



Courtesy of Ron Cox, fireworks at Lakewood, CA

Growing up, the 4th of July meant sitting out in front of the house with family and friends, grilling burgers and hot dogs, listening to the whirring of the home-made ice cream maker, and – when dusk advanced sufficiently – setting off “safe and sane” street fireworks purchased from the local Red Devil Fireworks stand. The feelings of happiness I have from these vibrant memories makes me think about the line from the Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” What makes for happiness is as varied as the people of our country. And while happiness is not guaranteed, the freedom for all of us to pursue it is essential to the American experience. Independence Day is for celebrating a country that enshrines this freedom for us all.

But of course happiness is not all there is and a life constantly in pursuit of happiness can become futile. The God who endowed us with the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness has even greater things in mind for us and fulfilling these is His joyous pursuit. So as we take time off from our own pursuits, let us not just celebrate

our freedom but the happiness that comes from being found by a loving and merciful God.

Goodness and love will indeed pursue me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the LORD continually. (Psalm 23:6)

Ron Cox

Dean, International Programs

Seaver College