

America: A Country of Freedom

By Caroline Andy

June 2, 2009

The sunshine which formerly beamed in the sky has enveloped behind the moon and the darkened atmosphere above. With a crack, pop, boom, Fourth of July fireworks splash across the night sky like America's ocean waves battering the sea shore. Reds, whites and blues glisten and dance drawing a smile to everyone's faces, but have you ever stopped to wonder why we are celebrating? Have you ever asked yourself why we are truly lucky to be Americans? Have you ever considered that millions of people dream to be standing in our shoes as Americans for just one day while we spend lifetimes in them?

Imagine yourself in another country, surrounded by starving children, overlooking thousands of worn tarp tents barely standing. Imagine your actions dictated by a single ruler who forbids the rights and privileges we receive in American every day. Imagine having the inability to live based on your personal values or beliefs. Picture life without the freedoms, liberties and rights we receive every day as Americans. But realize that this is where we would be without our brave soldiers and dedicated citizens that risk their lives to preserve our country and its greatness, such as my grandfather.

My grandfather loved this country. He loved everything about it including the freedom, the liberties and the opportunities. He took pride in this land, and everything on it: from the rolling hills, to the whispering breeze, to the shadows that loll and stretch, reaching to mimic the knotted willows and tattered birch. So when the time came to fight in the Vietnam War, he was proud to honor his country, proud to help his nation, and later, proud to die in this war because it meant happiness and freedom for his children, family and country.

Millions of people across the country take our freedoms for granted. We don't stop to think as we go to vote or go to church, that we as a country – a single community – have fought for these freedoms, liberties and laws in a seemingly endless battle for seeking justice. Why is it that we only realize how lucky and grateful we are to live in this country when we have lost a loved one in a battle for it?

As a country, we stand for pride, liberty and independence for all, and our flag, a source of inspiration and pride standing before millions of lucky people, not only represents our American rights and freedoms, but those brave American heroes, such as my grandfather, who gave their life for this country. Today America stands above the rest of the world like the first single firework on the Fourth of July Celebrations penetrating the deep black sky.

However, beneath the streets, the rolling hills, or the profound oceans rippling softly is something stronger than what a single soldier could have implanted. It is a feeling of peace and courage that dwells in the bottom of everyone's hearts. Perhaps it is the knowledge of our country's greatness or of those who have struggled, fought and died so that one day we as Americans could proudly proclaim our liberties. However, it could just as likely be God reminding us that within us, above us, and around us, is a past of determination, a present of freedom, and a future of hope because of our citizens, soldiers, and all who persevered for our country.