

- HONORED /
GRATEFUL TO
BE HERE

- THANK ABBY
- THANK CITY COUNCIL

- FLAG AT LEFT, RAISED TOMB S.I.D.
- FLAG AT RIGHT, RAISED FOR S.P.D.

"The Cynthia Grubbs-Boggan Flag"

Dearest Sparks City Council and staff of our present and our future—

In the wake of the terrorist attacks on the people of France in 2015, Sparks Police Department raised a French flag above headquarters to show that Sparks Proud is France strong in the days the Eiffel Tower went dark. They then donated it to the people of Paris.

A simple deed like a flag donation can empower the weak. Sparks Fire Department also donated an American flag to an Irish family of a young, brave and fallen Irish firefighter in Ireland. The Sparks Marina Flag Runners don't forget stuff like this.

That said, in a historic snow blizzard on the day of January 22nd, 2016 and at the request of Nevada Congressman Mark E. Amodei, this flag in this plaque stood alone in a historic snow storm atop the U.S. Capital Building in Washington D.C. and donated to the Sparks Marina Flag Runners Running Club to thank Sparks Police Department.

As we know, from June the 1st, 2014 to Independence Day, 2015 a local group of men and women of different cultures, races, ethnicities, religions and political beliefs had ran the Sparks Marina with American flags daily to show their support for the backbone of our beautiful land of liberty. They didn't accept money of any kind and never will. In that period of thirteen months, they were teased, taunted and harassed but they did it because they were running with a purpose.

Nevertheless, the good far outweighed the negative. The people of Sparks stood with the Flag Runners and throughout the year endeavor, MANY first responders, firefighters, police officers and military personnel had brought their American flags and ran as well. In the years of hateful social media and tough economic times, Firefighters, First Responders, Police Officers and even Military Personnel weren't getting the support and respect they deserve. It sounds humorous, a group of people running with American flags but it attracted overwhelming unity, love and lifelong friendships throughout the community and people around the United States wanting to start their own Flag Runners chapter.

On July the 4th, 2015, our community created an artistic and patriotic masterpiece: we brought our flags and created a red-white-and-blue-out surrounding the Sparks Marina. Incredible is a word that doesn't even begin to convey the message of love it sent to those who put their lives on the line for us daily. On just that one day, they felt they didn't stand alone anymore. A joint United States Marina Corps and Sparks Fire Department Honor Guard folded the flags and the flags the running club ran with for a year were donated all over the land of the brave and around the world to inspiring people, organizations and communities. On July 26th, 2015 the Flag Runners, who already had a following by the people of Ireland, were invited to help bring unity and understanding to their Firefighters, Garda, Medics and Irish Defence Force. We ran with the Irish from Greystones and Bray, in a mixture of Irish and American flags.

Sparks City Council, we give this to you on this 28th day of March, 2016 to thank the people of Sparks for all their love and support over the past year. To also thank the many City Employees, we needed to nickname this flag after one of them. For months we worked hard on getting in touch with REMSA leadership. Mrs. Grubbs-Boggan took the time to do the research and put in the effort in her off-time from work to make a dream happen for a good person. Carlos came to this country with just the clothes on his back and dreams in his heart and after all he did for the community, alls he wanted was to give his flag to REMSA for saving his life. They got Carlos' flag on July 4th thanks to Cynthia and we found a photo of the massive crowd of people and their flags at the Marina. Carlos' loving wife possibly spotted one of the actual medics who saved him. The mystery woman was there alone and ran right by us.

Sparks City Council, this flag is also one of only ten Century of Thanks Flags donated around our community. You can keep this as a mere gift and let it get dusty on a shelf or vote a different inspiring person in our community every July the 4th for the next 100 years to run the Sparks Marina with this flag. People of Sparks, we are all Flag Runners and this event shall always be free because the brave of our country already paid for this American past time with their blood. So bring your flags, and remind our nation's heroes that we run with them!

****We receive so many donated flags with inspiring stories that we have to nickname them after inspiring people to prevent confusion****

“The Donald Abbott Flag”

Dearest Sparks Heritage Museum staff of our present and our future—

There was once a running club who brought their American flags to the Sparks Marina on June the 1st, 2014. The backbone of our nation's cherished equality, peace, prosperity, justice and freedom of our past, our present time and to our future has been in the hands and sacrifice of our courageous Firefighters, Police Officers, Medics and Military Personnel. Tragically, throughout our beautiful land of liberty in the year of 2014, especially in our own beloved city, our nation's heroes, our community's heroes stood alone on their thin lines with hate, being mocked and harassed by society. It is unacceptable that they have to hide their faces to stay safe off duty in the very cities they serve, nationwide.

The Sparks Marina Flag Runners Running Club started with three men who were longtime volunteers in our community and were helped in hard times by our nation's heroes in tragedies in their own lives. Robert Mead, from Reno, Nevada, Dan Saucedo, from a small Texas border town and Carlos Gaytan who emigrated to this country with just the clothes on his back and dreams in his heart.

Words can't convey how incredible Independence Day, 2015 was thanks to Mr. Donald Abbott. A longtime volunteer as well, Mr. Abbott rolled up his sleeves to get our community to show up with their American flags that historic 4th of July, 2015 day. Thanks to his inspiring photography and efforts, we, the people of Sparks, Nevada made history. That day our people of “The Rail City” ran the Sparks Marina as proud Americans for the first time ever. Refusing to accept rewards or money, Mr. Abbott literally kicked in the door for the Century of Thanks to even happen. Gender, race, political beliefs or religion mattered not; for it was a day we would all run and stand for our first responders, peace officers and military personnel together and the thin lines they no longer stand alone on.

After the flag run, a joint U.S. Marine Corps and Sparks Fire Department Honor Guard retired the flags that made it around the Sparks Marina daily for a year. Rob's flag went to the family of a fallen firefighter in Ireland, Dan's flag went to his grandfather, a Korean War Veteran's grave marker in Texas. Carlos' flag he ran with for a year went to the REMSA medics who saved his life in 2013. Sparks Fire Department's Station #1 flag that their legendary firefighters ran with that Independence Day went to another fallen firefighter in Ireland.

As predicted, we were called to serve the clover in their trying times for public safety. It turns out, Firefighters in the Bray Fire Brigade in Ireland are always on duty. They are desperately understaffed. And so to support them, we the people of Sparks, Nevada ran up the ancient and misty Brayhead trail with fellow Americans throughout Ireland who joined us, along the cliffs with the Irish, their nation's heroes, in a storm, waves crashing against the cliffs. It was so breathtaking to see a whole community running with their Irish flags and us, with our American flags, from Greystones to Bray. We remember looking back and seeing Irish flags chasing us as far as the eye could see. There was mud, there was blood and there was nothing but laughter, unity and joy. We did this, this was thanks to the people of Sparks for running with us after all those times throughout the previous year we were spat at or disrespected. The Flag Runners tried to give up numerous times but the people of Sparks wouldn't let us.

Every donated flag needs to have a nickname. It is essential to prevent confusion from the many of other flags we send off to inspirational people both at home and abroad to people and communities in hard times. Sparks Police Department just sent off their French flag they raised over Headquarters to support the people of Paris in the wake of the November, 2015 terror attacks.

Henceforth, this flag, raised in honor of Sparks Fire Department for all they do shall be nicknamed the “Donald Abbott flag.” Like most families in the City of Sparks, Donald comes from a wholesome and hard-working family. His father served with the Army Air Force in the European Campaign of World War II. People of the Sparks Heritage museum, with this gift from us to you, nicknamed after an inspiring citizen in our midst, you have been challenged to partake in the Century of Thanks. There are only nine other Century of Thanks flags to be ran with for the next 100 years. For a Century, please vote a different inspirational Nevadan firefighter to run with this flag every Memorial Day, for the following Independence Day at noon.