Americans will celebrate Memorial Day on Monday, May 30. Memorial Day is a day set aside to honor our servicemen and women who have lost their lives while serving in the military. You might attend a parade or a concert where military bands play patriotic music. Military music has a long tradition.

Today the branches of our military have bands that play to entertain and inspire those in the armed services as well as civilians. Military musicians are on active duty.

The U.S. Marine Band is our oldest professional musical organization, founded in 1798 by an act of Congress. It has grown from 32 members to about 130.

The U.S. Marine Band is also called ‘The President’s Own.’

In 1801, the U.S. Marine Band played for President Thomas Jefferson’s inauguration. He named it “The President’s Own.” It has played for every inauguration since.

The mission of the U.S. Marine Band is to play for the President of the United States. The band performs at concerts and ceremonial events as well. For instance, the band plays at the White House for the National Christmas Tree lighting, for the Easter Egg Roll and on Independence Day. Marine Band musicians appear at the White House about 200 times each year.

Joining the Marine Band

Musicians must audition to join the Marine Band. First, a musician performs behind a screen so that the judges can’t see him. A committee from the band then interviews musicians chosen from the auditions. Once accepted, musicians join the Marine Corps. Members of this band are not asked to go into combat.

The uniform

Members of the U.S. Marine Band wear scarlet, or red, coats with blue or white pants or skirts. Their hats are white. These uniforms have been used since the Revolution War. When field musicians were used to send signals on the battlefield and in camp and needed to be easily recognizable.

Along with a large barracks hat, the drum major wears a fancy sash across his chest called a baldric. He uses his mace, or staff, to signal directions to the musicians.

Mini Jokes

Norma: How deep is that river? 
Ned: Not very — it only reaches that duck’s waist!

Kathleen: What time does a duck wake up? 
Kyle: At the quack of dawn!

Cook’s Corner

Baked Sliced Tomatoes

You’ll need:
• pepper
• 2 tablespoons butter
• 1 cup sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
• paprika
• 3 tomatoes, sliced thick
• salt
• cheese, shredded

What to do:
1. Bake beef eggs in one small bowl and breadcrumb mixture in another.
2. Dip each tomato slice in the eggs and then in the breadcrumbs.
3. Place tomato slices side by side on a greased cookie sheet. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Dot tops of tomatoes with butter.
4. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven for 15 minutes.
5. Remove from oven, sprinkle with cheese and paprika, and bake for 5 more minutes. Makes 4 servings.

7 Little Words for Kids

Use the letters in the boxes to make a word with the same meaning as the letter word. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each word. The solution must be used once only, and letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

1. free (7)
2. pet kept in a bowl (8)
3. Curious George is one (6)
4. the biggest planet (7)
5. pig in “Charlotte’s Web” (6)
6. underwater vessel (9)
7. colors in the sky (7)

For later:

Look in your newspaper for Memorial Day events in your area.

 Teachers:
For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: bbs.universal.com/teaching_guides.html

Books from The Mini Page are wonderful resources and make great gifts too! All of our Mini Page products at MiniPageBooks.com, or call 844-432-1326 for more information. Mail payment to Universal Uclick, Mini Page Books, 150 Walnut, Kansas City, MO 64106. Include $4.00 shipping and handling per order.

Visit our website at www.minipagebooks.com for free games and puzzles.