenchel and Cody Childers, who fought valiantly and courageously for our freedoms.
- ▶ For the voice of freedom in our places of worship every Sunday.
- ▶ For our teachers, firemen, and policemen who guide our children and protect our communities.
- ▶ For our Founding Fathers, whose steadfast devotion towards this thing we call democracy has resulted in 235 years of freedom.
- ▶ For small businesses like the Virginia Diner, which embody the freedom of being able to own, operate and grow a small business.
- ▶ For the Greatest Generation, whose loyal, patriotic and hardworking spirit will live on in the fabric of American life long after they are gone.
- ▶ For a National Anthem whose stirring words and soaring melody compel people to stop in their tracks, remove their hats, wipe the sweat from their eyes, turn towards the flag, and slowly raise their right hand to their heart.

▶ For the best-trained, best-equipped Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard in the world, who protect and defend our nation daily.

▶ For powerful forces of freedom, courage, and sacrifice that continually determine the character and the course of our nation.

▶ For freedom of the press.

▶ For historical sites from the Statue of Liberty to the Petersburg Battlefield to the vibrant fresco by Constantino Brumidi painted on the canopy of the Capitol Rotunda, all of which tell the stories of our forefathers' sacrifices.

▶ For a civic tradition that preserves our core belief that United States citizenship is not a right, but an honor that transcends race, religion, privilege or politics.

▶ For the freedom to peacefully convene, whether as a Tea Party movement or an Occupy Wall Street group.

▶ For our founding principle that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

▶ For our national motto, In God We Trust, which declares that our nation is guided by something that man cannot take away.

▶ For the right to vote and the peaceful transition of power following American elections.



Randy Forbes
Congressman

▶ For a manufacturing industry that supports an estimated 18.6 million jobs in the United States.

▶ For a Constitution that "was made not merely for the generation that then existed, but for posterity — unlimited, undefined, endless, perpetual posterity." (Henry Clay)

▶ For the charity of Americans towards other nations during times of crisis.

▶ For inventors like Thomas Edison, George Washington Carver, Jonas Salk and Steve Jobs, whose work has industrialized our nation, eradicated diseases and changed the way we communicate.

▶ For the unsung heroes who take care of the elderly and sick, who treat our illnesses and help feed the hungry. For the everyday heroes who are our coworkers and our neighbors, and all the mothers and fathers lovingly raising their children.

▶ For our agricultural roots — from peanuts, to corn to wheat — that provide foods, fibers, fuels, and raw materials for our people and for other nations around the world.

▶ For America's remarkable way of overcoming our differences and embracing our commonalities to make this nation stronger and better for future generations.

▶ For the abundant blessings we have been given. They are the products of the sacrifices of those who have come before us, and we have a responsibility to cultivate them in order to leave a better nation for the generations to come.

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