



Program Guide for the Veterans Matter 11/11 @ 7 Rally to House America's Homeless Veterans, Sponsored by Your Club(s)



100% of the funds raised go to help house veterans locally, regionally or nationally, wherever the greatest need is. In other words, anywhere there is a veteran waiting for a home tonight, Exchange will be there!

Introduction and Purpose

The National Exchange Clubs are partnering with Veterans Matter, both based in Toledo Ohio, to help get our homeless heroes off the streets and into a place they can call home. What started as a local project to house 35 local veterans has gone national, housing over 3,000 of our nation's heroes in 22 states due in part to the support of 20+ celebrities, including Gene Hackman, Susan Sarandon, John Mellencamp, Dusty Hill, Gary Sinise, Katy Perry and others all raising funds and awareness. **Veterans Matter has a 100% success rate housing homeless veterans in the VA's LONG-TERM supportive housing program, which has a 91% success rate keeping them housed!**

Our goal, as an organization, is to house 1,000 veterans over the next year. This averages out to three veterans per club nationwide. Larger clubs can house many more. Your club will be working to house the homeless veterans in your community, region and nation -- wherever there is a veteran waiting now for housing! The goal is the closest veterans sleeping on the streets tonight can get housed tomorrow.

Again many clubs nationwide will be hosting simultaneous fundraising rallies on Veterans Day, 11/11 at 7 p.m. These can be as small or as large as your club's desire and passion to house our veterans. But it all boils down to this: Find a location, invite your friends, families, co-workers and business associates, and then help us raise as much as we can to house as many veterans as we can as fast as we can. Even one more night on the streets is one too many, especially for the 24% of the veterans housed who are families WITH CHILDREN!

Having an event on Veterans Day at 7 p.m. will make a national statement and will garner national and local press for your club and exchange clubs nationwide. This is an exciting opportunity to demonstrate how each club is interdependent with each other, together creating a national force of 20,000 members that is **EXCHANGE STRONG!**

This will also be an opportunity for your club to showcase your Exchange Strong Americanism to your entire community and recruit new members by inviting the community to participate in your rally. **Best practice is to invite all of the other local groups that care about veterans in your community such as veteran-friendly businesses, VFWs, American Legions, veteran's services organizations and the like. Unite!**

Discovery

Have your exchange club's Board of Directors assign a Rally Chairperson. This person will be extremely passionate about helping veterans and will be responsible for the event's success, including identifying and recruiting Rally Coordinators. Though all Coordinators may come from your club, we recommend you invite members of your community, such as

members of other veteran-friendly businesses or groups, to play a part in the leadership team for the “Veterans Matter 11/11 @ 7 Rally to House America’s Homeless Veterans Sponsored by: (Your Club(s) and other interested local groups)”. The more the merrier as it allows maximum exposure of your club’s Americanism and commitment to veterans throughout your entire community. Yes, it is a long name so we use “the 11/11 at 7 Rally” for short. Unite!

The Rally Chairperson will create the Club Team on the Firstgiving fundraising software, distribute the Project Plan, get weekly reports from the Rally Coordinators and assure the success of the event as well as provide a Results Summary once the event is completed.

The “Veterans Matter National Hero Club of the Year” recognition will go to the top club raising the most funds nationwide, and they will also be recognized at the 2020 National Convention. The sole criterion will be the number of veterans housed at Veterans Matter’s national average of \$750 per veteran or veteran family as documented by the Veterans Matter Firstgiving fundraising platform at midnight, June 30, 2019.

There will need to be a Logistics Coordinator, Marketing/Publicity Coordinator, Sponsorship/Fundraising Coordinator and Team Coordinator. All will recruit the organizational Team Captains. These leaders will form the core of the Rally Committee, as well as any additional members of your community who would like to support your efforts. Again the more you invite the more who hear about your club and Exchange.

The Rally Committee will set the Rally Objectives, such as deciding how many veterans your club wants to help house, determining how many people will be needed to help, establishing the preliminary budget (t-shirts, location, food, advertising, etc). And, most importantly, recruiting the teams, organizations and businesses to sponsor, partner and participate in the fundraising for your **Veterans Matter 11/11 at 7 Rally to House America’s Homeless Veterans sponsored by Your Club(s)**.

Planning and Conducting

See the separate Event Planning Guide for the “Veterans Matter 11/11 at 7 Rally to House America’s Homeless Veterans” for more details. Again, in the simplest form, planning comprises finding a location, inviting your friends, families, co-workers and business associates, and then helping us raise as much as we can to house as many veterans as we can as fast as we can. Even one more night on the streets is one too many, especially for the 24% of the veterans housed who are families WITH CHILDREN!

We hope every club will host an event of some kind, large or small (a Club-Sponsored Dinner, Community Fundraising Dinner, Auction/Silent Auction, Fundraising Walk, Wine Tasting or other special event) on 11/11 @ 7. This demonstrates how each club is interdependent with each other to create a national force of 20,000 members that is **#EXCHANGESTRONG! #GetVetsHoused**