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What Veterans mean to me.....

My poppop is a Vietnam veteran. He received his draft notice on the day of his wedding to my mommom. My poppop served two years in Vietnam and was part of the First Air Calvary.....he jumped out of helicopters. He doesn't talk much about his experience but I know it had a great impact on his life. How could it not? My mommom told me that he put iron bars up on all the windows in their house for a year after he returned. He was one of the lucky ones, though. He came home.

I think there is no greater honor then to defend our country. It is easy to talk about how thankful we are for our freedom but for some they endure unspeakable experiences actually defending our freedom and the freedom of others in the world. The United States has always been the defenders of the world. In World War II, had it not be for the United States soldiers we may have seen a different ending to the Holocaust. It makes me very proud of our country to know that we take on the bullies.

Sometimes I see veterans camped out in front of the Veterans Hospital. I feel sad for them that they are still "stuck" in that place within themselves. I feel sad that they can't move forward. I do think the United States has not always done a good job of taking care of our veterans when they return home from war. The men and women who defend us need lots of support and help assimilating back into society. I would imagine that it is difficult to turn off all the training and memories you had during your time at war.

My brother goes to the Delaware Military Academy and wears a navy uniform. One day he may serve our country and become a veteran. While I



would be very scared for him, I would be so proud that my brother is protecting me and my liberties. One thing we all have in this country is our liberties. It doesn't matter if you are rich or poor, black or white, male or female. Each of us is a citizen of the United States of America and in time of attack on our country or need to defend democracy, we pull together and are ONE.

When 9/11 happened the country pulled together like never before. New York City rallied and became an even stronger state. I do not believe the terrorists achieved what they intended. In my opinion many men and women became veterans that day. Many people stepped up and helped other with no expectations of anything in return. Really, that is what a veteran does.

Veterans step up when others can't or won't. Veterans expect nothing in return and giving everything they have to defend the cause. Some even pay the ultimate price...their life.