

Spirit of *America*

Wednesday, July the Fourth, is America's birthday – the 236th anniversary of this nation's independence from the rule of Great Britain. It is an occasion for the celebration of the spirit of America, a phrase often sounded by politicians, preachers and teachers.



What is the “spirit of America,” these words that have such a nice ring in the ears, glibly tossed about in conversation? What's the meaning of this rhetoric on which we pin our hopes, our dreams and our ideals?

The spirit of America is not a backyard barbecue. Or a trip to the beach. Or a picnic in the park. It is not an afternoon baseball game. Or even the donning of clothing in colors of red, white and blue. These are the trappings of the holiday, but the spirit of America is far more than any of them.

The spirit of America is found in ...

- The love of a mother for a newborn child.
- The laughter – the kidding and the fellowship – of a family reunion.
- The tender embrace of newlyweds, stepping with faith into a future together.
- The preparation of a teacher for a class of eager learners.
- The dedication of a worker to his company's success, and the proper reward of the organization for his or her faithfulness.
- The pursuit of a dream by an entrepreneur.
- A helping hand and a smile freely given to someone down on his or her luck.
- The exercise of talent, blended with compassion, of associates in Life Care, Century Park or Life Care at Home as they pursue their calling.
- The spilt blood of a soldier, willingly sacrificed for the cause of freedom.
- The hearts of a church congregation, praying to the Almighty on behalf of their country.
- The grace of God shed on this nation.
- The faithfulness of the Lord to “crown our good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea.”

That's the spirit of America and, thank God, we find it all around us every day of the year – not on July the Fourth alone.

– Beecher Hunter