

# MONTANA SUPPLEMENT



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## Memorial Day? Why only one day?

First things first! this article is in NO WAY an attempt to express my opinion either for or against any of the things that are celebrated or focused on each month, nor is it attempting to take away or lessen the importance of any of the things celebrated or focused on each month.

That being said, I have to ask, why is Memorial DAY only one day? Singular, not plural, a single digit, one (1), a single place holder on the calendar! Other things of importance get a full month for people to focus on that one thing, the media goes overboard promoting whatever the topic is for the month, all the while, the one important thing that made most of the other things possible, only gets one day! Sadly, the only publicity that comes along with Memorial Day is the fact that we all get a long weekend to head to the lake and remember “if you’re going to drink, drink responsibly!”

Personally, I see this as a travesty, not because we are spending months celebrating all these other things, I think all the things we celebrate or draw awareness to are fine and yes let us celebrate and raise awareness. The travesty comes from the fact that we only give one, halfhearted and hijacked day to the memory of the men and women who laid down their lives to make our country what it is today. Without their sacrifice, where would we be? What would we have to celebrate or bring awareness to? Everything we have, everything we are and everything we do is in one way or another, because of those who went before us.

If you do not know what we focus on each month, here is a partial list:

**Jan:** Nothing yet

**Feb:** African American History.

**March:** National Women’s History & Irish-American Heritage.

**April:** March 13<sup>th</sup> – April 15<sup>th</sup> National Deaf History month.

**May:** Asian Pacific American Heritage, Older American’s, Jewish-American Heritage.

**June:** Gay Lesbian Pride Month.

**July:** Nothing yet.

**Aug:** Nothing yet.

**Sept:** Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> – Oct 15<sup>th</sup>, National Hispanic-Latino Heritage.

**Oct:** National Disability Employment Awareness & Italian-American Heritage.

**Nov:** National American Indian/Alaskan Native Heritage.

**Dec:** Nothing yet.

Along with those listed, each month is also associated with some form of cancer awareness and other medical awareness, Again, all are good things, I just feel we are cheating those who deserve the most “awareness”.

Some facts about Memorial Day you may or may not have known.

1. It Honors the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. Military.
2. It is observed on the last day of May, but for years it was celebrated on May 30<sup>th</sup>.
3. Was originally known as Decoration Day.
4. In 1971 it became a Federal holiday creating a 3-day weekend for Federal employees.
5. A National moment of silent remembrance takes place at 3:00pm local time.
6. Originally only honored those lost in the Civil War but that changed during World War I.
7. One of the earliest celebrations of the holiday was organized by recently freed slaves.
8. The American Flag is too be flown at half staff until noon local time, then raised to the top of the staff for the remainder of the day.

I do not put up the American Flag on Memorial Day, at my house it is Memorial Day, Veterans Day and God Bless America day, every day! I fly our flag as a reminder and thank you EVERY DAY, because every day is worthy of remembering.

In closing I want to state again, I in no way, mean to take away from anything else we celebrate/remember, I only ask that you maybe try to change Memorial Day to NEVER FORGET! I leave you with a prayer I found that maybe you could say while you are out remembering with your family, “Let us turn to You, Lord, in our grief and in our remembrance of the fallen. Guide us toward a harmonious existence as we honor those who were willing to give up their lives that we may gather here today freely. On this Memorial Day, we pray for peace and for those who gave all, AMEN.”

Respectfully submitted: Dan Koch Jr. PM. REPGC