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## For Ourselves, and Our Country

Before reading Saving Dr. Warren... "A True Patriot," I would have told you that a patriot is someone who defends their country through the good and the bad. I still think that a patriot has these qualities, but now I know that being a patriot is so much more than that. In the book, it is revealed that "America's spirit" is the narrator. America's spirit is a feeling, one that true patriots know well. What makes a true patriot is someone who selflessly adds on to this feeling, and continues to be grateful and positive. Patriotism is a mindset, not a thing that comes naturally. If we want patriotism to better our lives, then we must choose to be patriotic. Dr. Warren chose to go to Bunker Hill that day, he chose to sacrifice everything, and in doing so he inspired many others to continue to fight. "One needs only a single match to start a fire" (Melissa Grey). We need to be this match for not only ourselves, but for all. Our community is exposed to everyday problems such as violence, poverty, depression, and many other sad situations. These circumstances affect many people every single day, and they chip away at America's spirit. If we become this match, and start doing simple things like cleaning the park, or donating even a few dollars to charity, then you can be the inspiration Dr. Warren was. My inspiration is my great grandfather. My great grandfather, Capt. Elmer Pickett, was awarded a bronze star for his service in World War 2. He was scouting in France, when he unknowingly entered enemy territory. He entered the town hall assuming to find it empty, but instead found a German colonel and his 85 Nazi soldiers. When asked where the rest of my grandfather's company was, he was too afraid to tell the truth, that they were 5 miles back, so he lied. He told the Nazis that they had the town surrounded. Then the weirdest thing happened. The Nazis surrendered. As it so happens, they happened to be a language group, so they decided instead of fighting, they might as well surrender. My grandfather may not have fought them off one by one, but he did capture a whole group of Nazis by himself. This reminds me that even when the

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odds are against you that bravery will always come through. A true patriot knows this and uses this to their advantage.

The word remember is used quite often in this book. In my opinion, that word alone is enough to teach America the importance of patriotism. If America does not remember its own past, then we do not have hope for the future. America learns patriotism by looking at the past and when something goes right we keep doing it, but more importantly, when something goes wrong we learn from our mistakes. “In the face of impossible odds, people who love this country can change it” (Barack Obama). When facing these impossible odds, we see our community benefiting from patriotism. During the 9/11 attack, people all over the country were scared, but almost every single state sent their national guard to help in New York. It was a selfless act that helped thousands of people. Many other events have helped our society grow and helped America’s spirit thrive. “And I won’t forget the men who died who gave that right to me, and I’d gladly stand up next to you and defend Her still today” (Lee Greenwood). This quote is from God Bless the USA. I have always loved this song, and after reading this book, I realize that that simple sentence breaks down patriotism for you perfectly. It shows that a patriot will remember the past and defend America so that there is a future. “Someone isn’t patriotic just because they say they are. They need to be doing something” (Mckenna 18). This quote is very true. A patriot isn’t someone who is a bystander. They are someone who acknowledges the good, bad, and ugly, and then they do something about it. For ourselves and for our country, we need to be more patriotic in order for a positive change to occur in our community. Just like Steve, we can all have a change of heart, but first we have to remember.

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