



American Weekly Inspiration

Thoughts for today and every day:

“Happiness and freedom begin with a clear understanding of one principle: Some things are within your control, and some things are not. It is only after you have faced up to this fundamental role and learned to distinguish between what you can and can’t control that inner tranquility and outer effectiveness become possible.”

Epictetus (c. 55-135 A.D.) philosopher

“In nature there are neither rewards nor punishments—there are consequences.”

Robert G. Ingersoll (1833-1899) orator and lawyer

““Envy is an insult to oneself.” Yevgeny Alesandrovich Yecvtushenko, poet

“He who asks questions, cannot void the answers.” African proverb

American Update:

We are **eight days away from Christmas** and I have still much gift shopping to do. I hope that everyone is looking forward to the joy of the holidays and sharing it with family. While you are off from school or work, take the time to ‘stroll’ through our web site to take a look at the vast information, links to other teams and businesses and support materials for our events and your organization: www.DanceADTS.com.

This will be the last message for 2008 and we will resume the American Inspiration on January 7th. The American office will be closing on Thursday, December 18th, and reopen on Monday, January 5th. If you need to contact us, we will be checking e-mail regularly. Make sure to watch the halftime of the **Capital One Bowl on January 1st, on ABC**. The game starts at 1:00pm Eastern time (2:00pm Central). We will have lots of dancers performing in this great halftime.

May the spirit of Christmas fill your household with joy, from everyone here at the
American Dance/Drill Team office.

Inspiration of the Week:
A Christmas Poem

*The embers glowed softly, and in their dim light,
I gazed round the room and I cherished the sight.
My wife was asleep, her head on my chest,
My daughter beside me, angelic in rest.*

*Outside the snow fell, a blanket of white,
Transforming the yard to a winter delight.
The sparkling lights in the tree I believe,
Completed the magic that was Christmas Eve.*

*My eyelids were heavy, my breathing was deep,
Secure and surrounded by love I would sleep.
In perfect contentment, or so it would seem,
So I slumbered, perhaps I started to dream.*

*The sound wasn't loud, and it wasn't too near,
But I opened my eyes when it tickled my ear.
Perhaps just a cough, I didn't quite know, Then the
sure sound of footsteps outside in the snow.*

*My soul gave a tremble, I struggled to hear,
And I crept to the door just to see who was near.
Standing out in the cold and the dark of the night,
A lone figure stood, his face weary and tight.*

*A soldier, I puzzled, some twenty years old, huddled here in the
cold.*

*Alone in the dark, he looked up and smiled,
Standing watch over me, and my wife and my child.*

*"What are you doing?" I asked without fear,
"Come in this moment, it's freezing out here!
Put down your pack, brush the snow from your sleeve,
You should be at home on a cold Christmas Eve!"*

*For barely a moment I saw his eyes shift,
Away from the cold and the snow blown in drifts..
To the window that danced with a warm fire's light
Then he sighed and he said "Its really all right,
I'm out here by choice. I'm here every night."*

*"It's my duty to stand at the front of the line,
That separates you from the darkest of times.
No one had to ask or beg or implore me,
I'm proud to stand here like my fathers before me.*

*My Gramps died at ' Pearl on a day in December,"
Then he sighed, "That's a Christmas that 'Gram always
remembers."
My dad stood his watch in the jungles of ' Nam
And now it is my turn and so, here I am.*

*I've not seen my own son in more than a while,
But my wife sends me pictures, he's sure got her smile.*

*Then he bent and he carefully pulled from his bag,
The red, white, and blue... an American flag.
I can live through the cold and the being alone,
Away from my family, my house and my home.*

*I can stand at my post through the rain and the sleet,
I can sleep in a foxhole with little to eat.
I can carry the weight of killing another,
Or lay down my life with my sister and brother..
Who stand at the front against any and all,
To ensure for all time that this flag will not fall."*

*"So go back inside," he said, "harbor no fright,
Your family is waiting and I'll be all right."
"But isn't there something I can do, at the least,
"Give you money," I asked, "or prepare you a feast?
It seems all too little for all that you've done,
For being away from your wife and your son."*

*Then his eye welled a tear that held no regret,
"Just tell us you love us, and never forget.
To fight for our rights back at home while we're gone,
To stand your own watch, no matter how long.
For when we come home, either standing or dead,
To know you remember we fought and we bled.
Is payment enough, and with that we will trust,
That we mattered to you as you mattered to us."*

*LCDR Jeff Giles, SC, USN
30th Naval Construction Regiment
OIC, Logistics*

When you are making out your Christmas card list this year, please include the following:

**A Recovering American Soldier
C/O Walter Reed Army Medical Center
6900 Georgia Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20307-5001**

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