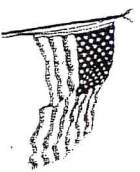


## I Am a Veteran



When I became a member of the Armed Forces and swore my allegiance, I promised to protect and defend this Nation, both within and without. And, to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America; to protect the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; as well as the right to bear arms.

I served in the Spanish American and Revolutionary Wars; and as a patriot, I was there when they dumped the tea into the Boston Harbor so that this Nation could grow and prosper independently; setting its own standards and making its own laws. I survived the war to end all wars and when on November 11, 1918, the Armistice was signed, I hoped that no one again would have to fight the fights to end all fights.

Yet that was not to be, and on December 7, 1941, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt declared that "this is a day that will live in infamy," I shouldered the responsibility to fight for the cause of freedom so that the

devastation and bloodshed I was to witness on the Pacific atolls or in the streets of London and Berlin, would never touch our shores.

I was there when they raised the flag on Iwo Jima. I flew the planes, navigated the ships, and led the troops into battle and I was aboard the USS Missouri when the Japanese surrendered. And when it was over, I watched the sun rise as we sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge and I was once again home.

Korea, Viet Nam, Saudi Arabia, Kosovo, Afghanistan. Some of these were names we never heard of until we were forced to fight to stem the flow of Communism and oppression. Today the fight continues and we must give our support to the brave and gallant men and women who lay their lives on the line to defend and protect us and uphold the ideals of that paper written so many years ago.

