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Chair, Pitkin County Commissioner  
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Welcome to Veterans Memorial Park

We remember those who fought for our freedom yesterday and continue to fight today. Major armed conflicts are being fought presently. In these times, wars are about democracy awakening. The battle in Ukraine is about preserving a country's vital independence and identity. We have fought similar conflicts of ideas within our own borders; about equality and freedom for all.

The joy and memories of gathering with neighbors in Aspen, reciting the names of friends we have lost is the solidarity we have in a shared place.

We live in a place where we know justice should not wear a blindfold. We aim to see you equally from our dress, our robes and formality; we are here to protect citizens, our way of life and our call for liberty. Our grandparents and parents fought for our freedom. Maybe for our children, this is the year we will beat swords into plowshares.

*Isiah 2:3-4*

*He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their*

*spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

Today is the day to remember our relatives who were drafted into the Army and served as a Captain in WWII and the Korean War. The plan to go to law school was thwarted by the draft, so he could prepare soldiers for deployment and support the war effort.

Today is the day to remember our relatives who proudly served in WW1 and then lobbied and fought for benefits, healthcare and support for our veterans and their families through the American Legion Post.

Today is the day we remember those who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces.

Maybe this Memorial Day, we will cease destructive wars and focus on our children's education, protect our nation's forests, enjoy the splendor of the headwaters and see all people as our equal, living in safety and happiness. This is grounded in my own family's service, in your family's service, and our collective service to a community, a state, a country, and a planet that is happy, healthy, and safe for all.