

Hello Brothers,

I want to write a few words today about the significance of Thanksgiving in our society today and hopes to do the importance of this day some justice. Many of us know Thanksgiving as the day where we gather together with family, give thanks for what we have, eat way too much food, watch way too much football (let's be honest, there is never too much food or football). A new trend is to have a Friendsgiving where you gather with your friends instead of family, because we all have that one crazy family member, that talks too much about politics or controversial issues, that we want to avoid. We are taught that the first "Thanksgiving" was between the Pilgrims and Natives. This feast wasn't what we envision today, as it was a celebration of a good hunt, most likely geese and ducks, which is an easier hunt than turkey, all of which are prevalent in the New England region, and harvest that could feed the colonists for a week or so, and it wasn't in the end of November but in October. The local Native tribe, the Wampanoag Tribe, appeared at the colonist gate after the start of the feast, bringing some of their own fairs. The two groups socialized for multiple days. This custom was spread throughout the colonies, but with no commonality and with some of the southern colonies being slow to take on the New England festivity. It was so divisive in nature that it did not become a national holiday until October of 1863 when President Abraham Lincoln declared that the 26th of November should be a national Thanksgiving, however it was up to the administration to determine the date of the holiday until 1942 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt changed it to the 4th Thursday in November.

Many of us plan trips to our hometowns to see family and friends during this time. In New England, there is a tradition of High School football teams partaking in their rivalry game, while old classmates reunite in the stands. However, it is hard not to notice over the years, that some of our friends and family members are missing from the stands or dinner table. Friends like CPT. Bob Fraser, US Army, currently deployed to Africa. Bob and I graduated from Coventry High School in 2006 and I remember clear as day our Freshman year, one of the hockey teams Seniors making us do burpees in the cafeteria to see who had more endurance, a hockey goalie (Bob) or a football linemen (Me), well Bob wins that one and has every year since. A man that after he went to the Citadel for college, we relinked up and I later introduced him to his now wife Leah, who will be spending her Thanksgiving with their kids Lizzie (4) and Rowan (2) without him at the table. Friends like TSgt. Sarah Nichols, US Air Force, who is currently deployed to an undisclosed location. Sarah and I worked together for years in restaurants prior to her joining the service and spent many holiday seasons trying to bring joy not only to each other, but our co-workers with silly stories or our horrible renditions of country songs. Her daughter Ginny (3) will be missing a huge part of her family this Thanksgiving. All of us know someone who is away for the holidays serving our country, or you yourself have been deployed during the season, we must not forget the sacrifice made by them and their families this Thanksgiving, and keep them and their families in our hearts



TSgt. Sarah Nichols and Daughter Ginny



CPT. Bob Fraser, Wife Leah, Daughter Lizzie and Son Rowan