News

What the Fourth means to me

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Jim Quigley, 73, of Norton, who immigrated from Scotland to the United States 43 years ago: "It's a great celebration of independence. It makes people realize how fortunate they are to live in a free society."

As the nation celebrates, local residents have their say about the holiday

The Fourth of July - Independence Day - is more than fireworks and backyard cookouts. The Sun Chronicle set out to find what the holiday means to ordinary residents in the Attleboro area. They include immigrants, the young and the old. Here is what they had to say:

North Attleboro Veterans Agent James McCann, 60, who served with the Army's 82nd Airborne Division in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969:

"The Fourth of July is the moment where each of us should pause and remember the rebirth of democracy. It should be a great moment of reflection and joy. It's a time of rejoicing that the human spirit is protected by the freedoms of democracy. I think a lot of that is lost today."

Barbara Harwood, 67, office worker for the Attleboro Council on Aging:

"Freedom. It's a time when the nation comes together. It's also a time for family, food, and fireworks." **Connie Farrands, 71, of Attleboro:**

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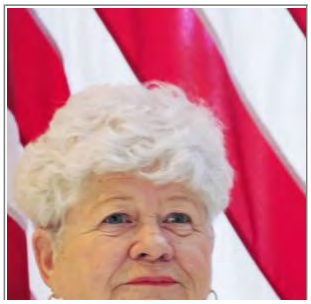
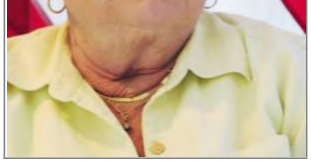


"It's such a wonderful holiday. I'm a patriot. I love this country. I think it's too bad that people don't realize the importance of this day the way they used to."

Rabbi Elyse Wechterman, Congregation Agudas Achim in Attleboro:

"I love the Fourth of July. I always get teary eyed at some point during the day. I think it's because I believe in the ideals of the country. As an American Jew, I know that my community has flourished here under these ideals of democracy and freedom like no where else in the world. I very



Connie Farrands

much appreciate the opportunities, and at the same time realize we don't fulfill these ideals very well. July 4th is a time to recommit to doing my part to live out those values."

State Sen. Scott Brown, R-Wrentham:

"On other holidays we remember the sacrifices made for our country, but Independence Day is a more joyous day because we celebrate the birth of our nation and what it means to be an American. It is a day when we can wear the red, white and blue and show our pride in our country and heritage. I look forward to being with friends and family and participating in parades and attending fireworks shows. Some of my fondest memories are of this day."

Pagna Eam, 19, of Attleboro, who immigrated from Cambodia to the United States in 2004:

"It's about the freedom and the rights that people have. It is a wonderful day. I have been here about four years and this country has given me great freedom."

Michael Pratas, 18, Navy recruit, of Rehoboth:

"It means representing the country you live in. Patriotism is to fight for oneself, family and country, and not for only one person. People in past wars did that for us, and that's why we can enjoy the Fourth."

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Michael Pratas

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