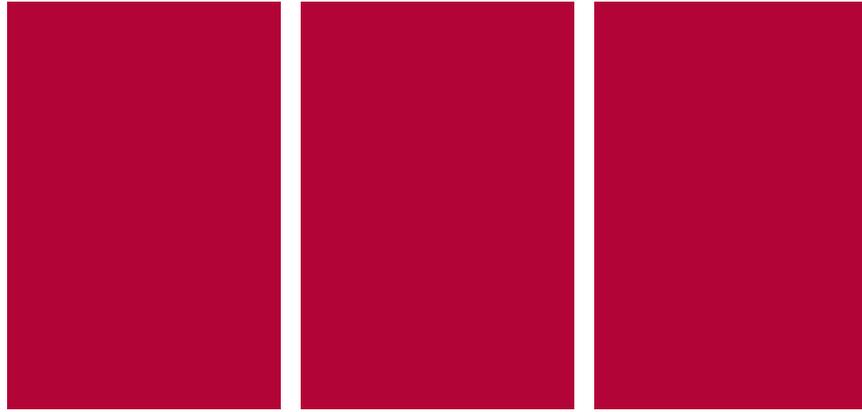


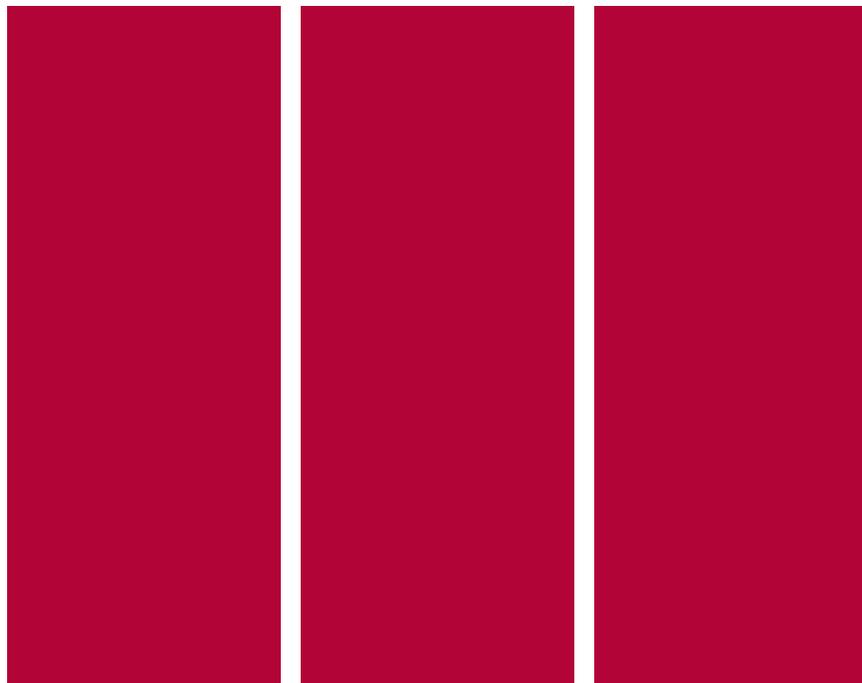


# EXCHANGE

THE NATIONAL EXCHANGE CLUB



# Americanism Projects



*Program of Service*

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# INTRODUCTION

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The tumultuous struggles of world powers in the twentieth century have done little to guarantee a peaceful future for the majority of the world's people. However, there's one country in modern times that people flock to for safety, freedom and opportunity — the United States of America. It is hard for Americans to imagine the horrors of modern struggles over religious and ethnic differences, the very differences we embrace.

Exchange's Americanism programs were born in the aftermath of World War II. At that time, patriotism was unquenchable, and Exchangites joined veterans and other civic groups in heralding the rich blessings of democracy. In 1949, dedicated Exchangites founded the Freedom Shrine project. This collection of historic document replicas is the most educational of Americanism projects and an overpowering visual illustration of democracy at work. Milestones of Freedom was adopted in 1972 to ensure that the enriching documents of the Freedom Shrine are read and appreciated by school children, the future leaders of our country. Exchangites celebrate May as Freedom Shrine Month.

In 1964, Exchangites adopted the One Nation Under God program. November marks this month-long celebration of the precious freedom Americans have to worship as they choose. One Nation Under God programs complement Veteran's Day well, and members are encouraged to include veterans in the events.

In 1976, during the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the world's most successful democracy, Exchangites founded the Proudly We Hail program. This is a grass-roots effort to recognize community members and businesses who proudly fly the American flag on a regular basis. Recipients are awarded the Proudly We Hail plaque to display in their homes or businesses.

In January of 1981, Project GiveAKidAFlagToWave was spearheaded. This is a concerted effort to educate the public hundreds at a time by distributing Exchange's hallmark flag brochure along with miniature American flags. The project is intended for parades and other events where crowds assemble.

The 1990s were marked by a disturbing trend of low voter turnout. Voting gives every citizen the opportunity to monitor the actions of elected officials and determine how local tax dollars are spent. Yet half of Americans were not participating in the democratic process. The Get Out the Vote Program was established in 1996 to combat this trend. With this program, Exchange Clubs can provide more convenient opportunities for voters to register, thereby encouraging more citizens to vote.

There are no guarantees for the future of our democracy or the stability of our world. As in the past, it will take hard work and dedication to protect the freedoms we cherish. Education is the key. Exchange leaders take the task of public education seriously, and hope your club will do the same.

# FREEDOM SHRINE

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## Freedom Shrine Documents

- 1620 The Mayflower Compact<sup>^</sup>
- 1776 The Declaration of Independence – Jefferson’s Rough Draft\*
- 1776 The Declaration of Independence<sup>^</sup>
- 1776 Benjamin Franklin’s Epitaph\*
- 1778 Patrick Henry’s Instructions to George Rogers Clark\*
- 1782 Washington’s Letter to Colonel Nicola<sup>^</sup>
- 1783 The Treaty of Paris\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1787 The Northwest Ordinance\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1787 Washington’s Copy of the Constitution\*
- 1787 U. S. Constitution<sup>^</sup>
- 1789 Washington’s First Inaugural\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1789 The Bill of Rights\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1796 Washington’s Farewell<sup>^</sup>
- 1801 Jefferson’s First Inaugural<sup>^</sup>
- 1814 The Star Spangled Banner\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1815 Jackson’s Letter Describing the Battle of New Orleans\*
- 1823 The Monroe Doctrine\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1863 The Emancipation Proclamation\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1863 The Gettysburg Address\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1865 Lincoln’s Second Inaugural<sup>^</sup>
- 1865 Lee’s Letter Accepting Washington College Presidency\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1865 The Thirteenth Amendment<sup>^</sup>
- 1874 Account of the Proceedings of the Susan B. Anthony Trial<sup>^</sup>
- 1907 Theodore Roosevelt’s Letter on Cuba\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1913 Wilson’s First Inaugural<sup>^</sup>
- 1920 The Nineteenth Amendment\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1941 F.D.R.’s Four Freedoms Speech<sup>^</sup>
- 1943 Letter Naming Eisenhower Supreme Commander\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1944 General McAuliffe’s “Christmas Message”\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1945 German Instrument of Surrender, World War II\*<sup>^</sup>
- 1945 Instrument of Surrender in the Pacific<sup>^</sup>
- 1961 J.F.K.’s “Ask Not …” Speech<sup>^</sup>
- 1963 Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” Speech<sup>^</sup>

\*19-document Freedom Shrine

<sup>^</sup>28-document Freedom Shrine

## Purpose

Developed by The National Exchange Club, the Freedom Shrine originated from the Freedom Train that toured the nation in 1947 carrying an exhibit of historic documents. The purpose of the Freedom Shrine is twofold. It puts before young Americans proof that the freedom and greatness we enjoy today were not purchased easily and reminds them that these gifts must be cherished and protected. Painstakingly researched to guarantee absolute authenticity, the 28 historical American documents that comprise the Shrine were carefully chosen to exemplify the beginnings of our nation and those subsequent turning points of importance which shaped our national character and eminence. The documents of the Shrine, although culled from the past, represent foundation stones which permit the present, as we know it, to exist and the future, as we dream it, to be attainable.

Thousands of Shrines have been dedicated throughout the United States and Puerto Rico in universities, libraries, schools, state capitals, city halls and at American outposts scattered throughout the world.

The Shrine is a display of historical documents photographically reproduced from the originals and permanently laminated to individual non-warping plaques. It is used by teachers, students, study groups and other clubs to further study American history. Exchange prints a study tool called the Freedom Shrine Documents Textbook which contains the texts of the documents of the Shrine. It can be used to inspire essay and speech contests, and to prepare for the Milestones of Freedom quiz. For more information on Freedom Shrines, request a free kit from National Headquarters.

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**“The heritage of the past is the seed that brings forth the harvest of the future.”**

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*A Freedom Shrine installation from the Exchange Club of Dayton, OH. While Freedom Shrines can be dedicated or rededicated at any time of the year, Exchangites officially recognize May as Freedom Shrine Month.*

## **Cosponsorship**

Although the Shrine is an exclusive project of Exchange Clubs, they could not have accomplished the task alone. Hundreds of businesses, industries and private individuals have provided financial assistance. They have helped to buttress the foundation stones of America by planting the seeds of our heritage in young minds to ensure a rich harvest of citizenship in the future.

The Shrine is a beneficial community relations project. It provides a company with an opportunity to present a community with a gift of value and prestige. A cosponsor shares the spotlight of public attention during the ceremonial dedication of the Shrine. The name of the cosponsor can be permanently displayed with the Shrine on a bronze plaque.

For more information on how to secure cosponsors in your community, refer to the publication titled “An American Partnership: The Freedom Shrine Cosponsorship Program,” that is included in the Freedom Shrine kit.

## **Milestones of Freedom**

The Milestones of Freedom Quiz is a great program to implement after your club has dedicated or rededicated a Freedom Shrine in your community.

The set of 50 multiple choice questions is based on Freedom Shrine documents. There is no cost to the students, parents or schools. Youth receive a book entitled “The Freedom Shrine Documents Text Book” which contains the printed texts of all of the 28 historic American documents displayed on the Freedom Shrine and, in some cases, the entire texts of some documents which are only partially displayed. The book is theirs to keep.

Each student takes the Milestones of Freedom Quiz and then Exchangites grade them. The winners can be recognized at your next club meeting. Prizes can be awarded to the winners.

# ONE NATION UNDER GOD

## Purpose

The One Nation Under God project was adopted on July 30, 1964, by Exchange leaders seeking to heighten awareness of our rich religious heritage. November, observed nationally as One Nation Under God Month, is a special time of year when Exchangites join together to increase public appreciation of the important roles religious faith and freedom have played in our nation's history. This publication contains a variety of simple but effective project ideas that will enable your Exchange Club to help remind all Americans of our religious freedoms. Also keep in mind that although November is One Nation Under God Month, these suggested projects can be equally effective at any time of the year.

The aims of the program are to:

- Build greater respect for the Pledge of Allegiance;
- Promote increased use of the Pledge in schools and at public gatherings;
- Combat all efforts to remove the words "under God" from the Pledge;
- Encourage and promote religious services by local churches on Thanksgiving Day or Thanksgiving eve;
- Promote attendance at such services to members and nonmembers alike;
- Prayerfully thank God for the blessings of liberty bestowed on America.

## Prayer Breakfasts

Host an interfaith prayer breakfast for the entire community or target segments of the community, such as employees of key businesses, professionals in a particular field, a local civic group or church, or geographic sectors of an urban area.

When publicizing the event, include the price per meal. Be sure the price covers the cost of the meal and gratuity, plus other costs such as an honorarium to the speaker.

Consider the size of the crowd when securing a location for the prayer breakfast. A hotel conference room or banquet hall facilities will be required for a large number of guests. For smaller crowds, seek a school gym or a church dining hall. Boy or Girl Scouts may be utilized as table helpers in return for a contribution to their troop funds.

Instruct the keynote speaker to talk about One Nation Under God, and invite a clergy member to give the invocation. Ask an Exchangite to lead the Pledge of Allegiance, preceded by a brief statement of the program's purpose. You may want to include suitable readings, a greeting by a local government official, and music.

## NONDENOMINATIONAL INVOCATIONS

Use the inter faith prayers that follow on table tents or in a printed program. These prayers are nondenominational because Exchange is comprised of members from a wide range of faiths. A nondenominational prayer is one that gives no referral to beliefs of specific religions.

**A**cept our thanks for this day and all its blessings. Guide and direct our club, its leaders and our actions. Grant that each of us may feel our responsibility to Exchange, to our community and to our country, one nation under God. Bless our fellowship today, and bless this food to the nourishment of our bodies.

**A**s we gather here today as members of Exchange, we pray that we are ever mindful of opportunities to render our service to fellow citizens and to our community. Keeping in mind always the enduring values of life, exerting our efforts in those areas and on those things upon which future generations can build with confidence. Let us continue to strive to make a better world.

**W**e are thankful for this day that you have given us, for its blessings, its opportunities, its challenges. May we appreciate and use each day that comes to us. We pray for strength and guidance for each day as it comes, for each day's duties, for each day's problems. May we be challenged to give our best always and may we be assured of your presence with us.

## PRAYER BREAKFAST SUGGESTED AGENDA

Club President, chairperson of One Nation Under God committee, or other Exchangite acts as master of ceremonies.

1. Inter faith invocation by clergy.
2. Pledge of Allegiance led by an Exchangite who should precede it with a very brief statement of the objectives of the One Nation Under God program.
3. Introduction of the head table and other distinguished guests by master of ceremonies.
4. Breakfast.
5. Greeting by mayor or other high ranking official.
6. Principal speech — inspirational message preferably by experienced lay speaker using One Nation Under God as subject.
7. Non-denominational benediction by clergy.
8. Recessional music — “God Bless America” by soloist or choir.

## Distribute Flag Brochures

Use Exchange’s One Nation Under God flag brochure to educate the public on the history of the American flag. The brochure explains how to handle the flag with care and display it properly. It also describes the origins of the Pledge of Allegiance and contains little known facts. This brochure may be the only education citizens young and old receive about the American flag. Distribute bundles to local schools, scout troops, church and community youth groups, retail stores, pharmacies, libraries, etc. One Nation Under God educational brochures may be purchased through Exchange Marketplace.

## Essay, Poster and Speaking Contests

Sponsor One Nation Under God essay, poster and speaking contests in local schools. Meet with school officials, explain the project’s purpose and ask them to participate. Ask the school’s teachers to help you plan and implement the project and judge the entries.

Once winners have been selected, invite them (and their teachers) to a club meeting and present them with special awards. (Visit the Exchange Marketplace at [BuyExchange.org](http://BuyExchange.org) for award suggestions.) At the meeting, the winners can display their posters, read their winning essays or present their speeches. In addition, make arrangements to have the local post office, restaurants, etc. display the children’s work. Arrange for the winners to deliver their speeches at the meetings of your city council, the local VFW chapter, and other civic organizations.

## What Else Can Exchangites Do?

- ❑ Sponsor assembly programs in schools on the tradition of religious freedom in the United States. Have a historian or member of the clergy speak.
- ❑ Sponsor a student contest to prepare posters and banners for public and private display.
- ❑ Deliver speeches in schools and at the meetings of various organizations.
- ❑ Place One Nation Under God advertisements in local newspapers, tabloids and magazines.
- ❑ Ask local retailers to hand out One Nation Under God flag brochures to customers who purchase United States flags or flag poles.
- ❑ Recognize those who fly the flag with our Proudly We Hail program.

## Publicity

Publicize all of your efforts well in advance of the event. Sample press releases are printed in the Public Relations Resource, a free guide available to download from the Member Resources section of Exchange’s website at [NationalExchangeClub.org](http://NationalExchangeClub.org). The press releases can also be downloaded from the Exchange website. Remember to always add details specific to your event, as well as a local contact person and telephone number. Email the press release to news rooms locally, and follow up with a phone call to ensure your release was routed to the appropriate editor or writer.

# PROUDLY WE HAIL

## Purpose

No symbol inspires respect and love of country more than our American flag — the Stars and Stripes. That is why Exchange encourages all Americans to properly fly the flag as an ongoing, highly visible expression of that respect through the Proudly We Hail program.

Proudly We Hail honors those Americans who do display the nation's banner properly and regularly. Recognition is in the form of a beautiful plaque specially designed for this purpose.

First, a club must decide to adopt the program. Once this is done, one member is appointed chairperson of the Proudly We Hail selection committee and each and every member of the club is made a committee member. As committee members, Exchangites, during their travels throughout the community, keep a sharp eye out for residences and office buildings where the American flag is regularly flown. Then, record the name and address of the candidate and check to see if the flag is indeed flown every day. When this is established, the name is submitted to the committee chairperson. Each month, one or more candidates are invited to a regular meeting of the club where they are ceremoniously presented with a plaque to display in their home or office.

Proudly We Hail is easy and effective. It represents a splendid way for every Exchange Club to actively support Exchange's ongoing effort to encourage and promote American citizenship. And it provides a program in which every member is an active participant. Moreover, the program benefits both the community and the nation by enhancing and strengthening a national sense of patriotism and pride.

## An Ongoing Activity

The success of the program depends on two factors — a commitment by the club to regularly present Proudly We Hail awards — and a vigorous effort to publicize these awards. Publicizing the awards not only brings additional honor to the recipients and provides examples for others to emulate, but it is also good publicity for local clubs and The National Exchange Club as a whole.

## Promotion

All of the presentations should be photographed so that pictures are available for local newspapers and television stations. In addition, news releases should be prepared for radio stations and other media in the area. See the

Public Relations Resource, available from your National Headquarters, for news release, proclamation and public service announcement samples. The photographs can also be used in a variety of other ways to help promote the program. For instance, they can be displayed in a public building or in the window of a cooperating merchant to give the program additional visibility. The club can also construct a display for use at local fairs or other community events.

## Supporting Material

Proudly We Hail plaques may be purchased through the Supply Department at National Headquarters (419.535.3232). Below is an excerpt from the One Nation Under God flag brochure, which gives facts and tips about the American flag.

### RESPECT FOR YOUR FLAG

It is customary to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and stationary flagstaffs, except during inclement weather. It may be displayed at night to produce a patriotic effect if proper lighting is provided.

Weather permitting, display the flag every day. Always hoist the flag briskly, and lower it ceremoniously. Flags should always be flown on national and state holidays and other days proclaimed by the United States President. When handling the flag:

- Never show disrespect to the flag.
- Never dip the flag to any person or thing.
- Never display the flag with the union down except as a signal of dire distress.
- Never allow the flag to touch anything beneath it.
- Never carry the flag horizontally.
- Never use the flag as drapery nor to receive, hold, carry or deliver anything.
- Never place anything on the flag nor attach any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture or drawing to it.
- Never embroider the flag on cushions, handkerchiefs and the like, nor should one print it on objects intended for temporary use and then discarded.
- Never throw away a flag. Badly worn flags should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by private burning.

# GIVE A KID A FLAG TO WAVE

## Purpose

Just as its title suggests, this popular project involves the distribution of small American flags to youngsters at parades, fairs, picnics, school events or other community happenings that generate large crowds. The flags are absolutely free to the children and can make a great souvenir of the occasion.

Developed by the Exchange Club of Galesburg, IL, the program can be implemented on any occasion which calls for a parade, i.e., Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Year's Day. The sponsoring club, after first securing permission from the local authorities, distributes small 4" x 6" United States flags to children along the parade route.

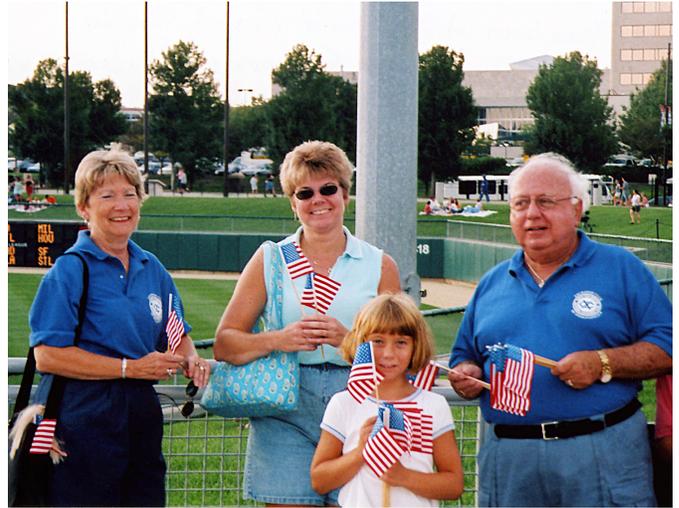
This is an easily implemented and effective program designed to cultivate a deeper sense of patriotism and to heighten young American's appreciation and admiration for our country's flag. Flags with Exchange identification are available from the Exchange Marketplace in gross lots.

Capitalize on this opportunity to educate adults as well. As you hand a flag to a child, greet adults and hand them literature. Choose any number of Exchange's brochures, from American flag history to your own local club brochure.

## Promotion

GiveAKidAFlagToWave should be recognized as not only a superb way to encourage respect for the flag, but also as an excellent way to promote Exchange within the community. The program must be coordinated with the parade organizers, and the actual distribution handled in a dignified manner. Also, the distribution vehicles, whether they be cars, trucks, boxes or baskets, should all be clearly marked with the name of the individual Exchange Club.

Another good idea is to make sure that the club gets proper credit for the flags in any parade program, newspaper, radio or television story. GiveAKidAFlagToWave can not only become an institution in the community, but can become an attraction in itself, drawing more people to the events and adding extra color and excitement.



*Members from the Exchange Club of Indianapolis, IN, distribute American flags as part of Project GiveAKidAFlagToWave.*

Double your public exposure by alerting the local media of your efforts. When you call local newspapers and radio and television stations, tell them to look for your press release. Sample press releases and valuable media relations strategies can be found in the PR/Marketing section of the Member Services page on Exchange's website. You can download the press releases from the National Exchange Club website at [NationalExchangeClub.org](http://NationalExchangeClub.org).

The basic ingredients for making this program a success are a parade, flags and imagination. The parade is supplied by the community. The flags can be ordered from the Exchange Marketplace at [BuyExchange.org](http://BuyExchange.org), or by calling 419.535.3232. The imagination and initiative must come from the club.

# GET OUT THE VOTE

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## Purpose

The Fifteenth, Nineteenth, and Twenty-sixth Amendments to the United States Constitution established the right to vote for all American citizens of minimum age 18. The National Exchange Club's Get Out the Vote Program gives our clubs the opportunities to not only remind their community members of their right to vote, but also their responsibility to vote. The Get Out the Vote Program is structured to encourage all citizens to exercise their right and responsibility by registering to vote and by voting for the candidates of their choice on election days or through absentee ballots. The program is not for promoting individual candidates for office. Get Out the Vote is most often coordinated by an Exchange Club's Americanism or Community Service Committee.

## Before You Start

Make sure your club has budgeted funds for Get Out the Vote materials and expenses, which could include registration event facilities, posters, yard signs, media announcements, electronic reminders, and transportation services.

### STEP 1: DISCOVERY

Have your club's Americanism or Community Service Committee assign a chairperson for the project. Determine the target group for your Get Out the Vote Program, such as club members, college students, business personnel, senior citizens, and the community in general. Consider reviewing historical voting trends with a Board of Elections representative to help identify those community groups which would most benefit from the Get Out the Vote Program. Establish whether the program's focus is to promote voter registration, election day voting, or perhaps both. For voter registration, contact your Board of Elections and review the appropriate protocols. With your target groups and budget in mind, determine how your club will promote registration and/or voting, such as:

- Hosting special voter registration events
- Supplying Get Out the Vote posters to local businesses
- Distributing Get Out the Vote yard signs
- Posting reminders in your club's newsletter and on your club's website
- Sending reminder e-mails
- Providing public service announcements in printed, electronic, and over-the-air media
- Coordinating shuttle services for senior citizens and community members on Election Day.

### STEP 2: CONDUCTING THE PROGRAM

Make sure that all Get Out the Vote printed and electronic materials have been prepared several weeks before your voter registration event and/or Election Day. Encourage club and community members to participate in the program by assisting with voter registration activities, displaying printed material at their homes or businesses, and verbally reminding family members, friends, and associates to exercise their right and responsibility to vote. Distribute electronic reminders and contact local media outlets. Arrange for public service announcements such as "The Exchange Club reminds you to register to vote" or "The Exchange Club reminds you to vote for the candidates of your choice on Election Day". If your program includes helping transport senior citizens or other community members to their polling sites, make sure you have communicated the transportation schedules and you have commitments for volunteers and vehicles. Always emphasize that the Get Out the Vote Program is designed to encourage Election Day and absentee voting but not to promote individual candidates.

### STEP 3: PUBLIC RELATIONS

In conjunction with promoting the Get Out the Vote message, it is always a good idea to acknowledge the messenger. Make sure your materials identify the Exchange Club as the Get Out the Vote promoter.

### STEP 4: FOLLOW-UP

After Election Day, contact your Board of Elections to review voter turnout. Consider having a special Get Out the Vote celebration for the impact your club had in encouraging community members to exercise their voting right and responsibility.

## Public Relations

Consider using promotional items such as flyers, stuffers, postcards, posters, fact sheets, news releases, e-mails, meetings, radio and television spots, newspaper ads, editorials, phone calls, door-to-door canvassing, booths, mobile vans, merchant signs, and billboards.

- ❑ Begin publicizing your efforts prior to September.
- ❑ Write news releases and submit them to newspapers and radio and television stations.
- ❑ Write and submit public service announcements to local radio stations in 10, 20, 30 and 60 second lengths.
- ❑ Seek a mayoral proclamation by submitting an application to the city administration office.
- ❑ Prepare inserts for monthly statements sent by local utility companies, banks and creditors.
- ❑ Prepare flyers to be inserted into shopping bags by sales associates at local stores.
- ❑ Prepare displays for grocery stores and other high traffic areas.
- ❑ Produce the following publicity items: posters, billboards, bumper stickers, lapel buttons, window stickers. (It is suggested that you not include a date on these items so they may be utilized in subsequent years.)
- ❑ Find more ideas in the GOTV handbook, available free from National Headquarters.

In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course. Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service surround the globe.

Now the trumpet summons us again — not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need — not as a call to battle, though embattled we are — but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle year in and year out, “rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation” — a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself.

Can we forge against these enemies a grand and global alliance, north and south, east and west, that can assure a more fruitful life for all mankind? Will you join in that historic effort?

In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility — I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it — and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country.

John F. Kennedy  
1/20/61

# OTHER AMERICANISM PROJECT IDEAS

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- ❑ Have a speaker from a local American Legion chapter speak about Veteran's Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, Memorial Day, the American flag, constitutional amendments, or other Americanism topic.
- ❑ Ask a local recruiter to speak at a club meeting about his or her experiences in the service and why it's great to be an American.
- ❑ Adopt-a-Unit or service person overseas by sending correspondence and care packages or adopt the family of a service person by providing special activities and holiday treats.
- ❑ Go to a veterans' home and visit with the residents. Bring snacks and pass out small flags as tokens of appreciation for their service.
- ❑ Hold a patriotism essay or speech contest. Have the winner read the essay or speech at a special club meeting.
- ❑ Have an essay contest on "What the Freedom Shrine documents mean to me."
- ❑ Supply a local school's history class with a Freedom Shrine document textbook. Ask the teacher to have each student (or a team of students) research one document, then give a report on that document along with reading it in class or at a school assembly. Have a local Exchange Club member be present.
- ❑ Help a local elementary/middle school make a collage with a line from each Freedom Shrine document. Quotes from the documents should be selected by students because they inspired them or define what freedom means to them. Students can give a brief presentation on why they selected their quote. Serve patriotic refreshments after the collages are assembled and displayed in a prominent place.
- ❑ Invite a former Peace Corps volunteer or study abroad participant to speak about how their experience affected their understanding and appreciation of America.
- ❑ Sponsor a Presidents Pageant in which students each "become" a U.S. president and explain their impact on the U.S.
- ❑ Hold a Freedom Shrine press conference at a local middle or high school. Send out news releases and invite the local media. Also invite the mayor and ask him or her to declare a week or the whole month of May as Freedom Shrine Week/Month.
- ❑ Partner with a local television station, newspaper or store to sponsor a patriotic coloring/drawing contest. Young children can color in a picture and older kids can create original art. Arrange to have winning entries published, shown on television or displayed in a local store or library. Savings bonds can be awarded as prizes.
- ❑ Collect old or worn flags from the community and conduct a proper flag-disposal ceremony.
- ❑ Hold a special flag-raising ceremony at your city hall or courthouse to raise awareness about the importance of displaying the flag. Try to get the mayor or another public official to give a brief statement. Or invite veterans' groups to speak about what the flag means to them. Distribute flag brochures to attendees.
- ❑ Support a Healing Field in your community, where an impressive number of full-sized U.S. flags are displayed in a large open outdoor space. These flags can represent the lives lost in September 11<sup>th</sup> Terrorist Attacks, veterans, children who have died at the hands of an abuser or other noteworthy causes. For more information visit: [HealingField.org](http://HealingField.org) or call 866-375-FLAG (3524).



# MILITARY APPRECIATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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*We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union... provide for the common defence...and secure the blessings of Liberty...*

It's been said that "Americanism is the heart of Exchange." Our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Coast Guardsmen, and Marines on active duty, in the Reserve components, and in the National Guard, provide a bulwark of defense against tyranny which would deny us "the blessings of Liberty." By serving, they enable us to celebrate America's special qualities in peace and freedom. Most young men and women who serve, do so away from their homes and loved ones. Those more seasoned service members have spouses and children who endure hardships in the service member's absence. All clubs are encouraged to hold one special program each year to recognize the military in its service to the United States. While many formats would work well, this guide recommends the meal setting club meeting.

## Before You Start

Decide if your club would like to show appreciation for the military in general or to particular service members for outstanding achievement. If the latter, a key to the success is finding military members to honor. If your club desires a speaker, then the speaker ought to know and appreciate the purpose of the US military and have some personal connection to it and perhaps have served. Many veterans are in your community. Go find them! Promote a celebration of military service to American sovereignty and civilian control of the military. Some clubs located near military bases, National Guard drill centers, and even recruiting stations, will find plenty of service members to honor.

## STEP 1: DISCOVERY

With a military hierarchy within reach, finding worthy service men and women will be as easy as plugging into the chain of command on the military installation. A call to the base locator operator or to the base commander's office will start the ball rolling. A letter of introduction stating that your club wishes to honor a "Soldier of the Year" (and/or "Sailor", "Marine" or "Airmen") should bring a prompt and a receptive response. Military commands care about individual recognition and welcome the community's expression of support for their mission and sacrifices. The military command should make the choice of who deserves the honor, however, in special circumstances, a club should feel empowered to recognize a deserving service member for reasons entirely held by the club.

## STEP 2: CONTACTING THE SPEAKER

Use this opportunity to introduce the speaker to Exchange, describing Exchange's Programs of Service, and National Project, the prevention of child abuse. Express your club's sense of privilege in being able to honor the US Military. The speaker's remarks are a capstone address, recognizing that the object of the gathering is to show appreciation for the military members foremost. Retired generals and admirals or war heroes make excellent speakers.

## STEP 3: PROMOTING THE EVENT

These type events are very popular with Exchangites whose clubs have honored the military each year. One particular Exchange Club in the Southeast honors the four military active services, their reserve components, the Army and Air National Guard, and the US Coast Guard active and reserve. That's 12 service members! At an-hour-long luncheon, this club provides each with a financial honorarium and a plaque commemorating the award of "XXXX of the Year." Each honoree's "summary of action" is read to the audience. The military service provides the summary of action, a brief overview of the member's particular achievements and qualities. If the awardee is being recognized for bravery or conspicuously meritorious action, a military medal award citation is sufficient. If the budget allows, include each honoree's commanding officer and senior enlisted member and the honoree's immediate family on the invitation list. Again, use the honoree's chain of command to extend invitations. Follow up on the RSVPs to avoid oversights and omissions. Ensure that club members invite guests, perhaps who have also served in the military, to showcase Exchange's love for the country, as expressed in military appreciation. Those guests might become club members, if asked. Regarding what the military calls "Pomp & Circumstance", Exchange suggests a small musical ensemble playing festive military marches and the like prior to meeting being called to order, perhaps a singer for National Anthem, a "Soldier's Prayer" style invocation, and a color guard to bring on the American and state flags will highlight the dignified ceremonial aspect of the meeting.

## STEP 4: PUBLIC RELATIONS

The local media should have high interest in this event, especially for clubs which are distant from military bases. Send out a press release or make a phone call to the news outlet. Leave room for the press in the event seating and meal planning, if appropriate. If no other means is available, after the event, send electronic media outlets digital pictures and a draft news copy for their ease of publishing them. Identify people in photos from left to right.

# SUPPORT OUR TROOPS AND VETERANS PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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All Americans owe tremendous debts of gratitude to the men and women who are proudly serving in our armed forces and to our veterans who have protected our freedoms worldwide. The National Exchange Club's Support Our Troops and Veterans Program gives clubs the opportunities to express our appreciation and support to the dedicated troops and veterans who have served our country with honor. The Support Our Troops and Veterans Program is most often coordinated by a club's Americanism Committee.

## PRELIMINARY PREPARATIONS

Survey your club members and contact national and local organizations to help identify potential projects for supporting our troops and veterans. National organizations such as Operation Troop Aid, and local organizations include your area's American Legion and VFW posts. Make sure your club has budgeted funds for Support Our Troops and Veterans materials and expenses.

### STEP 1: DISCOVERY

Have your Exchange Club's Americanism Committee assign a chairperson for the project. Determine the scope of your club's project, whether to work with a national organization, to partner with a local organization, or to create an entirely new project for your community. Define how your club will supply support materials and resources (manpower, funding, or both). Potential projects would include supplying manpower for armed forces benefit events, preparing care packages for troops serving overseas, "adopting" a community family with an armed forces member, welcoming home returning service personnel, helping to raise funds for veterans organizations, or visiting a veterans' hospital. Contact your local Exchange Club, schools, local youth organizations (such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts), and military support organizations which might be interested in partnering with your club for the Support Our Troops and Veterans project. Also, enlist community sponsors for providing additional materials and resources in support of the project.

### STEP 2: CONDUCTING THE PROJECT

Tailor your club's Support Our Troops and Veterans project to optimize the impact given your resources. Establish the timing of meetings, activities, and events to maximize committee and club membership involvement. Engage newer club members by encouraging them to volunteer for lead and support roles in the project. Make sure the funds expended on the project are within your approved budget. Recognize community organizations and sponsors who have contributed to the project's success. Always focus on the purpose on the project, and ensure that the armed forces personnel and veterans that you are supporting are properly recognized, thanked, and honored.

### STEP 3: PUBLIC RELATIONS

While the primary purpose of Support Our Troops and Veterans is to thank and honor the men and women who have served our country, it is also important to emphasize the Exchange Club name and the potential to do more for our service personnel with additional members and resources. Feature the program on your club's website, and make sure local media is updated and invited to events associated with your Exchange Club's Support Our Troops and Veterans project. Partnering with a national organization could increase the recognition of the Exchange Club name across the country.

### STEP 4: FOLLOW-UP

Hold a special meeting or event for your club and the community to review the success of your Support Our Troops and Veterans project. Express your club's gratitude to the armed forces members, veterans, and their families for their service and support of America.

# HOMETOWN HEROES PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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## PURPOSE

Americans owe tremendous debts of gratitude to the men and women who are proudly serving in our armed forces and to our veterans who have protected our freedoms worldwide. The National Exchange Club's Hometown Heroes Program provides our clubs the opportunities to express our appreciation and support to the dedicated troops and veterans who have served our country with honor. Hometown Heroes projects are most often coordinated by our clubs' Americanism Committees.

## PRELIMINARY PREPARATIONS

Survey your club members and contact local organizations to help identify potential projects for thanking and supporting your Hometown Heroes. Examples of local organizations include your area's American Legion and VFW Posts, Marine Corps Leagues, and Veterans and Purple Heart Associations. Consider contacting local college ROTC and high school junior ROTC units to encourage networking and communicating with recent graduates who have joined the armed forces and would like to hear from friends at home. Involving local organizations presents opportunities for membership growth in the present as well as in the future. Make sure your club has budgeted appropriate funds for Hometown Heroes materials and expenses.

## STEP 1: DISCOVERY

Have your Exchange Club's Americanism Committee assign a chairperson for the project. Determine the scope of your club's Hometown Heroes project, whether to create an entirely new project for your community or to partner with a local organization on an existing project. Establish the timing of your project and whether it will be a monthly, quarterly, or annual event. Define how your club will supply support materials and resources (manpower, funding, or both). Potential projects include preparing and shipping hometown care packages and letters of appreciation to troops serving overseas, "adopting" a community family with an armed forces member, welcoming home returning service personnel, hosting a military appreciation event, coordinating a career opportunity program for veterans with local businesses, or visiting a veterans' hospital. Contact your local Exchange Club, schools, local youth organizations (such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts), and military support organizations which might be interested in partnering with your club for your Hometown Heroes project. Also, enlist community sponsors for providing additional materials and resources in support of the project.

## STEP 2: CONDUCTING THE PROJECT

Tailor your club's Hometown Heroes project to optimize the impact given your resources. Establish the timing of meetings, activities, and events to maximize committee and club membership involvement. Engage newer club members by encouraging them to volunteer for lead and support roles in the project. Make sure the funds expended on the project are within your club's approved budget. Recognize community organizations and sponsors who have contributed to the project's success. Always focus on the purpose of the project, and ensure that the armed forces personnel and veterans that you are supporting are properly recognized, thanked, and honored.

## STEP 3: PUBLIC RELATIONS

While the primary purpose of your Hometown Heroes project is to thank and honor the men and women who have served our country, it is also important to emphasize the Exchange Club name and the potential to do more for our service personnel with additional members and resources. Feature the program on your club's website and through social media, and make sure local media outlets are updated and invited to events associated with your Hometown Heroes project. Ask honorees and their families as well as sponsors and project partners to consider becoming Exchange Club members.

## STEP 4: FOLLOW-UP

Hold a special meeting or event for your club and the community to review the success of your Hometown Heroes project. Request feedback from your Hometown Heroes and their families to assess the impact of your project. Be prepared to expand your project to increase participation within your community and surrounding areas in honoring Hometown Heroes. Express your club's gratitude to the armed forces members, veterans, and their families for their service and support of America.

# Mission Statement

Exchange, inspiring communities to become better places to live.

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# Vision Statement

A strong America, safe communities, and unified people.



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