

May 28, 2012

Late Breaking News, Compelling Ideas, Just Plain Good Stuff for the Gaming Industry!

As we kick off the summer with our casino crowds and barbeques this Memorial Day ...

let's give some thought to our soldiers who are not at home to put the flag up.

By [Christine Faria](#), VP of Operations and Communications, Raving Consulting Company

Dear Ravers,

Last year for Memorial Day, I wanted to reach beyond our typical gaming topics and honor our soldiers who have had "boots on the ground." You know, the ambassadors who have served our country. We received such positive response from [last year's special report](#), that we'll continue this tradition.

This year, I asked the question, "When you have been away from home serving our country, what are the thoughts you hold close, the activities you miss the most that can really only be experienced in hometown USA?"

Their following sentiments remind me just how very lucky I am to spend my holiday weekends, and more importantly, my life, how I want and with whom I want, because of these men and women who have sacrificed for me.

**1LT Liberty Reyes, Army National Guard - Nevada,
150th Maintenance Company, Las Vegas, NV, and Regional
Marketing Manager at Aristocrat Technologies**

Balancing life as a working mom, wife, and member of the Army National Guard has its moments of pure chaos and those of pure joy! Those moments of joy become so important when I am away from my family for work or military duty. I have been in the Army National Guard for over thirteen years, and in 2004, I began my career in the gaming industry shortly after I had twin girls. Traveling for work and military obligations have caused me to be away from my husband and twins more than I would like. So coming home to them is my greatest joy. And nothing is better, or more irreplaceable to me, than simply going for an evening walk with my husband while the girls ride their bikes.



Jordan S. Chroman, OBE, Colonel, US Army

A year (or more) of deployment is a long time to an adult, but it is much longer to a child. What kinds of thoughts make me pause; what do I miss? It's never one thought -- never one thing.

Sometimes it's thinking about a major event, like a missed soccer game or flute concert, and how badly you wish you could be there.

Sometimes it's about the small things in life, tucking a child into bed and hearing their thoughts before they go to sleep, or having them vent about the unfairness of teachers, about how they felt they did on their test that day, putting a Band-Aid on a skinned knee, or hearing about the weekend activity they are looking forward to.

Often it's something as simple as sitting at the table during our nightly family dinners and the discussions that ensue.

But one thing that it's always about -- is how lucky we are to be Americans, to have the comfort of knowing that regardless of where our soldiers are or what we are doing, our families live secure, peaceful, and relatively safe lives. Free from the dangers and issues of everyday war, of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Of driving down the road to take your children to school and getting hit by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED), or having to watch a death squad kill someone's family in the market square in retribution for a family member voting for the wrong party or flying the wrong flag. Of having a sniper fire at you as you try to get water from the only well that has safe drinking water.

We are safe because a very small number of our citizens take significant risks, endure hardships, and do the tough jobs that are required in order to ensure that the

rest of the population can live as they do. At the end of the day, that's one of the major factors that motivate our military, and why we should pause and think about them and what they do -- not just today, but every day.

Tim Hall, United States Air Force, 820th and 554th Red Horse Squadrons, 1988-1992

This sounds pretty simple -- but when I think of what kept me going, it was the thought of returning to "America." No matter where I was, in Okinawa, Honduras, Korea or Iraq, it was about coming home to MY country, to MY America, a place like nowhere else in the world. It might be hard to understand -- but to me, the smell of home, the tastes, the people, the freedom to go four-wheeling, to be with friends, to jump in my truck and go anywhere, to be with my family -- all those things I probably take for granted now, well, it is all packaged in my head that it could never be duplicated anywhere else than in America.



Lou Roggensack, United States Army, Specialist 5th Class, 4th PSYOP Group, Vietnam, 1965-1968

When I was drafted into the US Army and sent off to Vietnam, many things went through my mind about what the experience might be like for me. An immediate face-to-face with mortality was, of course, foremost in my mind. But I made it through, by the grace of God, and something unexpected came from it, a kinship with the other individuals going through the same experience.

We all had to find a way to cope with our fears and justify our reason for being there. My justification came to me within a week after I entered the action of war. It was the poor Vietnamese children and how they were suffering every day of their lives. I felt that it was necessary to do my part to help provide them with a life more like that of the children in the United States.

In my communications with other great men and women of all branches of service, they had their individual reasons to do the same. During battles, the expressions on the faces and the actions of those brave soldiers created a feeling of one large family, no matter what branch of service they were in. Those men and women who did not get the chance to come home to their families, I feel, knew that they were part of the largest family in the world, and a family that will always be there for them, living or not, working for the betterment of the world community. For those who have never experienced military service, imagine the loss of a loved one and how you feel because of that loss. We as Veterans feel and remember that loss every day of our lives.

So, on Memorial Day, it is not hard for us to stand up and feel proud of those fallen

soldiers and think of them as part of the "FAMILY." And it is not unusual for us Veterans to have a lump in our throat or a tear in our eye while remembering those lost members of the family.

Mark Berkowitz, Lt. Col (retired), Ohio Air National Guard

Trying to pick one specific thing I missed most while being away from home is tough. But I can tell you that, during my over 28 years of service, it was always family.

One year we were lucky enough to have both of our boys, Dan and Tom, on the same baseball team, even though they are two and a half years apart. That usually isn't allowed, but since I was the head coach of their team, the Orioles, the league OK'd it.



Although it was really fun for me, I knew I'd be leaving for several weeks to support the NATO Bosnian effort in the mid-90's. I wanted to leave the team in good hands, with a few key things they could remember and work on.

I missed being around for the boys' games, for the unity and teamwork that always seemed to accompany each event. My wife Terri was very involved on gameday, administering playing time and substitutions. Besides emails, I'd call her on MARS radio from our operations facility to get the low-down after each scheduled game. How did the pitchers throw? Did we run the bases smartly? Were the batters selective? Did the outfielders hit the cutoff man? What ... a rainout??

It sounds corny, but I really looked forward to those calls and remember waiting in nervous anticipation for the antiquated radio connection ... then hearing Terri describe, often in great detail, how Dan, Tom, and the rest of the Orioles did.

I was able to make it home for the last two games of the season. We won the championship and while proud of that accomplishment for the players, I was really happy the boys played good, fundamental baseball.

Happy Memorial Day and a heartfelt "Thank You" to those who have, are, or will serve our country. Not only to them, but to their families as well.

The Raving Flash! Report is compiled weekly by [Christine Faria](#), Raving's VP of Operations & Communications, and is designed to be a "quick read" covering everything from interesting casino promotions to gaming news. See our archived reports and newsletters by [clicking here](#). Got an interesting promotion or news item? Contact Chris at 775-329-7864.