

★ MEMORIAL DAY ★

In memory of the millions that have given their lives for freedom!



THE LAST TRIP HOME

Contributed. From the Web.

AIRLINE CAPTAIN: My lead flight attendant came to me and said, "We have an H.R. on this flight." (H.R. stands for Human Remains.)

"Are they military?" I asked.

"Yes," she said.

"Is there an escort?" I asked.

"Yes, I've already assigned him a seat."

"Would you please tell him to come to the Flight Deck. You can board him early." I said.

A short while later a young army sergeant entered the flight deck. He was the image of the perfectly dressed soldier. He introduced himself and I asked him about his soldier.

The escorts of these fallen soldiers talk about them as if they are still alive and still with us. "My soldier is on his way back to Virginia," he said. He proceeded to answer my questions but offered no words.

I asked him if there was anything I could do for him and he said no. I told him that he had the toughest job in the military and that I appreciated the work that he does for the families of our fallen soldiers. The first officer and I got up out of our seats to shake his hand. He left the Flight Deck to find his seat.

We completed our preflight checks, pushed back, and performed an uneventful departure.

About 30 minutes into our flight, I received a call from the lead flight attendant in the cabin. "I just found out that the family of the soldier we are carrying is also on board," she said. She then proceeded to tell me that the father, mother, wife, and 2-year-old daughter were escorting their son, husband, and father home. The family was upset because they were unable to see the container that the soldier was in before we left.

We were on our way to a major hub at which the family was going to wait four hours for the connecting flight home to Virginia. The father of the soldier told the flight attendant that knowing his son was below him in the cargo compartment and being unable to see him was too much for him and the family to bear. He had asked the flight attendant if there was anything that could be done to allow them to see him upon our arrival. The family wanted to be outside by the cargo door to watch the soldier being taken off the airplane.

I could hear the desperation in the flight attendant's voice when she asked me if there was anything I could do. "I'm on it," I said. I told her that I would get back to her.

Airborne communication with my company normally occurs in the form of e-mail-like messages. I decided to bypass this system and contact my flight dispatcher directly on a secondary radio. There is a radio operator in the operations control center who connects you to the telephone of the dispatcher. I was in direct contact with the dispatcher. I explained the situation I had on board with the family

and what it was the family wanted. He said he understood and that he would get back to me.

Two hours went by and I had not heard from the dispatcher. We were going to get busy soon and I needed to know what to tell the family. I sent a text message asking for an update. I saved the return message from the dispatcher and the following is the text: "Captain, sorry it has taken so long to get back to you. There is a policy on this now, and I had to check on a few things. Upon your arrival, a dedicated escort team will meet the aircraft. The team will escort the family to the ramp and plane side. A van will be used to load the remains with a secondary van for the family. "The family will be taken to their departure

controller said, "Take your time."

I stopped the aircraft and set the parking brake. I pushed the public address button and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, this is your Captain speaking: I have stopped short of our gate to make a special announcement. We have a passenger on board who deserves our honor and respect. His name is Private XXXXXX, a soldier who recently lost his life. Private XXXXXX is under your feet in the cargo hold. Escorting him today is Army Sergeant XXXXXX. Also, on board are his father, mother, wife, and daughter. Your entire flight crew is asking for all passengers to remain in their seats to allow the family to exit the aircraft first. Thank you."

We continued the turn to the gate, came to a stop, and started our shutdown procedures. A couple of minutes later I opened the cockpit door. I found the two forward flight attendants crying, something you just do not see. I was told that after we came to a stop, every passenger on the aircraft stayed in their seats, waiting for the family to exit the aircraft.

When the family got up and gathered their things, a passenger slowly started to clap his hands. Moments later, more passengers joined in and soon the entire aircraft was clapping. Words of 'God Bless You', 'I'm sorry', 'thank you', 'be proud', and other kind words were uttered to the family as

they made their way down the aisle and out of the airplane. They were escorted down to the ramp to finally be with their loved one.

Many of the passengers disembarking thanked me for the announcement I had made. They were just words, I told them, I could say them over and over again, but nothing I say will bring back that brave soldier.

I respectfully ask that all of you reflect on this event and the sacrifices that millions of our men and women have made to ensure our freedom and safety in the United States of AMERICA.



area and escorted into the terminal, where the remains can be seen on the ramp. It is a private area for the family only. When the connecting aircraft arrives, the family will be escorted onto the ramp and plane side to watch the remains being loaded for the final leg home.

"Captain, most of us here in flight control are veterans. Please pass our condolences on to the family. Thanks."

I sent a message back, telling flight control thanks for a good job. I printed out the message and gave it to the lead flight attendant to pass on to the father.

The lead flight attendant was very thankful and told me, "You have no idea how much this will mean to them."

Things started getting busy for the descent, approach, and landing. After landing, we cleared the runway and taxied to the ramp area. The ramp is huge with 15 gates on either side of the alleyway. It is always a busy area with aircraft maneuvering every which way to enter and exit. When we entered the ramp and checked in with the ramp controller, we were told that all traffic was being held for us

"There is a team in place to meet the aircraft," we were told. It looked like it was all coming together, but then I realized that once we turned the seat belt sign off, everyone would stand up at once and delay the family from getting off the airplane. As we approached our gate, I asked the copilot to tell the ramp controller, we were going to stop short of the gate to make an announcement to the passengers. He did that and the ramp

LV Chamber of Commerce

MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

10AM
Monday
May 29th

Lucerne Valley
Memorial Park

(Just west of the post office)

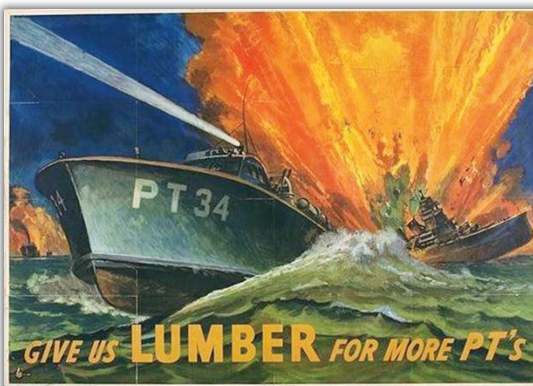
OLD POST CARDS

Contributed. From the Web.

While being a Helicopter Crew Chief Instructor, I'd go to Washington DC, with a few buddies almost every weekend. We'd do the Smithsonian and all.

On the way back to Ft. Eustis (125 miles), we'd often stop for something to eat.

One time, it was getting late. We landed in



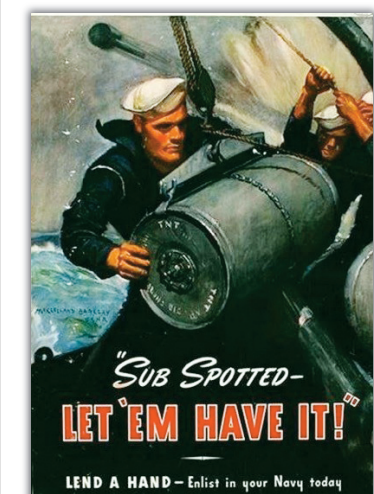
Falls Church, VA. We saw an old general store that was still open. We walked around on the old creaky floors looking for Frito's or something? I came across, an old wire frame post card holder. It was full of WWII post cards ... Penny a piece!

I asked the guy, "How much do you want for the Post Cards?" He said, "A penny. They have been here ever since he was a kid."

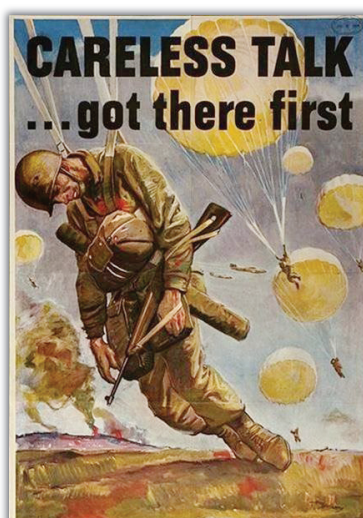
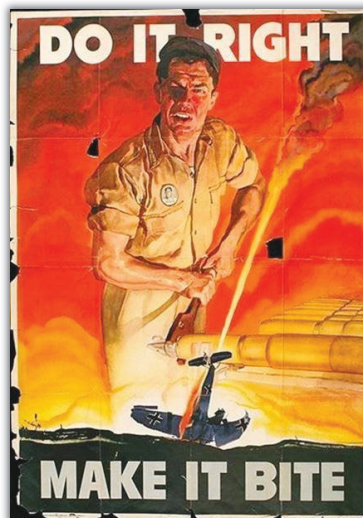
I counted them ... 300 plus. I gave him \$4.00 and I got the rack, too.

In San Diego, I sold a bunch for \$1.00 each. I still have a bunch to hand down.

I know some of you are too young to recall these posters and WWII, but they were



a part of my life and others who are now "older than dirt". These are great. Pass them along, especially to your older e-mail friends. I wonder whatever happened to this kind of thinking.



I got a lump in my throat when I read this. I "grew up" thinking: patriotism, it is the AMERICAN way! I am glad to see that somebody saved them.

These were our parents.

What in God's name have we let happen ?

I guess we are the last generation to see, or even remember anything like these!

Whatever happened?

- 70 years of "progressive" education happened!
- Political correctness (or "re-education") happened.
- Lack of God's name happened.
- Lack of personal responsibility happened,
- Lack of personal integrity and honesty happened.
- Lack of respect and loyalty to our country happened,
- Lack of being an American happened.

Did all of these things die along with common sense?
I for one am still proud to be an American!

Lucerne Valley's MEGA SWAP MEET!

Sat., June 3, 8am - 3pm

Sponsored by L.V. Chamber of Commerce

His Closet -- 760-412-0431

Cafe 247 -- 951-751-1039

LV Chamber -- 760-223-7164

Jack-O-Landia -- 760-646-3666

LV Senior Center -- 760-248-2248

Quality Treasure -- 760-810-2102

Floored -- 510-356-6733

Oasis Reality -- 760-533-3328

Michoacan Tacos -- 760-712-1186

Lucerne Valley Mkt & Hdw

-- SOLD OUT

Call to reserve your space to sell!