



*13 years of honoring  
service members –  
thank you!*

***Reflect ~ Remember ~ Rejoice***

## **Our Heroes' Tree Program Planning Guide**

*Showing appreciation for the U.S. Armed Forces*

**For all ages. Anytime of the year.**

***Start a tradition*** ~ Decorate Our Heroes' Tree with American flags, yellow ribbon, white lights, and decorations in honor of service members past and present

***Community spirit*** ~ Dedicate Our Heroes' Tree to remember the service, sacrifice, and deployment separation of U.S. service members and their families

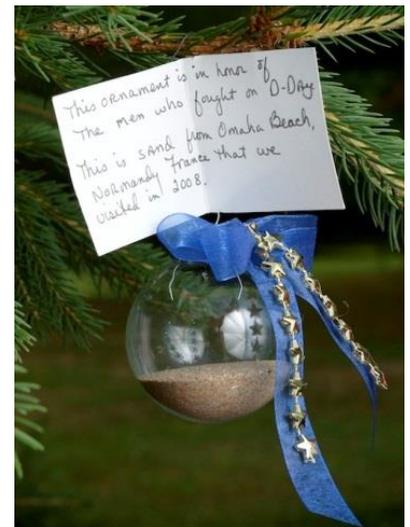
***Together in patriotic pride*** ~ For all ages, anytime of the year, rejoice together and promote patriotic pride and community support

Website: [ourheroestree.com](http://ourheroestree.com)

Facebook: [Our Heroes' Tree Program](#)

Marlene Lee and Stephanie Pickup created Our Heroes' Tree® in 2005 to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's military families.

*Our Heroes' Tree Program Planning Guide* is offered free of charge based on the conditions set forth in the section *Trademark and Logo Usage Notes for the General Public for Our Heroes' Tree®*.



The handwritten note says, "This ornament is in honor of the men who fought on D-Day. This is sand from Omaha Beach, Normandy, France, that we visited in 2008." This decoration was donated anonymously to Our Heroes' Tree, Rhode Island State House.



# OUR HEROES' TREE PROGRAM PLANNING GUIDE PROGRAM OUTLINE

Suggested program duration: 1 to 1.5 hours

Variables to consider: Group size and composition, location, travel distances, weather, and activities, such as crafting decorations on-site.

Following is the suggested program flow (using a start time of 3:30 p.m. (1530) as the example):

3:30 – 3:45 p.m. (1530 – 1545)

- ★ Hang decorations

3:45 – 4:05 p.m. (1545 – 1605)

Welcome (5 minutes)

- ★ Pledge of Allegiance (5 minutes)
- ★ Reading of Our Heroes' Tree poem (e-book) (5 minutes)
- ★ Patriotic song (group sing, 5 minutes)

4:05 – 4:45 p.m. (1605 – 1645)

Incorporate themes of *Reflect ~ Remember ~ Rejoice* for dedication of Our Heroes' Tree

- ★ Remarks from host about sharing the bonds of service, separation, and sacrifice
- ★ Join in a moment of silence to remember those who are serving, those who have served, and those whose lives have been lost
- ★ Announcements and/or guest speaker
- ★ History comes alive as attendees share stories about the meaning of their decoration with other attendees
- ★ Announcements and/or guest speaker
- ★ Refreshments and socializing



Our Heroes' Tree celebration indoors in winter, Ft. Wainwright, Alaska





# CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESS

Set-up, Budget, Time

## OUR HEROES' TREE & DECORATIONS

- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard decoration configuration for Our Heroes' Tree:
  - \_\_\_ Place two American flags at the 10:00 and 2:00 o'clock positions on upper tree branches.
  - \_\_\_ Hang or tie a bow of yellow ribbon near the top of the tree. Hint: On a typical 6+ ft. tree, wide ribbon works best, approximately 18-24 ft. long. For a paper tree on a wall or door, just drape or draw a yellow ribbon.
  - \_\_\_ Per the Trademark usage, if lights are used, they should only be white lights to symbolize a silent salute to history and the deceased.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Share ideas via social media.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Decorations are individual creations. Write the name of the person(s) being honored; and the creator of the decoration may wish to write their name on the back of the decoration.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Help engage participants of all ages by offering templates for decorations (see *Templates*).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tree (consider asking a local merchant to donate or sponsor the tree), indoors or outdoors, artificial, paper tree on a wall, etc., plus tree holder.



Artwork by Chandler Dudley

*Featured in schools, military installations, events, and previously listed in the **Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury Resource Guide:***

*The Soldier's Tree* by Stephanie Pickup, an uplifting book for children enduring the separation of deployment during the holiday season

*The Hero in My Pocket* by Marlene Lee, a keepsake book to give children a voice in their grief following the death of a U.S. service member or Veteran

*The Hero in My Pocket* is available via [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

*Our Heroes' Tree* e-book is also available online via Apple iBooks Store

## PLANNING YOUR BUDGET

- \_\_\_\_\_ Budget Considerations: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Potential Sponsors, Donors, and Partners: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fundraising Options: \_\_\_\_\_

## PLANNING YOUR TIME

Consider group size, location, travel distances, and activities in planning Our Heroes' Tree.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Location / Name and Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_



# CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESS, *Continued*

## Community, Invitation, and Trademark Compliance

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Share ideas on fostering community spirit among military and civilian communities.

- \_\_\_ Incorporate the program's themes of: *Reflect ~ Remember ~ Rejoice*
- \_\_\_ Be creative! Host Our Heroes' Tree on Veterans' Day, Valentine's Day, pre-deployment or welcome home, or adapt the program for deployed units to honor loved ones back home, as well as in tribute to the injured and the fallen.
- \_\_\_ Show *Our Heroes' Tree*, the e-book, on a big screen or wall
- \_\_\_ Consider the expressive arts: family art display, music, poetry, dance, etc.
- \_\_\_ Consider a musical selection, such as inviting a military band, school band, or a choir
- \_\_\_ Arts and crafts supplies/table for making decorations or creating cards for deployed service members or family members
- \_\_\_ Arrange for a simulcast or videoconference with deployed service members
- \_\_\_ We support the use of live trees. Visit the Arbor Day Foundation website or American Forests website for information.
- \_\_\_ Light refreshments



Twin Falls (Idaho) Public Library honors its Veterans with photo-decorations

### INVITATION & PUBLICITY

In all publicity, include your organization's name, event date, time, location, and RSVP information, if needed.

- \_\_\_ Announcements via e-mail, social media, website
- \_\_\_ Announcements via traditional media newspaper, newsletter, radio, TV
- \_\_\_ Brochure or flyer for event attendees, explaining the meaning of Our Heroes' Tree
- \_\_\_ Digital recording or photography (with permission, of course)



Veterans Day parade, Fairhaven, MA, hosted Our Heroes' Tree

### TRADEMARK COMPLIANCE

- \_\_\_ Our Heroes' Tree is a registered Trademark. Use the full name of the program: Our Heroes' Tree and refer to the *Trademark* page for information on compliance.
- \_\_\_ On collateral (e.g., marketing, advertising, event literature, media), in a point size no smaller than 10 point and in an easy-to-read typeface, include the following phrase: Our Heroes' Tree® created by Marlene Lee and Stephanie Pickup.



# SEEDS OF CREATIVITY

## CREATIVE INSPIRATION

- ★ **25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division** families in Ft. Bliss, Texas, sweetly and proudly decorated Our Heroes' Tree for Valentine's Day on live trees outdoors.
- ★ **McBride Elementary School, Ft. Benning, GA**, hosts Our Heroes' Tree as an on-going display of family and community unity.
- ★ **Veterans' Day parades** in Fairhaven, MA, feature Our Heroes' Tree to honor all generations of Veterans.



Our Heroes' Tree adorning the wall on Valentine's Day, West Point Elementary School

- ★ **The United States Military Academy's** West Point Elementary School dedicated the inaugural Our Heroes' Tree in 2005, and invited Stephanie Pickup to read her book, *The Soldier's Tree* to its classes. In 2012, 2<sup>nd</sup> graders decorated Our Heroes' Tree for Valentine's Day, and voted on the cover artwork for *Our Heroes' Tree*, the e-book.
- ★ **Citizens Care and Rehabilitation Center**, Frederick, Maryland, honored their World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War Veterans with Our Heroes' Tree and a 1940's themed dance
- ★ **Hospice of Frederick County (MD)** promotes honoring Veterans who are hospice patients.
- ★ **Veterans Administration Medical Center**, Chicago, Palliative Care, honors Veterans, families, and staff with Our Heroes' Tree.
- ★ **1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division** families decorated Our Heroes' Tree outdoors with 2,000 ornaments on 11 evergreen trees.
- ★ **Purdue University's Military Family Research Institute (MFRI)** engaged communities to honor Veterans' Day with Our Heroes' Tree. MFRI created a resource guide, educational literature, posters, bookmarks, and a "Virtual Our Heroes' Tree."
- ★ **Currituck (NC) BBQ Restaurant** dedicated Our Heroes' Tree to firefighters and police officers who dual-serve in the National Guard or Reserve.
- ★ **American Cancer Society, Relay for Life**, featured Our Heroes' Tree.



# RESOURCES

## RESOURCES

- ★ **National Military Family Association**, Operation Purple camps bond campers who are all military-connected children. Website: nmfa.org
- ★ **Armed Services YMCA**, specializes in supporting military families with recreation, education, and family programs. Website: asymca.org
- ★ **Team Red, White & Blue** connects America's Veterans to their community through physical and social activity. Website: teamrwb.org
- ★ **We Honor Veterans**, a program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. Website: wehonorveterans.org
- ★ **Disabled Sports USA**, transforms the lives of service members through adaptive sports. Website: dsusa.org
- ★ **National Military Family Association**, Operation Purple camps bond campers who are all military-connected children. Website: nmfa.org
- ★ **Armed Services YMCA**, specializes in supporting military families with recreation, education, and family programs. Website: asymca.org
- ★ **Team Red, White & Blue** connects America's Veterans to their community through physical and social activity. Website: teamrwb.org

**Citizens Care and Rehabilitation Center and Montevue Assisted Living** (*Citizens/Montevue*), Frederick, Maryland shared these lessons learned for hosting Our Heroes' Tree in a senior care environment. For more information, refer to Marlene Lee's white paper, *Our Heroes' Tree: Honoring Veterans in Senior Care and Hospice Environments*.

- ✓ Start planning early and select a date that offers a unique recognition opportunity for Veterans. *Citizens/Montevue* started planning in August for an early February event.
- ✓ *Citizens/Montevue* extended its reach with the program by partnering with Hospice of Frederick County and engaging the organization's Veteran Liaison.
- ✓ Plan two to four arts and crafts sessions with residents/patients to create memento-decorations (therapeutic recreation and art therapy). *Citizens/Montevue* hung memento-decorations on two artificial trees for three months.
- ✓ *Citizens/Montevue* encouraged intergenerational participation and included families, caregivers, and staff in the program.
- ✓ *Citizens/Montevue's* event featured music from the 1940's – music serves as a powerful therapeutic and memory recall technique. Residents began reminiscing and chair-bound residents swayed to the music, tapped their feet, and enjoyed the music of their era.
- ✓ Have an instant camera on hand! *Citizens/Montevue* did not do this and wishes they had.

# TEMPLATES FOR DECORATIONS

Copy and cut out these templates for Our Heroes' Tree participants to use – or create your own.

**Our Heroes' Tree**®

Veteran's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates/Location(s) served: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your name and relationship to Veteran: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Message: \_\_\_\_\_



© Our Heroes' Tree Artwork by Chandler Dudley





# ABOUT THE CO-FOUNDERS

## Marlene Lee and Stephanie Pickup



Marlene Lee and Stephanie Pickup co-founded Our Heroes' Tree to foster community spirit among military and civilian communities.

Programs, events, and living history help promote awareness and appreciation of the service and sacrifice of U.S. service members and their families.

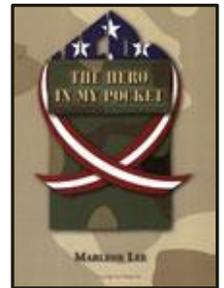
From its first tree in 2005 to events held in 34 states and 10 countries with military bases in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, we thank you for helping share and grow the spirit of Our Heroes' Tree.

*Our Heroes' Tree* e-book introduced artist and self-described “military brat,” Chandler Dudley.

### Marlene Lee, Co-founder, Our Heroes' Tree

Inspired by her volunteer work with injured soldiers and their family members at (the former) Walter Reed Army Medical Center while her own son was deployed to Iraq, Marlene authored *The Hero in My Pocket*, an interactive and keepsake book to give children (ages 6-12 years) a voice in their grief following the death of a U.S. service member or Veteran.

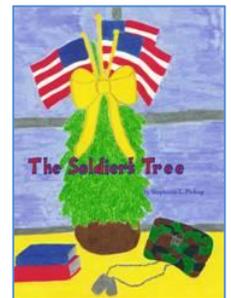
Marlene also co-authored *That's My Hope*, an interactive story of inspiration and resilience for families who have experienced trauma, illness, or injury. Marlene holds a master's degree in Thanatology (death, dying, and bereavement studies).



### Stephanie Pickup, Co-founder, Our Heroes' Tree

Stephanie is the Marketing Manager for Care Free Homes of Fairhaven, MA. Previously, Stephanie led an Army Family Readiness Group for more than two years, and helped her young children through her husband's Army deployments overseas which twice coincided with the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

Based on her own experiences, Stephanie, a writer and mother of four, authored *The Soldier's Tree*, a book for children (ages 3-6 years) whose loved one is deployed during holiday time. This charming story and colorful illustrations comfort and encourage children as they make, decorate, and celebrate their very own soldier's tree.



Books are available via Amazon.com and *Our Heroes' Tree* e-book is available via Amazon.com, Apple iBooks Store, and Barnes & Noble

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Website: [www.ourheroestree.com](http://www.ourheroestree.com)

Facebook: Our Heroes' Tree Program

TRADEMARK AND LOGO USAGE NOTES FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC FOR OUR HEROES' TREE®  
(The fine print in plain English)

*Permission is granted to reproduce this Program Planning Guide for use with Our Heroes' Tree and in accordance with the Trademark and Logo Usage. We reserve the right to modify the Trademark and Logo Usage and the Guide at any time. It is the user's responsibility to check for updates.*

Marlene Lee and Stephanie Pickup do not charge user fees for others to use the name *Our Heroes' Tree* to host a program consistent with the intent and spirit of the existing program and the trademark rules below.

*Our Heroes' Tree*® began in 2005 and is a Federally-registered trademark. Except as stated in the Trademark and Logo Usage Notes herein, you or your company, organization, etc., may not use *Our Heroes' Tree* trademark or any confusingly similar mark as a trademark for your program or service, or use *Our Heroes' Tree* trademarks in any manner that may cause confusion in the marketplace, including but not limited to advertising and collateral, Internet or other electronic media (websites, Facebook, Twitter, etc.), or event programming.

*You may:*

Below are the conditions for use by the general public of *Our Heroes' Tree* as a Trademark name, as long as compliance with all items is met, no advance written permission is necessary. Use is permitted when all four conditions are met.

1. The name *Our Heroes' Tree* must be used in full and cannot be modified (for example, do not abbreviate the name).
2. The name *Our Heroes' Tree* is used only in conjunction with promoting and hosting a program or event that features or includes *Our Heroes' Tree*, a community program created by Marlene Lee and Stephanie Pickup.
3. Program or event organizers cite and credit Marlene Lee and Stephanie Pickup, in customary and usual collateral (i.e., marketing, advertising, event literature, in all media), in a point size no smaller than 10 point and in the Arial font or similar font, as stated as follows:

*Our Heroes' Tree*® created by Marlene Lee and Stephanie Pickup

Program or event organizers can share information via the Facebook page: *Our Heroes' Tree* Program.

*You may not:*

*Our Heroes' Tree* logo (blue tree, gold star, red lettering, and service mark) and the tagline "Reflect ~ Remember ~ Rejoice" are used solely by *Our Heroes' Tree* and use or replication is not granted for the general public, with two exceptions:

1. *Our Heroes' Tree* logo and tagline appear on each page of *Our Heroes' Tree Program Planning Guide*, and permission is granted to copy the *Planning Guide* for event planning and implementation.
2. *Our Heroes' Tree* logo appears on the Invitation poem for *Our Heroes' Tree* and permission is granted to embed the logo without alteration on the invitation.

*Our Heroes' Tree* is not responsible or liable for events, outcomes, media exposure, etc., associated with *Our Heroes' Tree*. Please be aware that Federal law obligates Trademark owners to monitor their marks and prevent the use of confusingly similar names by third parties.