

“Poppy Day” Talking Points

Monday Memorial Day

- **Memorial Day** is a federal holiday in the United States for remembering the people who died while serving in the country's armed forces. It's a day to reflect and honor those who have given their lives in service to our country.
- The holiday, which is observed every year on the last Monday of May, originated as **Decoration Day** after the American Civil War in 1868, when the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization of Union veterans, established it as a time for the nation to decorate the graves of the Union war dead with flowers.
- On **Memorial Day**, veteran's organizations across the United States will visit cemeteries and memorials, to conduct services to remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.
- At national cemeteries, volunteers will place American flags on each veteran grave. Some private cemeteries also allow this practice.
- **Memorial Day** is not to be confused with **Veterans Day**; **Memorial Day** is a day of remembering the men and women who *died* while serving, while **Veterans Day** celebrates the service of all U.S. military veterans.

Tuesday The Poppy & Symbolism

- The real poppy is a small red flower that grew wildly across the battlefields in Europe after WWI.
- The idea for the **Memorial Poppy** came from a line in the poem "In Flanders Field" written just after WWI by Lt. Col. John McCae.
- The **Memorial Poppy** is a symbol of the blood that is shed, and the sacrifices made by our veterans to protect our country, our values, and our way of life.
- In 1920, the National American Legion adopted the **Memorial Poppy** as their symbol of remembrance.
- The **Memorial Poppy** is made by hospitalized and/or disabled veterans. Contributions collected through the distribution of the **Memorial Poppy** are used exclusively to support veterans in need.
- Veterans hand out **Memorial Poppies** in their communities around Memorial Day to raise funds for veterans in need. In the community many people contribute their "pocket change" to the veteran when they are handed a poppy. This Thursday our local Veterans will be here during lunch. The veterans will hand each student a poppy and would appreciate a modest contribution. The donations are a small way to show our gratitude and help the veteran community. Participation is strictly voluntary.

Wednesday Poppy Day Goals

- Veterans from American Legion Post 318 will be available during lunch to conduct the first FHSD “Poppy Day”.
- The goals of this program are to:
 1. Educate the youth of our community regarding the significance of **Memorial Day** and the symbolism of the “**Memorial Poppy**”.
 2. Provide an opportunity for FHSD students to interact with local veterans.
 3. Raise funds to support veterans in need.
- Each individual in the Forest Hills School District will have the opportunity to obtain a **Memorial Poppy**. A modest contribution would be appreciated.

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In Flanders Fields

By Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae

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.

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