

2006 “Baton of Patriotism” Recipient’s Essay

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Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave

Francis Scott Key watched the Battle of Baltimore, a fight during the War of 1812. He was so proud of the way the Americans defended Fort McHenry that he began writing a poem he titled, “The Defence of Fort McHenry.” The poem was made into a song and given the name, “The Star Spangled Banner” from words in the song that refer to the flag that was flying over Fort McHenry during the battle. The “Star Spangled Banner” became the national anthem of the United States of America.

Defenders’ Day is a state holiday in Maryland and is celebrated on September 12, the day the Battle of Baltimore was won by the Americans.

When I see an American flag or hear the National Anthem, I feel proud that I am an American. I am glad that we won the fight against the British and live in a free country. I am thankful for the soldiers who fought so bravely in the Battle of Baltimore and in the Revolutionary War.

I have visited Fort McHenry several times and [have] seen the huge flag that flies there and some of the cannons that helped fight off the British navy when they attacked Baltimore. I go to school in Dundalk where schools, streets, and parks are named after people who were important in the War of 1812, like General John Stricker.

Fort McHenry and Defenders’ Day are important to me as an American because they remind me of the fight between the Americans and the British and that I live in the “land of the free and the home of the brave.”