

# 250 Flags

Continued from page 1

But this field isn't just a beautiful display—it is a deeply emotional and personal one.

As you walk among these rows, you will see that many of these 250 flags bear individual dedications. They have been sponsored by local families, businesses, and neighbors to honor our community's personal heroes—our veterans, active-duty military, first responders, and loved ones who embody the American spirit.

To everyone who has sponsored a flag, thank you. Your generosity has brought this tribute to life.

If you have not had the chance to dedicate a flag yet, sponsorships are still available. You can speak with any of us here today to honor a hero of your own and leave your mark on this historic milestone.

Our first president, George Washington, reminded us that "the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty" is a trust placed firmly in the hands of the American people.

That fire doesn't just burn in big cities or stone monuments. It burns right here in our communities, passed down through generations of families who plow the fields, run the local shops, and look out for their neighbors. It burns in the very names attached to these flags today.

Building this country took grit and bold action. Theodore Roosevelt captured that strength, urging Americans to "dare mighty things." Teddy knew that our greatness comes from facing hard challenges head-on, and doing the honest, hard work required to

leave our communities better than we found them.

As we look toward America's next chapter, we hold onto the optimism of Ronald Reagan. He looked at our nation and saw a "shining city on a hill." Reagan knew that America is a beacon of hope to the world because of the everyday freedom, faith, and opportunity found in places just like the Slate Belt.

These 250 flags stand as a living testament to that freedom and that sacred fire of liberty. They honor the millions of hardworking Americans and heroes who came before us, and they wave proudly for the generations yet to be born.

This beautiful display will remain open to visitors from dawn to dusk every day until Independence Day. We invite you, your families, and your neighbors to come back, walk these rows, and reflect on what this nation means to you.

Let's open this celebration with pride in our roots, gratitude for our past, and complete confidence in our future.

Thank you to our hosts, our committee, and our sponsors. Enjoy the celebration, and may God bless the United States of America

Sarah Lanier was the guest singer and sang the Star Spangle Banner.

Richard Shaplin president of the Bangor exchange club for 57 years and a veteran of the United States Army said "One of the things that they exchange club pride itself on is their ability to serve the community help with the prevention of child abuse and also the American events. The Bangor exchange club is also very active in doing the blue Valley farm show which occurs the third week of August every year. It's a wonderful thing to serve in the community and it is also a way to help young families learn more about farming, agriculture, and just being a good person in the

community."

Bangor exchange club member Carolyn Shaplin spoke a few words. "We gather today with grateful hearts as we celebrate many blessings - the 250th anniversary of our nation, the proud display of our flags that remind us of sacrifice and freedom, and the 80th birthday of the Bangor exchange club and its legacy of service to this community."



Each flag sponsor was tagged with their name on it



It was a great photo opportunity



Sarah Lanier Sings the Star Spangle Banner



Bangor exchange club member Carolyn Shaplin

