

Memorial Day: Remember our heroes



RABBI IRWIN GRONER

On Memorial Day throughout the nation, we honor the memory of our heroic dead. By the heroism and sacrifice of the men and women who fought for their country, America has become free and great and strong. We bear witness to our continuing dedication to the ideals for which they laid down their lives.

Every thoughtful American should be aware on this Memorial Day of a debt and the responsibility to these honored dead. That they have our reverence and gratitude is without question. No eulogy is needed, nor could any be adequate to describe our solemn tribute to the heroes who rest in all the battlefields and graves where our freedom was earned and tested.

Tributes alone cannot exhaust the measure of our obligations to these dead. Elaborate rhetoric is an insufficient payment of the nation's debt to its heroes.

If we break faith with us who die, we shall sleep — though poppies grow in Flanders' fields.

That was how John MacRae conceived the duty of the living to the dead — not to break faith with them, to make real the ideals for which they died.

They speak to us and say: "We have died so that the ideals of freedom and brotherhood may live. Can you so live that these ideals shall not die?"

Their memory, therefore, is a vigorous challenge to us, for we are engaged in a battle, as momentous as the great conflicts in which they gave up their lives.

We must build for our hallowed dead, monuments more lasting than brass and more enduring than stone — monuments within our hearts.

They died for one of the supreme ideals mankind has envisioned — democracy. Democracy consists of a sacred texture of ideals — freedom and brotherhood and justice and responsibility. They saw the war in which they engaged and in which they invested youth and life itself, not as a conflict or conquest, or for territorial expansion. And they saw it as a crusade on behalf of mankind and for freedom.

They believed that the priceless heritage of human liberties was threatened, and they went forth on a sacrificial mission to stave off the defeat of those values which they had been taught to reverse.

Only by keeping faith with our

heroes can we perpetuate their deeds. Only by fulfilling the purposes for which they made a supreme sacrifice can we redeem that sacrifice from futility.

Thus, the example of their devotion to their country, moves us to equal loyalty, to an exalted patriotism. May it impel us to make our country great, its laws just and wise, its culture deep and true, its economy productive and equitable and free.

Abraham Lincoln spoke for all the generations in his immortal words: "It is for us, the living, highly to resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain."

Rabbi Irwin Groner is with Congregation Shaarey Zedek in Southfield. If you have a question or comment, call him at 963-2047, mailbox number 1882, on a touch-tone phone.

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Sweet Adelines officers named

Several area residents are being installed as officers in the barbershop-singing Spirit of Detroit Chapter of Sweet Adelines. Ruth Penack of West Bloomfield was elected president, Maureen Maher of Westland vice president, Laura Lozano of Garden City, corresponding secretary, Mary Lou Howlett of Walled Lake, recording secretary and Pam Lauer of Westland, treasurer.

New board members are Nora Conn of Huntington Woods; Faith Massey of Allen Park; Harriet McAvoy of Lincoln Park; Mary Thompson of Plymouth; Ellen Segh of New Hudson; Sandy Pastor of Birmingham and Linda Clements of Plymouth.

Retiring board members are Grace Roberts of West Bloomfield, Betty O'Connor of Farmington; Margaret Lockard of Detroit; and Jan Dillon of Redford.

The 90-woman, 1993 regional champion Spirit of Detroit Chorus offers free group singing lessons to women of all ages at 7 p.m. every Tuesday when Spirit of Detroit rehearses at the VFW Hall at 1-96 and Inkster in Redford Township. Reading music is not required. For more information, call (313) 634-4468.

Spirit of Detroit is preparing for the first of its summer music series, set for 8 p.m. Thursday, June 9, in Heritage Park on Farmington Road north of 10 Mile in Farmington Hills. Dust off your lawn chair and pack the picnic basket. Admission is free.

Also on the calendar is Spirit of Detroit's return engagement at Tiger Stadium, where they will sing the national anthem and "O Canada" at the Detroit-Toronto game June 17.

Sweet Adelines — an international organization boasting

28,100 members with 607 chapters in 12 countries — is launching "Young Women in Harmony," a new program by which they'll enlist future Sweet Adelines.

Last month, Sweet Adelines Gayle Smith of Bloomfield Hills and Margaret Lockard of Detroit visited the Hampton School in Detroit where they taught four-part harmony to a large class of enthusiastic students. It was such a hit they'll be returning each Thursday.

Spirit of Detroit is rehearsing diligently for November's international competition in Reno.

Directing the metro-Detroit chorus is Leann Hazlett, who drives an hour and 45 minutes one way to Redford from Swan-Ohio for weekly rehearsal. Hazlett is the lead in Swing Street, voted the top international quartet in 1991.

Shelters get money

Forty-one homeless shelters and service providers in Michigan have been given \$2.8 million by the state and federal governments.

The Oakland County Task Force on Homelessness gets \$197,100.

The Cass Community United Methodist Church and Center gets \$29,736. The Detroit Health Care for the Homeless gets \$30,000. The Eastside Emergency Center gets \$30,000. Operation Helping Hand gets \$100,000. The Premier Land Community Shelter gets \$30,000. Simon House gets \$28,600. And St. Vincent DePaul gets \$30,000.

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