



Ohio Adjutant General's Department

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Honoring the Birth of our Nation

On July 4, our country will celebrate its 241st Independence Day.

It's a day to celebrate our good fortune to live in this great nation, founded on the principles of liberty and freedom. It's also a day to reflect on the obstacles and dangers those who came before us braved to found our great nation.

I am enormously proud this same spirit resonates strongly today within the Ohio National Guard. As we gather for fireworks and picnics, we remember our Soldiers and Airmen celebrating this 4th of July in other parts of the country and the world — defending the same pursuit of liberty and freedom our Founding Fathers so earnestly endeavored to achieve.

Although Congress did not make the Fourth of July an official federal holiday until 1870, Americans began observing the day as early as 1777, when the first-ever major celebration in Philadelphia included a parade, a 13-gun salute and fireworks.

Much has happened in the 241 years since the Declaration of Independence was signed. As we enjoy a parade or watch fireworks, we should take a moment to reflect on how far we have come from that hot, cramped room in Philadelphia during the summer of 1776. We should remember with gratitude the men and women who risked all to move our nation closer to the model of freedom, liberty and democracy that it is today.

Major General Mark E. Bartman,
Ohio National Guard, The Adjutant General