

May 30, 2024

Pete:

I am in receipt of an email you sent to the Mayor re: the **Lantern Floating Ceremony**. Do you have a few minutes to chat today? If so, please send along a few times and your phone number and we will find a time to connect.

Thank you,
Andy

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Cc: Honorable Rick Blangiardi, Mayor of Honolulu

Aloha e Andy ~

Thank you for getting back to Pete and I. We appreciate hearing from you. I'm from Kaua'i and came to O'ahu in August 2018. First Memorial Day was 2019. Was horrified. I come from a military family, as does my wife. My father served in Korea; grandfather in WWI. Her grandfather was a decorated WWII POW. Not only escaped the Nazis, carried many out with him. You can read about his service to our nation:

<https://www.scottgould.org/ray.php>

Made a video that year:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VwBp4LRIAPE>

Pete also made a video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yhTWclRizKQ>

My g grandfather was awarded the Medal of Honor. Enlisted in the Union army at 18. Volunteered for a special unit of 150 men. All had to be unmarried. Was a suicide mission. Still stepped up. They served as the Tip of the Spear in the Siege on Vicksburg 1863, a key battle ending the war and FREEING Black slaves. Decoration Day, Memorial Day has special significance to our family. Of the 150, Pvt Robert A Lower was one of only 19 to survive ... 87% perished.

Compare pandemic to our military service members. Pandemic was WAR against a virus. DRs, nurses, staff carried the load; terrible, horrific ordeal. Many cried on TV. Their suffering was our suffering. Civilians can cry.

Military CANNOT cry. Tears would embolden the enemy. Morale must be high at all times (even when it isn't). Low morale leads to defeat. Thus, the CULTURE of the military is to SUFFER in SILENCE !!! Our military suffer this appropriation of Memorial Day. They have not cried out, as it is not their culture to ask for help or show their suffering. Civilians do great injustice to this Culture of Honor and Duty by failing to be empathetic to their needs, pain and suffering.

After observing the degradation of Memorial Day on O'ahu 2019, spent many hours sitting with our fallen brothers & sisters at Punchbowl. I'm not very talented, but played my ukulele for them.

They told me they appreciated the company! They are very lonely. They gave their lives for us; we have forgotten them. They suffer in silence ... and it's so silent at Punchbowl. You should spend some time in reflection in that hallowed ground. They will speak to you! They LOVE you !!! They LOVE all of us.

Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are their friend. The mayor is their friend. We ask ONLY that Shinnyo-en not trample on their memory. Let's be friends to these heroes. Sunday-Monday joint observation creates love & harmony. USA & Japan holding hands across the sea in peace and love. We do not wish to call 5,000+ heroes to protest on Memorial Day. We will if needed. Thank you!

Medal of Honor Recipient, Pvt. Robert A. Lower, Company K, 55th Illinois Infantry

