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"I Pledge Allegiance," A Red, White and Blue Must-Read

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By Chris Stuckenschneider. Book Editor

There will be fireworks on Fourth, and flag-waving too. But often in the sparkling excitement of this national holiday, the real meaning of the day is lost.

A new picture book, "I Pledge Allegiance" by Pat Mora and Libby Martinez, drives patriotism home, and highlights the joy a young girl feels when her great aunt becomes a naturalized citizen.

Both the child and her aunt must memorize the Pledge of Allegiance. The little girl will be leading her class in the pledge, and her great aunt is required to recite the pledge in a courtroom before a judge.

At home, the child and her aunt "Lobo" work together, placing their hands over their hearts, because "It's a promise you make with your hearts," the girl's teacher Mrs. Hall has told her class. She also explains that "indivisible" means that America is "...fifty states, but we are all one country."

"I Pledge Allegiance"

The upcoming naturalization ceremony offers the child's great aunt the opportunity to tell her niece about growing up in Mexico and about why her father wanted to leave his homeland for a better life in America.

"This country is like one big family, una familia, that works together to take care of people who need our help. That is what America did for me."

Watercolor Illustrations by Patrice Barton display all the love and excitement felt by the characters in a book that's touching, entertaining, and educational. It's a red, white and blue must-read that will tug at your heart.

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