

On Thursday, America will celebrate its 243rd birthday. This holiday always brings to mind many of the time-honored traditions which are associated with this special day. However, the Fourth of July has an important meaning, and it should be a day of reflection.

As we celebrate the birth of this nation, we must not forget that our armed forces are serving around the globe – protecting the very freedom we cherish, always mindful that the democratic experiment which began on July 4th, 1776 not only survives at home, but also begins to sprout in uncharted realms across the globe.

Symbol of Pride - Not only is the flag full of symbolism, it is, itself, a symbol. Olympic athletes wrap themselves in the flag when they have won gold. The flag flies high above the crowd during the medal ceremony honoring both the athlete and the athlete's country.

What was left on the Moon after man's first visit there? Footsteps and a U.S. flag. The flag, in this instance, represented pride in our space program and told the story of the U.S. being the first to make it to the Moon.

In a military funeral, a U.S. flag is properly draped over the coffin. The flag is then folded 13 times and handed to the surviving family. Pride in the country and the service the person gave for his or her country is clear.

It is with this sense of pride that The Ocotillo Community Association is joining in the tradition of displaying American flags throughout the Ocotillo Community on such important days of remembrance. Much like our great nation, Ocotillo is comprised of many neighborhoods and smaller communities which make up one beautiful community. As a symbol of unity as one great community in the tapestry of our great nation, these flags represent our mutual respect and pride for The United States of America.

We invite all homeowners, residents, communities or businesses within Ocotillo to join in this tradition. We want to extend a huge thank you to the Ocotillo Facilities Maintenance Department for their work in placing more than 200 flags throughout Ocotillo. We are honored to have on the FMD team, as well as the Board of Directors, several who have served our great country. To them, as well as to all our residents who have served, we say thank you for your service.

We mustn't forget as well, the families and loved ones of those who have served or are serving today. You all have made or are making great sacrifices while supporting and honoring these great service men and women. With hand on heart we fly these flags in honor of our Country, and all who have given of themselves in so many ways. Thank you.

Happy Fourth of July Ocotillo!!!