

# The 4th of July DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

*A bit of history you didn't know!*

## HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT HAPPENED TO THE 56 MEN WHO SIGNED THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE?

Five signers were captured by the British as traitors, and tortured before they died.

Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned. Two lost their sons serving in the Revolutionary Army; another had two sons captured.

Nine of the 56 fought and died from wounds or hardships of the Revolutionary War. Each and all signed and pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor!

### *What kind of men were they?*

Twenty-four were lawyers and jurist. Eleven were merchants, nine were farmers and large plantation owners; men of means, well educated, but they signed the Declaration of Independence knowing full well that the penalty would be death if they were captures.

Carter Braxton of Virginia, a wealthy planter and trader, saw his ships swept from the seas by the British Navy. He sold his home and properties to pay his debts, and died in rags.

Thomas McKean was so hounded by the British that he was forced to move his family almost constantly. He served in the Congress without pay, and his family was kept in hiding. His possessions were taken from him, and poverty was his reward.

Vandals and soldiers looted the properties of Dillery, Hall, Clymer, Walton, Gwinnett, Heyward, Rutledge, and Middleton.

At the battle of Yorktown, Thomas Nelson, Jr. noted that the British General Cornwallis had taken over the Nelson home for his headquarters. He quietly urged General George Washington to open fire. The home was destroyed, and Nelson died bankrupt.

Francis Lewis had his home and properties destroyed. The enemy jailed his wife, and she died within a few months.

John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside as she was dying. Their 13 children fled for their lives. His fields and his gristmill were laid to waste. For more than year he lived in the forests and caves, returning home to find his wife dead and his children vanished.

As time passes on we forget the hardships and sacrifices that many of us take for granted. Patriots and Veterans from The Revolutionary War through and to the present war of Iraq and Afghanistan are what have kept America free, but many don't respect or care any more as noted in many of today's parades!

### THE PRIDE OF ONE

#### GENERATIONS OF VALOR

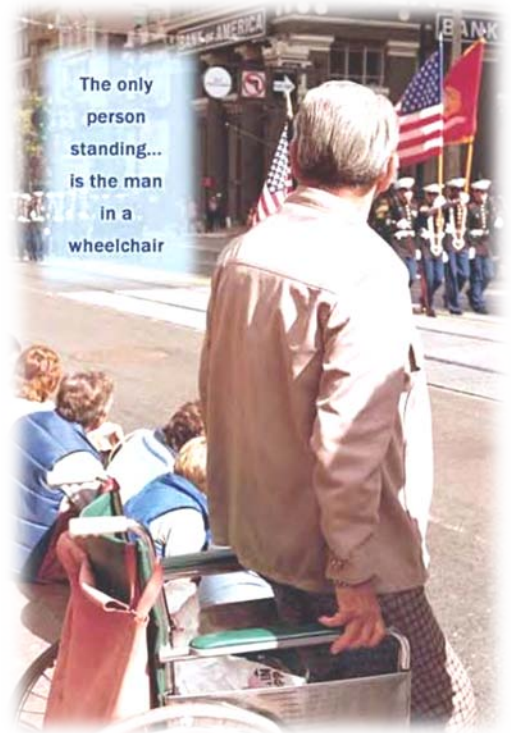
*Pearl Harbor survivor Houston James of Dallas embraces Marine Staff Sgt. Mark Graunke Jr. during a Veterans Day Commemoration in Dallas Texas. Staff Sgt.*



*Graunke lost a hand, a leg and an eye when he defused a bomb in Iraq in March 2005.*

So, take a few minutes while enjoying your 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday and silently thank these patriots and veterans. It's not much to ask for the price they paid and for the price which will be paid in the

future to keep us free! Remember, freedom is not free and the fourth of July, Memorial Day and Veterans Day is more than beer, picnics, baseballs games and parties!



Personally, I feel we should bring our troops home and have them clean up the greedy corporate companies of America, the hall of Congress, drug dealers, the dirt bags in the allies of our cities and the borders of our country! No matter what we do in the Middle East, they will continue to kill each other for the next 2,000 years like they have in the past 2,000 ... this is my personal opinion!