

FLAGS ACROSS AMERICA® GETTING STARTED PACKET

Last updated April 2001

Getting Started as a National Flag Foundation Chapter

Welcome to the *Flags Across America*® effort! We are excited to work with you to raise a large 30-foot by 60-foot United States Flag in your county. We have enclosed for your benefit in getting started a packet of information on how to incorporate as a chapter of National Flag Foundation, how to set up a bank account, how to start gaining public awareness of the project and how to raise the necessary funds to raise the flag.

“We see this flag as a bridge, a bridge between generations, a reminder of the sacrifice of America’s veterans, and a symbol to students of that pride.

Davie Jane Gilmour, President,
Pennsylvania College of Technology

As with any worthwhile project, it takes commitment and dedication by many individuals to raise the large flag over your county and community, maintain the flag, and become involved in NFF

educational initiatives. Start by recruiting dedicated volunteers to assist in the effort. We recommend that you organize a committee as the foundation for incorporating the new chapter.

Forming the Committee

NOTE: If you want to form a committee or start a chapter, please call NFF Executive Director, David L. White before starting (412.261.1776). We want to get acquainted and clarify start-up procedures. In forming the committee to start a chapter, we recommend that the following types of people serve:

1. Banker
2. Attorney (a must)
3. Accountant (a must)
4. Contractor
5. Public relations/marketing executives
6. Public Official
7. Officers and/or members of fraternal organizations, patriotic organizations and service clubs
8. Patriotic people from the community who possess the drive and energy to see the project through. (Every community has individuals like these.)

To recruit the right individuals to serve on the committee, we suggest that you start with elected officials by gaining their support and asking them to help recruit. You may also ask the local newspaper to run an article asking for volunteer support. We have enclosed a news release to help you in seeking volunteers.

Procedure of Setting up the Chapter

Flags Across America[®] is a project initiated and conducted by National Flag Foundation. NFF suggests setting up a chapter as the most effective method of raising the large flag. NFF approves the following method of legally organizing your committee for fundraising purposes. You may raise funds if recognized as a legal chapter by the state or federal government.

“This flag is about educating the very young as to the sacrifices of the old, and to ever remind them that freedom is not free.”

Stephen Cappelli
Former Mayor,
Williamsport, PA

1. Elect Officers (President, Secretary, Treasurer) and fill out Chapter Data Sheet (form attached). Read the Chapter Rules Form (form attached) and have the Chapter President sign it. Return Chapter Rules Form and Chapter Data Sheet to NFF.
2. NFF will then approve the new chapter and send the following documents: 1) chapter bylaws, 2) articles of incorporation and 3) chapter certificate.
3. NFF will apply for local chapter's Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN). Once we have sent you an EIN, you may use it to set up a bank account with your local bank. It takes less than 24 hours to obtain an EIN.
4. Sign the bylaws and fill-out the accompanying directors' conflict of interest disclosures. Make copies of the bylaws and disclosures and send original documents to NFF.
5. NFF requires an annual \$100 chapter fee. The fee will be waived for the start-up year but will be due by June 14 (Flag Day) each ensuing year.
6. Upon completing numbers 1-5, the local Chapter is responsible for filing articles of incorporation with the state, publishing the name in a legal journal and local newspaper, ordering the corporate seal and minute book, and registering as a charitable organization with the state. We advise that you have a local attorney provide an in-kind contribution of time and services to fulfill above tasks. There are fees associated with the above tasks. Total cost is in the range of \$500.
7. Establishing your committee as a corporation provides limited liability and indemnification for your directors. It is the safest way in which to ensure a successful project without great risk to your committee and National Flag Foundation.

TIPS AND IDEAS

Chapter fund raising for **Flags Across America**® is an easy sell as most everyone contacted thinks it to be an extremely worthwhile project.

Likely prospects are local government, businesses, fraternal organizations, veterans organizations, families and individuals.

The chapter in Johnstown, Pennsylvania raised \$100,000 in 90 days.

Contact NFF for flagpole information. We know several reputable vendors capable of delivering a quality product at a fair price. We deal only with those manufacturers using American labor and materials.

Normally, pole installation is provided by a local company that is familiar with flag poles, telephone poles, and equipment necessary for installation. Some pole manufacturers will install the pole.

A site should be chosen that is highly visible and offers maximum exposure to the public. The Chapter will provide the lease agreement and insurance. Sites are large enough to allow for accessibility and at least modest landscaping and lighting. Sites should also allow for easy maintenance.

Each chapter will hold a dignified public ceremony upon opening the site to the public. NFF can provide guidelines for this ceremony or the Chapter may design a ceremony of their own.

Once the site is dedicated, the Chapter will continue maintenance and upkeep through its members or by contract. After dedication the Chapter will want to conduct seminars, demonstrations, and other flag related activities for school children and adults.

NFF provides a function on this web site that will provide members with the opportunity to share activity and other information between chapters.

EXAMPLE CORPORATE FINANCIAL REQUEST LETTER

(date)
(name)
(title)
(company)
(address)
(city, state zip)

Dear Mr./Ms. (name):

The United States Flag is our most important patriotic symbol, yet many of our young people are unaware of what our flag represents. To help educate our youth and promote patriotism in our community, the (Chapter Name) Flag Committee is working to hoist an inspiring 30-foot by 60-foot United States Flag on a 120-foot flagpole in (Location) county. We need your help!

This project represents our community's participation in *Flags Across America*[®], National Flag Foundation's (NFF) volunteer-driven, grassroots effort to raise large flags in communities across the country. NFF is the nation's only non-profit educational organization devoted exclusively to promoting love and respect for the United States Flag.

In communities all across the country, NFF has worked with local residents to organize volunteer committees to locate an appropriate site and make the public aware of this exciting project.

To make this beautiful large flag a reality here, we need financial support from the local business community. We invite your company to take a leadership position in this effort by contributing \$_____ to sponsor a star (or a stripe). Your support will stand as an example for other area businesses and organizations. A reply envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

The large flag will bring the community together and be an object of great civic pride. We invite your firm to be part of this worthwhile endeavor.

Sincerely,

(Local Flag Committee Chairperson)

P.S. Donors will be recognized on a plaque to be permanently placed at the flag site. For more information, please call (Phone Number).

EXAMPLE FINANCIAL REQUEST TO INDIVIDUALS

(date)

(name)

(title)

(company)

(address)

(city, state zip)

Dear Mr./Ms. (name):

The United States Flag is our most important patriotic symbol, yet many of our young people are unaware of what our flag represents. To help educate our youth and promote patriotism in our community, the (*Chapter Name*) Flag Committee is working to hoist an inspiring 30-foot by 60-foot United States Flag on a 120-foot flagpole in (*Location*) county. We need your help!

This project represents our community's participation in *Flags Across America*[®], National Flag Foundation's (NFF) volunteer driven grassroots effort to raise large flags in communities across the country. NFF is the nation's only non-profit educational organization devoted exclusively to promoting love and respect for the United States Flag.

In communities all across the country NFF has worked with local residents to organize volunteer committees to locate an appropriate site and make the public aware of this exciting project.

To make this beautiful large flag a reality here, we need financial support from local residents. It is estimated that this project will cost (*Dollar Figure*), a figure that represents a worthwhile investment to our young people's future attachment to freedom. We ask that you consider supporting this project, and encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same. A reply envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

The large flag will bring the community together and be an object of great civic pride. We invite your firm to be part of this worthwhile endeavor.

Sincerely,

(Local Flag Committee Chairperson)

PS We are seeking businesses that would be interested in sponsoring a Star or Stripe on the flag. These special donors will be recognized on a plaque to be permanently placed at the flag site. For more information on this opportunity, please call (Phone Number).

Publicity Tips for Local Flag Committees from National Flag Foundation

MEDIA CONTACTS

Compile an accurate, up-to-date list of media contacts in your area. This list should include the following:

Local newspapers

- Managing Editor
- Features Editor
- Calendar Editor

Local radio stations

- News Director
- Community Affairs Director

Local television stations

- News Director
- Assignment Editor(s)
- Community Affairs Director

Local cable systems

- Individual in charge of on-air community bulletin board.

In addition to those listed above, also include any other people connected with the local media whom committee members know personally. When compiling the media list, call the paper, station or cable company to get the name, correct spelling and complete mailing address for each contact. Address correspondence to a specific person wherever possible. Avoid sending correspondence addressed to "Editor" when a simple phone call can get you this editor's name.

Personalization

Get to know the local editors in each situation above. Leave with them brochures and other material about NFF and the Chapter so that they will have accurate information at their finger tips. Let the editors know who to contact in the Chapter and keep the contact consistent -- change as infrequently as possible.

NEWS RELEASES

When writing a news release, keep in mind that in order to publicize your meeting or event, or to explore doing a story on your community flag project, members of the media must have complete information. Make sure your news release or correspondence answers the five basic questions: Who? What? Where? When? and Why? NFF is providing the packet of news releases designed to help you give the media in your area the information they will need.

At the top of the first page of every news release or other correspondence, always list the name and phone number of a knowledgeable person who can answer any questions about the project, the committee or the planned event.

Mail out news releases a minimum of two weeks before an event. If possible, also fax your release to the same contacts one to two days before the event.

FOLLOW-UP CALLS

Occasionally place follow-up calls to media contacts. When doing so, be cheerful and positive, focusing on the contact's editorial or programming needs (not the needs of the flag committee.) A good approach is to call to confirm that your release was received, and to see if there are any questions you might be able to answer. In fielding this call, the media person is likely to let you know whether or not your event will be covered and if not, why. Even if your event will not be covered, you now have some valuable information that you can use when approaching this media outlet in the future.

When calling, be respectful of the time constraints imposed on most media people and plan accordingly. For instance, newspaper people working on deadline will not usually have time to talk, and if they do, their time will be at a premium. So call when they will most likely have time to talk. If it is a morning paper, they are more likely to be available in the morning. If it is an evening paper, try them in mid to late afternoon. Avoid radio and television contacts while they are on the air or shortly before their shows. Try them several hours before or shortly after airtime.

Do not call more often than once every two to three months. Most media people view frequent callers as pests.

Be realistic in your expected results when working with your local media. A successful media program might result in one prominent story per media outlet plus on-going publicity of meetings, fund raising events or other activities. To expect more than this is to be disappointed; however, you will be surprised at how many people see even the smallest of stories in the paper or the briefest of video clips on television.

**EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE
SEEKING VOLUNTEERS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: *(Contact Name)*
(Phone Number)

**(LOCATION) FLAG COMMITTEE SEEKS VOLUNTEERS TO
HELP HOIST 30-FOOT BY 60-FOOT UNITED STATES FLAG**

(CITY OF RELEASE) *(Date)* -- The *(Chapter Name)* Flag Committee is seeking volunteers to help hoist an inspiring 30-foot by 60-foot United States Flag on a 120-foot flagpole at a prominent location in the county. In support of this exciting project, the Flag Committee needs volunteers to help create awareness in the community, raise the necessary funds and select an appropriate site.

This effort represents *(Location)*'s participation in *Flags Across America*[®], a national initiative aimed at educating young people about the Flag of the United States, which is arguably the most revered and recognized non-religious symbol in the world.

Flags Across America[®], in a program of the National Flag Foundation, a nonprofit educational organization. founded in 1968. The NFF mission is to teach the young people of America to have greater respect for the United States Flag and to be more responsible citizens.

"The Flag of the United States represents the noblest political experiment in human history," says David L. White, NFF Executive Director. "It is important for young Americans to understand and appreciate the genius and contributions of our Founding Fathers. The flag is a symbol of the past and a banner for the future. In its history is the message of civic participation. The flag belongs to all Americans with no bias toward individuals or groups."

To volunteer for the *(Chapter Name)* Flag Committee, or for more information on the national *Flags Across America*[®] initiative contact *(Contact Name)* at *(Phone Number)* or write *Flags Across America*[®], *(Chapter Address)*.

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**EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE
PUBLIC INVITED TO FIRST MEETING**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: *(Contact Name)*
(Phone Number)

**PUBLIC INVITED TO FIRST MEETING OF
(CHAPTER NAME) FLAG COMMITTEE**

(CITY OF RELEASE) *(Release Date)* The public is invited to attend the first meeting of the *(Chapter Name)* Flag Committee, *(Day of Week)*, *(Date)*, *(Time)*, at *(Meeting Location)*, *(Address)*. The meeting will be held in the *(Name or Number of Room)*.

The newly-formed volunteer Committee is working to hoist an inspiring 30-foot by 60-foot United States Flag on a 120-foot flagpole at a prominent location in *(City or County Name)*.

The Committee is working to create awareness in the community, raise necessary funds, and select and design an appropriate site for the flag.

This is a dynamic, creative committee seeking ideas and comments from the public. We want our site to be an inspiration to our residents. We are seeking a site in a prominent, highly visible location, making it an object of civic pride and a tool for building patriotism in the community.

Flags Across America[®], is a program of the National Flag Foundation, a nonprofit educational organization. Founded in 1968, the NFF mission is to teach the young people of America to have greater respect for the United States Flag and to be more responsible citizens.

For more information on the *(local community)* flag project, contact *(Contact Name)*, *(Location)*, at *(Phone Number)*.

To find out more about the national *Flags Across America*[®] initiative, call (412) 261-1776, or write *Flags Across America*[®], National Flag Foundation, Flag Plaza, 1275 Bedford Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

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EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE FOR RECEIVING FINANCIAL GIFTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: (Contact Name)
(Phone Number)

(CHAPTER) FLAG COMMITTEE RECEIVES GIFT FOR LOCAL PROJECT

(CITY OF RELEASE) (Date) – The (Chapter Name) Flag Committee has received a gift (or gifts) of (Amount) from (Benefactor Names), (Benefactor Location), to help raise an inspiring 30-foot by 60-foot United States Flag on a 120-foot flagpole in (Location) county.

“We are grateful for (Benefactor’s Names)’s support of *Flags Across America*[®],” says (Contact Name), coordinator for the (Chapter) Flag Committee. “(Benefactor’s Name)’s gift(s) will help us to complete this project and raise awareness among our community’s young people about the importance of the United States Flag.”

The (Chapter Name) Flag Committee is undertaking this project as part of *Flags Across America*[®], National Flag Foundation’s (NFF) program aimed at educating young people about the Flag of the United States of America.

Through *Flags Across America*[®], NFF, the nation’s only non-profit organization devoted exclusively to promoting love and respect for the United States Flag, is working to hoist large United States Flags in communities across the country.

As is the case in (Chapter Name), NFF is organizing local volunteer chapters to raise large flags in communities throughout the country. Each flag will be placed in a prominent, highly visible location, making it an object of civic pride and a tool for building patriotism in the community.

To learn how you can support the local flag project, contact (Contact Name) at (Phone Number). For more information on the national *Flags Across America*[®] initiative, call (412) 261-1776, or write *Flags Across America*[®], National Flag Foundation, Flag Plaza, 1275 Bedford Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

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Note for chapters: Before sending out a press release like this you will want to obtain approval from your benefactor. This might be done in your thank you letter to him or her.

**EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE
PUBLIC INVITED TO DEDICATION**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: (Contact Name)
(Phone Number)

**PUBLIC INVITED TO ATTEND DEDICATION CEREMONY OF
30-FOOT BY 60-FOOT UNITED STATES FLAG**

(CITY OF RELEASE) (Date) -- The (Chapter Name) Flag Committee invites the public to attend the dedication ceremony for the hoisting of a 30-foot by 60-foot United States Flag at (Cite Location). The ceremony is scheduled for (Day of Week), (Date), (Time), at (Ceremony Location).

Local dignitaries expected to be in attendance include (Names). Also participating in this special event will be students from (Local School Names) and local Scout troops or youth groups (Scout Troop Numbers).

This ceremony will be a celebration of the flag and our community's patriotic spirit, as the 30-foot by 60-foot United States Flag will be unfurled and raised on the 120-foot flagpole for the first time.

The (Chapter) Flag Committee has been working successfully for several months to raise funds and coordinate the effort. The Committee undertook the project as part of *Flags Across America*[®], the National Flag Foundation's (NFF) initiative aimed at educating young people about the Flag of the United States of America.

The nation's only non-profit organization devoted exclusively to promoting love and respect for the United States Flag, NFF is working with volunteers in communities around the country to raise large flags.

"We are very proud of the (Chapter) Flag Committee's hard work and dedication to *Flags Across America*[®], says David L. White, Executive Director of NFF. "That flag will stand as a tribute to the community's unity and belief in the importance of liberty."

The day's schedule of events include: (List of Scheduled Events, Times and Locations). , Contact (Contact Name) at (Phone Number) for more information on the Flag Dedication Ceremony

Flags Across America[®], in a program of the National Flag Foundation, a nonprofit educational organization founded in 1968. The NFF mission is to teach the young people of America to have greater respect for the United States Flag and to be more responsible citizens.

To find out more about the national *Flags Across America*[®] initiative, call (412) 261-1776, or write *Flags Across America*[®], National Flag Foundation, Flag Plaza, 1275 Bedford Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

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EXAMPLE CABLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Donations

Sponsor a star or stripe and help support the (*Chapter*) Flag Project. Call (*Contact Name*) at (*Phone Number*) for details.

Volunteers

Volunteers needed to help the (*Chapter*) Flag Committee raise a 30'x60' United States Flag. Call (*Contact Name*) at (*Phone Number*) for details.

Meeting

(*Location*) Flag Committee to hold its monthly meeting. (*Day of Week*), (*Month*) (*Day*), (*Year*). (*Time*). (*Location*), (*Room*). Public invited to attend. Call (*Contact Name*) at (*Phone Number*) for details.

Dedication

(*Chapter*) Flag Committee to dedicate 30'x60' United States Flag. (*Day of Week*), (*Month*) (*Day*), (*Year*). (*Time*). (*Location*). Come join the celebration! (*Phone Number*) for details.

end of Flags Across America® Start-up Packet