

I'm Dave Douglas With a Community comment.

Last year my wife and I were in Texas to attend a wedding . On May 15th we were sightseeing. We saw public and private United States flags being flown at half-staff throughout the region. There were so many half-staff flags we wondered if a tragedy had occurred. When we asked we were told that it was Peace Officers Memorial Day and it was federal law that United States flags were to be flown at half-staff on May 15th.

It was an embarrassing reminder of an important memorial date that I knew, but had failed to remember, while I was enjoying travelling and attending a happy event. How could I not instantly remember when I saw the flags? I have law enforcement friends who gave their lives protecting the rest of us, leaving behind families who would forever miss their presence and bringing a certain sadness to even the most joyful of life events. I had been to the Police memorial wall and spoken at Police Memorial events.

I decided that next year I would make sure I reminded others of the need to observe Peace Officers Memorial Day and to fly the flag at half-staff in appreciation and tribute to our law enforcement officers – past and present. Well, next year is now. May 15th is coming and the week following is National Police Week.

To stress the National and non-partisan importance of this observance, allow me to recite statements made by our last two Presidents:

President George W. Bush : “Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week pay tribute to the local, State and Federal law enforcement officers who serve and protect us with courage and dedication. These observances also remind us of the ongoing need to be vigilant against all forms of crime, especially to acts of extreme violence and terrorism.”

President Barack Obama(2013 closing): “... The 143 fallen officers we honor today put themselves on the front lines of that fight, to preserve that quality of community, and to protect the roots of our greatness. They exemplified the very idea of citizenship—that with our God-given rights come responsibilities and obligations to ourselves and to others. They embodied that idea. That’s the way they died. That’s how we must remember them. And that’s how we must live. We can never repay our debt to these officers and their families, but we must do what we can, with all that we have, to live our lives in a way that pays tribute to their memory. That begins, but does not end, by gathering here—with heavy hearts, to carve their names in stone, so that all will know them, and that their legacy will endure...”

This year let’s see if we can have our government, school, business and private flags at half-staff on May 15th. Your reminder may be the one that makes it happen. Thank you for your help-and thank you for caring.

Police memorial videos can be found on YouTube and elsewhere on the internet. Some are highly emotional for law enforcement personnel and their families. May God Bless and Protect Them.