

Wreaths Across America™

Wreaths Across Chattanooga Project

2018 Fact Sheet (rev 8/7/2018)

The Wreaths Across America™ Mission Statement

- Remember the fallen.
- Honor those who serve.
- Teach our children the value of freedom.

Wreaths Across America™ was born out of a desire to remember and honor American service members for their contributions in preserving our freedom. (segments of this history are taken from www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org/our-story)

Morrill Worcester and the Worcester Wreath Company of Harrington, ME had the vision for this project and placed the first wreaths. It has since become an annual tradition to lay wreaths at the grave markers of our fallen veterans during December as a way to express our appreciation and to pay tribute for the sacrifices made for our country by our service men and women.

Wreaths Across America™ maintains no political or religious agenda, but rather a mission to remember and honor our veterans during the month of December. At time of traditional family get-togethers, this event provides a great learning opportunity to teach our children of the many sacrifices made by our military men and women. Wreaths Across America™ is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization founded in 2007 as a continuation of the Arlington Wreath Project.

WAA ceremonies are held at over 1,400 locations in the United States and many locations overseas. WAA could not carry out its mission without the help of volunteers, location coordinators, sponsors, fundraisers and the generous donations of trucking companies. We extend a special thanks to all involved.

Chattanooga National Cemetery - Wreaths Across America™ History

In 2006, The Arlington Wrath Project (now W.A.A.) encouraged an alliance with Civil Air Patrol (the official U. S. Air Force Auxiliary) to organize wreath-laying ceremonies to be held at National Cemeteries and Memorial sites across the United States. In December, 2006, the first wreath laying ceremony was held at Chattanooga National Cemetery, under the leadership of Maj. Ron Broach, who was then serving as Civil Air Patrol's Chattanooga Composite Squadron Commander at the time. Under Broach's leadership, ceremonies were held every December (usually on the 3rd Saturday of the month). In the early years, under 100-200 wreaths were sponsored each year, but over the program's first decade, though increased awareness and participation of dozens of other volunteer organizations, the average placement increased up to approximately 1,000 – 1,400 wreaths.

Continuing after Maj. Broach's years of leadership, (2006 – 2010) donations and awareness have increased. In the last few years, we have been able to place 7,000 – 18,000 wreaths per year, partly from local donations, and one-time gifts from national sponsors. This is still far short of being able to honor every veteran at Chattanooga National Cemetery each year, which would require about 43,000 wreaths annually.

Following the 2017 ceremony, several members of the Chattanooga Choo Choo Senior Squadron requested (and received) permission to expand the oversight of the program in Chattanooga and set a goal of placing a wreath on every veteran's headstone, this year and every year to come.

Under the guidance of Maj. Marty Nix, the members of the Choo Choo Senior Squadron are making plans to expand the program, enlist the help of additional organization and will be seeking larger corporate sponsors. This leadership group realized that reaching the 43,000 wreaths goal would require resources far in excess of previous years.

In cooperation with retired U. S. Navy Captain Mickey McCamish, and the Chattanooga Area Veterans Council, and other veteran's associations in the area, the group will be reaching out to community leaders, the local media, and corporate groups to help raise the \$430,000 necessary to sponsor 43,000 wreaths for Chattanooga National Cemetery.

In addition to the need for more funding, will be the need for more volunteers to help place the wreaths following the 20-minute ceremony to be held at Noon on Saturday, December 15th, 2018. Members of the squadron will be reaching out to past participants and other volunteers organizations, seeing more community participation required to place the wreaths on the headstones.

How Can I Donate to Support the Mission, and How Does it Work?

Donated wreaths are placed at locations throughout the United States and selected overseas locations to honor our veterans. Wreaths Across America™ works with people and businesses in our communities to donate the wreaths for these locations.

Chattanooga National Cemetery (TN0156) is just one of over 1,100 current locations where wreaths are placed, and you may choose to sponsor wreaths in one of two ways.

- (1) **Sponsoring Organizations:** Wreaths Across America™ wreath sponsorships sell at \$15 each. The funds are collected by the participating non-profit groups and sent to the WAA home office located in Columbia Falls, ME. Of the \$15.00 donated for each wreath, \$5.00 is returned to the fundraising organization. Some groups may opt out of the fundraising aspect of wreath sponsorship by choosing the "3 for 2" option. **PLEASE NOTE: If your non-profit group would like to raise funds for wreaths while using this as a fund-raising opportunity for your group, please visit our website at ChattanoogaWAA.com and scroll to the bottom, where you will find more information on how to enroll your organization, and secure your group's unique identifier number.**

- (2) **3 for 2 Option (100% Funding Option):** Some sponsors (mostly large corporate sponsors) desire to have 100% of their donation applied to wreath purchase. In the “3 for 2” option, three wreaths are sponsored for the price of two. In other words, where \$30 donated through the participating volunteer organizations, that same \$30 sponsors three wreaths. The net cost per wreath under the “3 for 2” option is \$10 per wreath. A wreath sponsorship form/brochure is available for download at the bottom of our webpage: www.ChattanoogaWAA.com Donations can be mailed in to the local address shown on the form, or sponsors can make their donation online, using the link provided our website. **PLEASE NOTE: Using this link (or using the identifier “TN0156”) will bypass fundraising option, but the WAA sponsor page makes it look like \$5 of every \$15 is going back to the volunteer organization. However, if you use the identifier, “TN0156”, you can be assured that 100% of your donation will fund wreaths at \$10 per wreath. The final page before you press "Submit" shows \$0 going back to the organization, so all of your donation goes towards wreaths for Chattanooga. Feel free to contact us (see below) if you have questions about this.**

For information beyond what is provided on the www.ChattanoogaWAA.com website, or to discuss corporate sponsorship, please contact:

- Maj. Marty Nix, CAP, Chattanooga Location Leader, at (423) 667-0399

For information about the www.ChattanoogaWAA.com website, or public affairs and interviews, please contact:

- Maj. Larry Stewart, CAP, Public Information Officer, at (423) 596-3196 or email at 483157@tncap.us

For information about how your organization can raise funds for wreaths (and for your volunteer organization), or if you need a presentation to your organization, please contact:

- 2d Lt. Steven Rastatter, CAP, Liaison to Volunteer Organizations and Fund-Raising Groups, at 610082@tncap.us

For information about veterans’ affairs and sponsorships, please contact:

- Capt. Mickey McCamish, U. S. Navy (retired), Wreaths Across Chattanooga committee member, at (423) 394-0024

For information about the placement of wreaths or operations, please contact:

- 2d Lt. Byron Poe, Operations Officer, at (423) 240-5963

We also have a Facebook Event Page at “Wreaths Across Chattanooga”

- <https://www.facebook.com/events/2164257847153529/>