

**State of Nebraska
John A. Gale
Secretary of State**

P.O. Box 94608
State Capitol, Suite 2300
Lincoln, NE 68509-4608
Phone: 402-471-2554
Fax: 402-471-3237
www.sos.state.ne.us

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Contact: Gary Seacrest
402-471-8408, gary.seacrest@sos.ne.gov

Gale urges thoughtful reflection on Memorial Day

LINCOLN – Nebraska Secretary of State John Gale urges Nebraskans to take time on Memorial Day to make sure the sacred spirit of the holiday is properly observed.

“Memorial Day was established as a day of remembrance for military personnel who have died in our nation’s service. From the Revolutionary War to the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, over 1 million Americans have lost their lives for our country, and many millions more were wounded and disabled,” Gale said.

“Unfortunately, the purpose of the day is often forgotten in today’s society,” he noted. For too many people, it has become synonymous with simply recreational and fun activities and a three-day weekend that signals the start of summer.

“While we can and should celebrate our freedom and liberties this weekend, we can’t forget to say thank you.”

Gale said a good way to observe Memorial Day is to participate in the National Moment of Remembrance at 3 p.m. local time. As a show of honor and respect, Americans are urged during that time to pause for a moment of silence or to listen to “Taps.”

Gale said the holiday also may be observed by flying the U.S. flag at half-staff until noon, placing flags or flowers on the graves of fallen military personnel, attending remembrance events, visiting memorials, and providing aid to disabled veterans and families of fallen military personnel.

“There is no better place to visit than our local cemeteries that have the graves of veterans identified and where you can say a soft prayer of thank you,” he said. “In my family, we

have customarily placed flags on the graves of our family veterans at Omaha's Forest Lawn Memorial Park.

“Remembrance is a solemn act of celebrating the lives of those we honor.”

As chief protocol officer of Nebraska, Gale regularly attends events sponsored by the National Guard, veterans' organizations and memorial sites.

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