

WELCOME



Welcome to the Young Marines Veteran's Appreciation Week Campaign Toolkit

November 5-11, 2014

Our goal is to provide you useful information to help you effectively manage and promote your YMVAV campaign. In this toolkit, you will find information about: donor solicitation, media relations, and how to promote your activities and events. All Young Marines that participate in Veterans Appreciation Week are eligible to wear ribbon.

Best of luck in your Veterans Appreciation Week activities. If you have any questions, or comments, please feel free to contact our YMVAV Coordinator, Janelle Johnsen, at: vetsweek@youngmarines.com.



Please send us an email to let us know what unique event your unit has planned for Young Marines Veterans Appreciation Week by Nov. 1st and we might pitch your idea to the national media.

ABOUT YMVAW



What is Young Marines Veterans Appreciation Week?

The purpose of the campaign is to challenge our youth to dedicate some of their time to help our veterans, and demonstrate, through their actions their sincere appreciation for our veterans' service to our country.

During the week-long tribute, Young Marine units have the opportunity to design their own project that is most fitting in their local community. Projects might include sending thank you cards to hospitalized veterans, cleaning up a disabled veterans yard, visiting veterans in the hospital, or simply setting up a community function to socialize with local veterans.

In 2014, the Young Marines organization celebrates the 14th annual Veterans Appreciation Week campaign.

PROJECT IDEAS



The project that your unit does is up to you.

Here are some ideas that might help get you started.



- Clean up a veteran's yard or paint a veterans house
 - Hold a car wash at a VFW and invite veterans to come get a free car wash
 - Write letters to hospitalized veterans
 - Coordinate a picnic or social gathering for local veterans
 - Make a craft for a veteran (quilt, picture frame, magnets, etc)
 - Put together "craft kits" to donate to a hospitalized veteran (watercolor paints, brushes, paper, model cars, etc.)
 - Make posters "thanking veterans" and display them on community boards or deliver them to a hospital or a military unit
 - Make patriotic decorations and donate them to a veterans organization
 - Host a movie night for veterans or purchase group tickets to a movie and go see it with veterans
 - Have Young Marines research family members that are veterans and write about their experiences.
 - Have members donate items for a care package and send it to a service member overseas
 - Call your local VFW, American Legion, Marine Corps League, etc., and ask them for their ideas. They might have a community service project idea for your unit to participate in.
 - Call your local television station and ask them if they would be willing to sponsor an event. Example: the station could come and help clean up a veteran's yard with you and broadcast live from your location. Possibly the weatherman could broadcast his/her weather report from your event location.
 - Get involved in the Veteran's History Project through the Library of Congress.
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VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT



Here is an activity that your unit can participate in during Young Marines Veterans Appreciation Week and ALL YEAR LONG!!!!

It's the Veterans History Project



The mission of the Veteran's History Project at the Library of Congress is to collect the memories, accounts, and documents of war veterans from World War I, World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf War, and to preserve these stories of experience and service for future generations. The Library of Congress invites individuals and organizations to participate directly in the Veterans History Project and to help create a new national collection.

As the entire Young Marine organization works to serve as the pre-eminent youth organization in supporting our veterans, here is a great opportunity for Young Marine units to honor veterans throughout the year or use this as your unit's Veterans Appreciation Week project.

On a National level, the Young Marines organization is an official partner of the Veterans History Project. Young Marine units can participate by interviewing war veterans and then transcribing their recordings.

To participate in the Veterans History Project, visit their website at:

www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/

On their website, you will find project toolkits, sample interview questions and information on how to get started, or call their toll free number:

1-888-371-5848 (recorded information and message line)

**Of the
25.5 million
veterans
currently alive,
nearly three of
every four
served during a
war or an
official period
of hostility.**

SPONSOR DEVELOPMENT



You may want to consider seeking sponsorship for your event. For example, if your event consists of releasing balloons in honor of veterans, you may want to contact a floral shop to donate balloons. First of all, you should develop an informational packet about the Young Marines. You can use the Fact Sheet or brochures found in the database Library. You should include information that describes your event or project that you are participating in.



Be specific about your requests and inform your potential sponsor how it will benefit them.

Be specific about what you are requesting. State your needs clearly. For example: spaghetti lunch for 200 veterans including drinks, appreciation certificates and patriotic decorations @ \$5.00 per person = \$1,000. Be sure to communicate to your sponsor what kind of benefit they will receive by sponsoring your event. For example, a benefit might be including their company's name on all advertising and in press releases to the media. Sponsors should be acknowledged as much as possible on signage, in advertising, newspaper articles, or on your website. Most importantly, thank your sponsors after your event.

THANKING YOUR SPONSORS



Sample thank you letter to a sponsor

Dear Mr. Smith,

*A fun way to thank
sponsors is to present
them with a Certificate
of Appreciation.*

*You can design your
own certificate and
frame it for them to
display!*

On behalf of the Central County Young Marines, I would like to thank you for participating as a sponsor of our Veterans Appreciation Week event on November 11, 2014. Your donation of 100 helium balloons truly helped make the event a success. We were delighted that you chose to donate red, white and blue balloons, which gave our balloon release a patriotic touch.

It is only with the participation of organizations such as yours that we were able to put together such a successful event to honor America's veterans. Our event received a great deal of publicity. I have included copies of the articles for your enjoyment. Again, many thanks to Smith's Floral Shop.

Sincerely yours,

(Unit Commander signature)

MEDIA RELATIONS



*Young Marines
Veterans
Appreciation
Week is a great
opportunity to
make, and
maintain, media
contacts to use in
the future!*

- Create a media list by researching your local newspapers, radio and television stations. Look for reporters who have written similar articles about veterans, youth organizations or community service. You can also call and ask the newspaper or station which reporters cover these types of stories.
 - Send a press release to your local stations and newspapers. You can distribute your press release by mail, fax, email, or in person. Press releases should be sent at least two weeks in advance of the event. Sample Press Release found in the Appendix section.
 - Follow up on your press release with a Media Advisory about 3-5 days prior to your event. Media Advisories provide the basis details of: WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY. Media Advisories should be sent to the assignment editor. Sample Media Advisory can be found in the Appendix section.
 - Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper about the importance of honoring America's veterans. Your letter should also make reference to the fact that Young Marines are making efforts in your community to thank veterans for their service. Letters to the Editor should be no more than 500 words.
 - If you have any questions, please contact Janelle Johnsen, Unit Marketing Manager at: janelle.johnsen@youngmarines.com
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MEDIA RELATIONS



Obtaining media coverage for the day of your event

Before you begin contacting the media to invite them to cover your event, be sure that all of your details are confirmed such as location, time, spokespeople, etc. The more interesting the event, the more likely that you will entice a media representative to cover your event. Consider partnering with a local VFW or other organization. This will broaden the audience. For example, writing letters to hospitalized veterans and sending them in the mail will most likely not produce coverage. In contrast, if your Young Marines write letters to veterans and then hand-deliver them to a local VFW then hold a BBQ afterwards where the mayor is a guest speaker.

Thank the media outlets that cover your event

A letter or a phone call complimenting a journalist on a particular article or piece that was done will show that you appreciate their efforts. You may want to let the journalist know that you received great feedback from others as a result of their work and compliment them on the feedback you've received.

MEDIA RELATIONS



Contacting the media

NEWSPAPER: Look in your local newspaper and find the names of reporters that cover stories similar to yours. Contact that person directly via telephone (find the phone number in your local yellow pages). Briefly tell him/her about your event and offer to send a press release or a media advisory and ask how they would like to receive it (fax, mail, email, or in person). Be sure to give them ideas about photo and interview opportunities. Remember to keep your phone call brief.

TELEVISION: News directors are interested in stories with a visual impact. How do you know what stations might cover your event? Watch TV!! You will quickly be able to figure out which programs are a good fit for your event. When contacting television media by telephone, follow the same guidelines for newspaper. Don't call a television station in the late afternoon when they are finalizing their evening broadcast. It's best to call in the morning.

If your event is scheduled for outdoors, you might request that the weatherman come to your event and broadcast the weather. This might require some creative planning to assure that your event falls within the time frame of your local weather forecast, but well worth it.

RADIO: A fun way to get a radio DJ to cover your event is to invite them to broadcast live from your location. When contacting radio stations, follow the same guidelines for radio that you would for newspaper or television.

EVENT PLANNING TIMELINE



Now

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- * Choose a project
 - * Identify sponsors
 - * Create media list

2—3 weeks prior

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- * Distribute Press Releases
 - * Confirm sponsors

One week prior

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- * Finalize all arrangements
 - * Send Media Advisories
 - * Follow up with media contacts

Event Day

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- * Take pictures,
record attendance
and thank sponsors
 - * Provide media interviews

Post Event

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- * Formally thank sponsors
 - * Submit an article about your event to the Young Marines *Esprit* magazine
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SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OCT 24, 2014

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
John Bell
Public Relations Officer,
Central County Young Marines
202-555-1212

CENTRAL COUNTY YOUNG MARINES TO HOST SPAGHETTI DINNER HONORING AMERICA'S VETERANS

Centralville, VA (Oct. 24, 2014) - The Central County Young Marines are hosting a dinner to honor America's veterans at VFW Post #2555 on Sunday, Nov. 9 at 4 pm. The public is invited to attend the event and thank a veteran for his/her service to our country.

This event is part of the "14th Annual Young Marines Veterans Appreciation Week," sponsored by the Young Marines. Young Marine units throughout the nation are planning events in their local communities. The campaign is designed to give Young Marine members the opportunity to come together, on a national level, for a common cause to honor our veterans.

"The purpose of the campaign is to challenge our Young Marines to dedicate some of their time to help our veterans and demonstrate, through their actions, their appreciation for our veterans' service to our country," said Mike Kessler, National Executive Director of the Young Marines.

Each Young Marine unit has the opportunity to design their own projects that they see most fitting in their local community. Other projects throughout the nation include sending thank you letters to hospitalized veterans, cleaning up a disabled veterans yard, visiting veterans in the hospital, or simply setting up a community event to socialize with veterans. The nationwide campaign celebrated from Nov. 5-11, 2014.

The Young Marines is a non-profit 501c(3) youth education and service program for boys and girls, age eight through the completion of high school. The Young Marines promotes the mental, moral and physical development of its members. The program focuses on teaching the values of leadership, teamwork and self-discipline so its members can live and promote a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

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SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOV 1, 2014

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
John Bell
Public Relations Officer,
Central County Young Marines
202-555-1212

UNITED VALLEY YOUNG MARINES HONOR AMERICA'S VETERANS BY READING THANK YOU LETTERS AND A PANCAKE FEED AT LOCAL VFW POST

- WHAT:** The America Valley Young Marines invite the public to join them in honoring America's veterans at VFW Post #2555 on Sunday. The Young Marines will read thank you letters to veterans during a pancake feed event. Cost for the meal is \$3 per person, children under 6 are free.
- WHO:** This event is coordinated by the United Valley Young Marines in cooperation with the United VFW Post #1775 and the Marine Corps League.
- WHEN:** Saturday, November 9, 2014 from 8 am-9:30 am
- WHERE:** VFW Post #1775 on Memorial Highway behind the Walmart store.
- WHY:** The National Executive Director of the Young Marines, Mike Kessler is calling on all Young Marines units nationwide and overseas to participate in a call-to-action campaign in November to honor the contributions of America's Veterans. The 14th Annual Young Marines Veterans Appreciation Week is designed to give the Young Marines the opportunity to come together, on a national level for a common cause, to honor veterans.

**For more information about the Young Marines Veterans Appreciation Week tribute,
please call John Bell at: 202-555-1212**

The Young Marines is a non-profit 501c(3) youth education and service program for boys and girls, age eight through the completion of high school. The Young Marines promotes the mental, moral and physical development of its members. The program focuses on teaching the values of leadership, teamwork and self-discipline so its members can live and promote a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.