

Patriotism in Action Tribute to the Founder of Veterans Day

Commemoration of the Founder of America's 1st Veterans Day, 1947, Birmingham, Alabama

November 10, 1630-1700 / Raymond Weeks Monument, Linn Park, Birmingham, Alabama USA



Chair: COL Bob Barefield (USA Ret.)

Emcee: Dr. David Dyson

Speaker: Mayor William Bell

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Welcome and Sponsors

Good evening veterans and other patriots – and a special welcome to our visitors from across the nation! We hope you enjoyed the patriotic music played for us by “Bama Bill.”

On behalf of Patriotism in Action, National Veterans Day, Blue Star Salute Foundation, the City of Birmingham, and Life Leaders America, welcome to our Tribute to the Founder of National Veterans Day. Col Bob Barefield (USA Retired), chairman of Patriotism in Action, led organizing this event. Please see your program for a list of sponsors and key contributors who, along with the Weeks Family, also welcome you.

Posting of Colors

The posting of colors is an honored tradition in America. The First Pennsylvania Regiment at The American Village near Birmingham is a group of historical scholars dedicated to preserving the memory of the American soldiers who fought in the War for Independence. Major Moore (Chris Long), present colors.

Prayer

Chaplain Duke Martin, US Navy veteran, will offer our prayer.

Purpose

Our purpose for this event is to remember the founder of Veterans Day, Raymond Weeks, at this monument dedicated for his patriotic action. His family is here and appreciates your attendance. Because of Mr. Weeks taking action on his feelings of patriotism, Birmingham is recognized by the

U.S. Senate as the city that started our nation's Veterans Day in 1947. Mr. Weeks started the National Veteran Award in 1954, was honored by President Reagan at the White House on national television as the "driving force" for this holiday in 1982. From forming the concept in 1945 to the calling to gain support from General Eisenhower in 1946 until his death, Raymond gave loyal service to Veterans Day for 40 years. This monument before us was dedicated in 1987 from "a grateful nation." The street sign next to City Hall was dedicated last year by a grateful city.

This tribute seeks to promote patriotic action. In 1945 many veterans had the idea for Veterans Day. Raymond Weeks was a patriot who took action to honor veterans and support world peace.

If you would like to use our research to teach others of Veterans Day history and school character traits, we can provide books, posters, and web pages. You can see more at PatriotismInAction.us

Call to Action Speaker

Mayor William Bell has served Birmingham over 30 years on the City Council, council president, and was re-elected mayor. Under his leadership, Birmingham was selected an "All-America City" for the first time in decades. His video message to the national committee cited Birmingham's role as a leader for Veterans Day. Birmingham will host The World Games in 2021.

Three years ago tonight at the banquet, Mayor Bell and I met and discussed Birmingham's potential as a "top 5" city for Veterans Day and patriotic events. Soon after, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution naming Birmingham and Raymond Weeks as leader of our nation's Veterans Day. Mayor Bell signed a proclamation for Birmingham as the founding city of Veterans Day and as one that stands for freedom—Liberty provided by our military and Rights supported by veterans and civilian foot soldiers. He is working with us to brand Birmingham branded as a city where *freedom lives* and all of us are free to flourish at our callings. Mayor Bell, thank you for caring about this history and advancing the city as a leader for freedoms.

Thank you Mayor Bell. Folks, if you want to support Freedom initiatives, visit FreedomCity.us.

Riderless Horse in Honor of those no longer Riding

Please direct your attention to the riderless horse. As horseman to American Patriot and two others, I love this part. The military tradition of tribute to soldiers-past dates back to the Roman and Greek empires. If you have seen the funeral procession of a Commander -in-Chief or a full military honors funeral at Arlington (like we did for Stretch's dad, LTG Dunn), you have been moved by the beauty and meaning of the horse carrying a saddle without a rider with the boots in the stirrups reversed as a sign *the warrior will never ride again*.

Horse: sponsored by: Lucky Acres Ranch, Chilton County. Thank you Amanda.

Led by Second Lieutenant Stephen Vance.

Saddle, bridle, and other tack provided by: The Red Barn in Leeds.

Wreath Dedications

We have three wreaths to present in memory and honor of Mr. Weeks and all veterans no longer with us. Please remember Col. Bill Voigt (USAFR Ret), who succeeded Raymond Weeks as president of National Veterans Day and served 25 years.

1. Blue Star Salute wreath shall be laid by National Veteran Award honoree Army MSgt (Ret) Ronald Rosser, assisted by Lt. Col. Glenn Nivens (USA Ret).
2. National Veterans Day wreath presented by National Commander-in-Chief, Veterans of Foreign Wars, John Gwizdaz, assisted by Mark Ryan, president of National Veterans Day Birmingham.
3. Patriotism in Action wreath placed by the Daughter of our Veterans Day Founder, Barbara Weeks Minor, escorted by Col. Bob Barefield (USA Ret), with Col. Stretch Dunn (USA Ret) assisting.

Please remember these patriots and their actions as we hear "Taps" played by Jim Quakenbush (USMC) of Alabama Bugles Across America.

Jim, thank you. We wish the Marine Corps a Happy November 10 Birthday.

Announcements and Closing

If we did our job well, you are leaving here convicted that Raymond Weeks, the City of Birmingham, and State of Alabama started America's Veterans Day national movement and has advanced freedoms. We hope this event inspired you to take action as a true patriot. Please pass on this history to a teacher or veteran service provider.

You are invited to visit the Flame of Freedom just across the park.

Mark Ryan: President of National Veterans Day will share important information about events tonight and tomorrow.

- ◆ National Veteran Award Reception and Banquet
- ◆ Memorial Service
- ◆ World Peace Luncheon
- ◆ Parade

Good night. Please tell someone else what we did here this evening.