



AFSA International Family Matters Program November 2019



Thanksgiving is only three weeks away – and this is the time for us to remember how truly blessed we are and to give thanks to the Lord above.

And let's not forget our Veterans on November 11 (Veterans Day). We need to show them just how thankful we are for their service, their fight to keep our country safe and their families who made many sacrifices along the way. How many Chapters actually have contacted those retirees who are also vets? I will venture a guess that not many have done so. You don't have to wait for Veterans Day – any day will do. Here are some ways for your Chapter to honor those veterans -- and be sure to **involve your Family Members, PLEASE!**

HOST A "THANK YOU TO VETERANS" CEREMONY – This can be done at a local assisted-living facility where it gives you the chance to draw attention to the residents, staff and family members who are veterans, and show them they're appreciated in front of the entire assisted living community. Family and friends of the residents can also be invited.

- Invite a local ROTC Color Guard to come in for a flag ceremony.
- See if a local church, school choir or other musicians would be willing to perform patriotic songs and have the Veterans and others sing along.
- Ask Veterans how long they served and what branch of the military they were in and recognize those that served the longest.
- Ask Veterans to wear their favorite military item (hat, jacket, uniform) or red, white and blue in honor of their service and take a picture of them as a group and individually.
- Present flags to the widows of veterans.
- Read and share a Veteran-themed poem (just Google it).
- Print colorful thank you cards for your Veterans – check out the second link under **SOURCES** below.

NOTE: You could do the same thing for the Retired Veterans in your Chapter.

LIST OF WAYS TO HONOR VETERANS

- Hang a flag in your yard.
- Ask an aging Veteran to share with you the song that most takes them back.
- Visit the gravesite of a Veteran. Take flowers to a Veteran's memorial.
- Visit a homebound Veteran in their home, talk with them and thank them for their service.
- Thank a Veteran co-worker for their service.

- Take a private moment to be proud of your country.
- Say a silent prayer for those who are serving.
- Hug your family, and tell them that it's thanks to Veterans that you get to.
- Observe a moment of silence with family and friends.
- Wear your favorite "Pro-Vet" T-Shirt. (Examples: Free Hugs for Vets; Remember Our Fallen Veterans; Freedom is not FREE...; Thank a VETERAN; or I Heart Veterans!).
- Make sure your children and grandchildren know who the Veterans are within their own family and share the family stories with them.
- Help young children or grandchildren make thank-you cards and post them in a window, on a grocery store bulletin board, in the library or some other public place.
- [Good for any day](#) -- Stand out in front of the VA and greet Veterans as they are being dropped off at the door. Some older folks even need a hand getting out of the car.
- Buy a homeless Veteran a cup of coffee.
- Donate time, money or supplies to local Veterans Day drives.
- Volunteer to help a Veterans Service Organization (there are lots!).
- Take a moment to reflect on what it means to live in America.
- Gather with friends and family and watch a patriotic movie.
- Take a quiet moment and imagine hearing "taps" played in your head. Think about what it means.
- Shake a Veteran's hand.
- Pick one or two of the activities listed above and resolve to do them at least one time every month this year when it's NOT Veterans' Day.

Thanks for all you do – take care & God Bless! And remember – **FAMILY Matters** – be sure to involve your Family Members in all Chapter events.

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11/7/2019

SOURCES: <https://www.aladvantage.com/20-ideas-for-honoring-veterans-on-veterans-day/>
<https://blog.chickabug.com/2015/04/free-printable-honor-our-armed-forces-cards.html>
https://www.wallawalla.va.gov/misc/honor_veteran.asp