

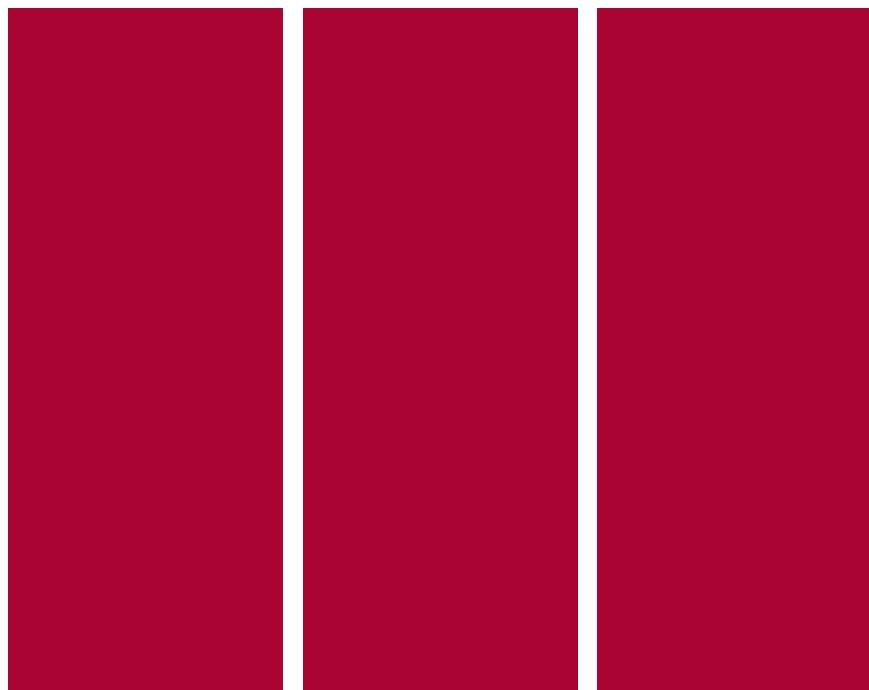


# EXCHANGE

THE NATIONAL EXCHANGE CLUB



## Community Service Projects



*Program of Service*

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# INTRODUCTION

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Community service is the lifeline of Exchange. Exchange Clubs across the country spend countless hours and dollars improving their communities each year. In fact, many of the projects within the Program of Service have a common goal of serving and benefiting our communities. Then why a separate category called Community Service? Because while the programs listed under Child Abuse Prevention, Youth and Americanism focus on specific areas within the community, the following projects are more broad in scope and are designed to benefit every community member.

The history of Exchange's community service projects is quite impressive. Since the first group of Exchangers convened in 1911 in Detroit, Mich., Exchange has been dedicated to serving its communities through various projects. Throughout the years, Exchange Clubs have been responsible for community improvements of all

types such as: cleaning up highways; sponsoring cultural programs, air, art and industrial shows, state and county fairs, festivals, rodeos and athletic events. These clubs have also provided millions of dollars for scholarships, gifts, equipment, sponsorships, educational endeavors and other causes.



# CRIME AND FIRE PREVENTION

## Purpose

Crime and Fire Prevention, has been a major avenue of Exchange service since the 1940s. Since its inception, Exchange's crime and fire prevention program has been endorsed by nearly every U.S. President, and many of the nation's leading law enforcement officials. The majority of clubs kick off their anticrime campaigns during October, National Crime Prevention Month.

Any club searching for a program with a clear commitment to community safety will find the crime and fire prevention projects ideal. The primary objectives of these projects are:

1. To educate the public.
2. To help eliminate crime and the causes of fires.
3. To teach people how to safeguard themselves against the dangers around them.

Following is a list of crime prevention programs in which your club is encouraged to participate. Clubs starting these projects are urged to gear their activities to the entire year, not only October.

## Junior Police

Junior Police is a proven and powerful program which brings law enforcement officers into the classrooms of third through seventh graders. It allows young people to meet and talk to law enforcement officers in a relaxed and friendly environment. This program provides early establishment and a correct image of who law enforcement officers really are and what they stand for.

To get started your Exchange Club explains the program to the targeted school administration, the local police department, and the school's police liaison officer to gain everyone's support and participation for a successful program. Then, three visits are scheduled in the classroom with one or two police officers presiding. With Exchange Club volunteers helping in the classroom, students are encouraged to ask questions and learn about the officers and their work.



During the final visit each student receives an official Junior Police ID card and a specially designed badge sticker. These and other materials are available from your National Exchange Club Supply Department.

## My Day in Court

The focus of "My Day in Court" is to show future adult citizens of America how our system works and how the law is administered. Since crime prevention requires an early understanding of America's complex justice system, an awareness of the laws, and the consequences of breaking those laws, My Day in Court provides a hands-on learning experience of our judicial system.

Limited to sixth grade students, My Day in Court allows students to sit in a courtroom while a judge hears arraignments on a variety of criminal matters. After the court session, the students are seated in the jury box and are able to ask questions, and view the courtroom from the judge's seat.

The program requires the cooperation and participation of a judge who hears both misdemeanor and felony cases, the municipal or county court system and the local schools. "My Day in Court" certificates can be presented to the students upon completion of this project. These certificates are available through your National Exchange Club Supply Department.

# CRIME AND FIRE PREVENTION CONT.

## Cyber Tipline

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) works with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Customs Service, and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, to prevent sexual abuse of children. They have established the national Cyber Tipline and the national Child Pornography Tipline at 1-800-843-5678 (800-THE-LOST).

The Cyber Tipline Program is one way for Exchangites to help prevent incidents of sexual approaches or solicitations towards children while online. Clubs are encouraged to distribute brochures to parents throughout the community and place posters in high traffic areas in an effort to protect children from online pornography.

Exchange Clubs can work with schools, parent organizations, or youth-oriented organizations to distribute software designed to filter out pornographic web sites. Clubs could distribute the software free or obtain a sponsor. Clubs could also ask a representative from an Internet Service Provider to speak about filtering systems at a workshop or meeting. To order Cyber Tipline brochures and posters contact the National Exchange Club Supply department.

## Child Identification/Fingerprinting

Your club can help parents be prepared to help law enforcement officers in the event their child is missing. The

program is not preventative — it does not reduce the possibility that a child may join the ranks of the missing. What it does is provide parents with a permanent record of a child's identification data which law enforcement agencies can later use if they need to locate the child.

This project involves the collection of information about children, such as name, age, address, height, weight, hair color, etc., in a format that is easy for parents to keep and turn over to police in the unfortunate event their child is missing. These specially designed cards allow for all the necessary identification data as well as a child's fingerprints to be recorded on a single sheet.

In many communities, Child ID programs are already in place through area law enforcement agencies. If this is the case in your community, your Exchange Club can get involved by supporting the existing program with volunteers or financial donations.

With the cooperation of law enforcement agencies, Exchangites work with schools, churches, shopping malls, community festivals or other areas to arrange for a Child ID event. Utilizing school or church newsletters is an effective way to promote your Child ID event as well as involving the media in this community project.

Child ID is an ongoing task for Exchange Clubs, since children are constantly growing and forms should be updated annually, although every six months is preferred. Child Identification/Fingerprinting Recording Cards are available through the National Headquarters Supply Department.

## Crime Prevention for Seniors

The need to be secure in our homes and communities is a primary concern of older Americans. Exchange Clubs, with their long-standing commitment to crime prevention activities, are especially well-equipped to educate senior citizens on simple, effective measures to help curtail crime.

For instance, a club can arrange for its members and a local police officer to visit community senior centers and senior-majority neighborhoods to create greater awareness of crime prevention techniques. Exchange Club Crime Prevention Action Files are excellent



informational tools for distribution at these events.

In addition, Exchange Clubs can sponsor and help organize Neighborhood Watch programs in areas where there are substantial numbers of older citizens. Neighborhood Watch programs involve the establishment of a cooperative system of citizen surveillance over one another's homes and property, on either a block by block or neighborhood basis.

## Alarm for Life

The fire prevention device with the greatest potential for saving lives is a smoke alarm. The likelihood of dying in a fire is reduced significantly by using a smoke detector in the home. Through this innovative project, clubs install, at no charge, smoke alarms in the homes of needy families. Local churches, senior citizens councils and state and federal agencies can assist the club in determining the candidates for smoke detector installations. Then, Exchangites and fire department officials visit the homes and install the smoke alarms. In the process, families and their neighbors will have seen Exchange Club members and firefighters up close, friendly and concerned. Be sure to have the head of the household sign a receipt, which includes a release clearing your club of any liability.

Additional Crime and Fire Prevention projects are explained in a more thorough form in the *Crime Prevention Resource Guide* available from your National Headquarters.

## Law Enforcement Officer/Firefighter of the Year

This program is designed to honor men and women who serve as law enforcement officers or firefighters. It is most successful when done with the cooperation of local law enforcement agencies and the fire department. These resources can help you establish the criteria by which outstanding performance of duty or an especially kind or



helpful act is publicly recognized. Your club serves as the magnifying glass which enables the public to see a clearer view of what law enforcement and firefighting work is all about.

Selections should be made by a committee which not only includes Exchangites, but also high ranking civic and social leaders. When the selections are made, a detailed written explanation of the reasons as well as a biographical profile of the honorees should be distributed to the local news media. Every attempt should be made to publicize the selection and award presentations as widely as possible.

The award can be in the form of a gift (an engraved wrist watch, U.S. Savings Bond, etc.) and/or Law Enforcement Officer/Firefighter of the Year Award Medallions and Plaques, available from the National Headquarters Supply Department.

## Blue & Gold Wounded in Service Award

The purpose of the Exchange Blue & Gold Wounded in Service Award is to further enhance the public's level of respect, admiration, and appreciation for the severe sacrifices which law enforcement officers and firefighters frequently make in the line of duty.

# CRIME AND FIRE PREVENTION CONT.



It must be emphasized that although Exchange has historically conducted other recognitions designed to achieve a similar purpose, the Blue & Gold Award represents our highest tribute to the men and women of our police and firefighting forces. Because of this, the selection of Blue & Gold recipients must be conducted carefully by a very select and qualified committee. Clubs should judiciously monitor the selections to ensure that the award is not given out indiscriminately.

The qualifications for the Blue & Gold Award are simple, yet severe. A man or woman may be considered for the award if he or she is an official member in good standing of a certified law enforcement agency or fire department and is injured in the line of duty.

The Blue & Gold Award consists of a set of custom designed decorations which permit an officer to display the honor whether in uniform or in civilian dress. The centerpiece of the set is a handsome bronze medallion

attached to a blue and gold ribbon that permits the medal to be worn around the neck during special ceremonial occasions. In addition, the set also includes a military type service ribbon that can be worn on the officer's uniform during regular tours of duty. There is also a combination lapel pin/tie tac which can be worn with civilian dress.

The Award also includes a special certificate suitable for framing. Both the medal and certificate can be purchased from National Headquarters.

## Purpose

As the significant segment of older Americans in our society continues to grow, so will the need for programs which aid these citizens and enable them to lead full, productive lives. It is the responsibility of all Americans to ensure that seniors are able to enjoy an excellent quality of life.

Exchange Clubs, as part of their overall commitment to community service, should welcome the opportunity to reach out to older Americans, helping them remain in the mainstream of society and assisting them in meeting their special needs in whatever ways possible.

The following project suggestions will enable Exchange Clubs to make a lasting and important difference in the lives of their community's seniors. In addition to the activities listed, there is a wide variety of other projects that could be conducted. Clubs are encouraged to survey the needs of their community and then select those activities that will have the greatest impact on the areas of greatest need.

## Adopt-a-Grandparent

This outstanding and rewarding program, originated by the Exchange Club of Quincy, Ill., brings together energetic, enthusiastic youth and residents of nursing homes. Through the Adopt-a-Grandparent program, fifth through eighth grade students from local schools are given the opportunity to adopt a nursing home resident as a "grandparent." These young people build lasting friendships through monthly visits to the care facilities. In addition to the regular visits, the young people are encouraged to write

letters, make cards and send presents to their adopted grandparents. The seniors are encouraged to do likewise.

This program provides the seniors with a sense of purpose and belonging, and helps children to better understand the aging process while developing a sense of social responsibility and community awareness. Because of this, the program should be limited to fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth graders, who are better able to understand these concepts.



To get started, contact and explain the program to local school principals. Once the schools agree to participate, contact the directors of selected nursing homes or other care facilities to obtain their support and approval and determine which resi-

dents are best suited for the program.

Take a photograph of each "grandparent" and provide a brief biography. Before bringing the students and seniors together for the first time, the activities director and an Exchange Club representative should visit the participating classes to orient the students on the life-styles of their prospective "grandparents." Topics addressed should include: the aging process; physical condition of the seniors; and wheelchair operation.

The first meeting should be relaxed and informal, with the students and seniors chatting about likes and dislikes over a dish of ice cream or some other refreshment. The initial encounter is also an appropriate time for the participants to be presented with official adoption certificates by Exchange Club representatives. Official Adopt-a-Grandparent certificates are available from National Headquarters.

# SERVICE TO SENIORS CONT.



The subject and organization of subsequent meetings should be determined by the students, seniors, teachers and activities directors. Nature walks, games, sharing stories and photo albums and holiday parties are just a few of the many activities possible. Encourage the participation of the youths' parents in all activities.

While your Exchange Club will continue to play a supporting role, it is recommended that club members allow the seniors and students the freedom to maintain an ongoing relationship on their own. Club representatives should maintain contact with the schools and nursing homes, to offer any special assistance that may be necessary.

It is recommended that the Adopt-a-Grandparent program be conducted for at least one full school year with each group of students and seniors.

## The Golden Key Program

The Golden Key program is another worthwhile activity which brings together young and old for the benefit of both. The program utilizes the resources of concerned seniors to help address the problem of latchkey children, those children who must stay home alone after school until their parents return from work. Through the Golden Key program, volunteer seniors call the latchkey children each day to verify their safety and provide companionship.

To get started, your Exchange Club representatives should contact the local board of education to determine if there is a need for this service in the community. If so, club representatives should seek the board's approval and support, as well as that of the individual schools involved.

The next step is to recruit volunteer seniors. Local senior centers are a good source for volunteers. Your Exchange Club may want to hold an open meeting at a senior center, where members can explain the program and ask for volunteers. Your club may also publicize your volunteer recruitment

effort with news releases and public service announcements. The older persons who would like to participate in the program should be required to apply through the local board of education, which must carefully screen each applicant with the assistance of the police department.

At the same time, the participating schools announce the program to students' parents. Again, Exchange Club leaders could hold an open meeting to explain the program to interested parties. Parents interested in participating should then complete an application form for each child they would like to enroll in the program. Once completed, the application should be returned to the school.

When the Golden Key Pal is paired with a child, the child's name and telephone number, the parents' business phone numbers, the family physician's number and emergency procedures should be provided for the Pal, with instructions to call at designated times every school day to check on the child. If the child does not answer at the designated time, the Pal should continue to call for a specified time and then contact a parent to verify the child's safety. The child is furnished with the code name and phone number of the Golden Key Pal to call for companionship, conversation, or assistance.

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The child should know that if the Pal does not call at the prearranged time, he is to contact the Pal. If the Golden Key Pal does not answer, the child should call a parent. This ensures the well-being of the seniors, who in some cases have little contact outside their homes.

Club members should keep regular communication with the participating schools to make certain the program is running smoothly. Your Exchange Club may also choose to honor the participating seniors at a special club meeting or banquet.

## The Calling Card Program

This simple, effective program enables Exchange Club members to provide daily phone calls to older persons. In many cases, a brief phone call can make a world of difference to a solitary man or woman who feels neglected or forgotten. Even more importantly, the daily phone calls allow the Exchangite to regularly check on the seniors' health and safety.

The Calling Card program is easy to implement and keep going. The area office on aging, senior housing project directors, hospitals, and physicians specializing in treating older persons can all provide valuable assistance in locating suitable candidates for the project. Next, get in touch with those seniors to see if they would like to take advantage of your club's Calling Card program. Obtain the name, address, and phone number of each interested individual, and if possible, the name and phone number of a neighbor who can be reached, if necessary.

The next step is to assign one or more of the seniors to each Exchangite who is able to participate. Then give each Exchangite a Calling Card — an index card with the name, address, and phone number of the person they'll be calling.

Once the callers and seniors have been matched up, the members should call, introduce themselves, and determine

a practical daily time to call. It's also a good idea to find out a little more about the seniors at that time, such as if they have any significant medical problems.

After all the preliminaries have been handled, the Exchangite simply calls the senior each day at the designated time.

The daily conversations can be brief and to the point, but if time permits, the member should try to spend some time getting to know the senior and finding areas of common interest.

If the senior does not answer when called, the Exchangite should wait five minutes and try again. If there is still no answer, the designated neighbor should be called and asked to walk over and make sure the senior is all right.

Once the Calling Card program is in place, it should continue for as long as possible. Since it requires only minutes a day on the part of each Exchangite, it can and should be a year-round affair. An Exchange Club can take the Calling Card program one step further by presenting the seniors with food baskets or other appropriate gifts at various times of the year, such as Christmas, Easter, or Senior Citizens Month, observed each May.



# SERVICE TO SENIORS CONT.

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## Senior Citizen of the Year Award

Many older Americans are still vital, contributing members of society, who deserve to be properly recognized for their achievements. A special award of some kind, presented to a senior who has performed an outstanding service to the community or excelled in some way, can serve to not only honor and reward that individual, but also to heighten community awareness and appreciation of the many important contributions of older citizens.

For example, your Exchange Club may choose to annually present a Senior Citizen of the Year Award to an older person who continues to serve your community in some significant way. Clubs are encouraged to develop their own criteria for the award on the local level. Suitable candidates for such an award can be found by contacting nursing homes, senior centers, churches, social service agencies, and similar organizations. Numerous plaques suitable for this type of award are available from National Headquarters.

## Nursing Home Visits and Assistance

Many residents of nursing care facilities are often forgotten except at holidays, but they need friendly visitors and special assistance all year long. Besides the Adopt-a-Grandparent program already described, Exchange Clubs can arrange for members to periodically visit the residents, sponsor parties and other special activities or donate needed equipment or supplies to local senior centers or nursing homes. Some suggested donations include: large print books and magazines; hearing aids and dentures; old eyeglass frames (to be recycled); Bingo prizes; and craft supplies.

Clubs may also wish to plan an outing for nursing home residents. Many times, such an event can be a pleasant change of pace from the seniors' daily routines.

The speakers featured at your Exchange Club meetings could also make excellent speakers at nursing homes and senior centers. At the end of your regular meeting, invite the speaker to appear at a senior citizens' gathering, offering to make all the necessary arrangements.

Check with local nursing care facilities to determine how your Exchange Club can best help.

## Purpose

As America's population continues to age, the importance of the Vial of Life project becomes more evident. It simply involves distributing plastic vials such as those that carry prescription medicine, but with a significant difference. These vials each contain a medical information sheet and are placed inside the refrigerator. A "Vial of Life" sticker is affixed on the front door or front window of the home so that when emergency personnel arrive, they see the sticker and know that important information concerning the individual's medical condition, prescriptions and allergies can be found in the refrigerator.

### **When the vials are given out, simple instructions are included:**

1. Fill out all questions on the medical information sheet.
2. Fold and place information sheet inside the vial.
3. Write the appropriate name on the outside label of each vial.
4. Place the vial on the top shelf of the refrigerator door.
5. Place the sticker on the front door or a front window of the house.

The Vial of Life is also a great way to inform emergency personnel if you are involved in an automobile accident. Simply place the vial in your glove compartment and place the decal in the lower drivers side of the windshield.

If that person suffers a medical emergency and an ambulance is called, the responding medical team will see the sticker and read the important medical information in the vial, which could help save a life when every second counts.

While the Vial of Life project is targeted at senior citizens, it can be helpful for anyone with special medical needs. In many cases, local hospitals, police and fire departments, and senior citizen centers can help distribute the vials.

It is important to educate your local medical emergency personnel of this program. Provide a sample of the Vial

of Life to your local police, fire, and medical services so they are aware of the information contained in this important vial and watch for the Vial of Life sticker when responding to emergencies.

Consider placing an ad in your local newspaper to publicize the event. Also, working with local fire and police stations can be a good way to get free publicity. Involving your local senior center is another great way to involve the community and gain media attention.

If you have any questions about the Vial of Life program please contact your National Headquarters at 800-XCHANGE or e-mail [info@nationalexchangeclub.org](mailto:info@nationalexchangeclub.org).

# BOOK OF GOLDEN DEEDS AWARD

## Purpose

Volunteer efforts are very important to our society and should not go unnoticed. The National Exchange Club's longest running project, the Book of Golden Deeds Award, recognizes dedicated volunteers who give endless hours of their time and talents toward making their communities better places to live. Ever since the Exchange Club of Huntington, Ind., sponsored the first award in 1919, thousands of unsung heroes and heroines have been recognized.

Honoring a fellow citizen with the Book of Golden Deeds Award is a heartwarming and inspiring act not only for the honoree, but for any Exchange Club. The Book of Golden Deeds Award exemplifies The National Exchange Club's beliefs.

This project is easy to implement and is an excellent means to promote your club within your community. In

fact, many Exchange Clubs have adopted this project as one of their most important annual events. The Book of Golden Deeds Award benefits your club, the honoree and the community by promoting and rewarding community service efforts.

## Obtaining Nominations

Finding and screening nominees can be accomplished in a variety of ways. In most cases, the committee drafts a nomination letter which asks for the names of those who have made significant contributions in the true sense of volunteering (see sample letter). Distribute the letters to local civic associations, churches, boards of education, fraternal and humanitarian groups, local radio and television stations, newspapers, health and welfare organizations, service clubs, veterans' organizations, hospital boards, physicians, medical associations, bar associations and

## SAMPLE NOMINATION LETTER

Dear: \_\_\_\_\_

The Exchange Club of \_\_\_\_\_ is looking for a Book of Golden Deeds Award recipient. We would like for your organization to nominate someone in the community who exemplifies volunteerism.

The Book of Golden Deeds Award is an Exchange Club program that honors a worthy person or group which continuously donates time, talent and energy to help those in need. Many times, fine citizens of our community do numerous good deeds which go unnoticed. The Exchange Club of \_\_\_\_\_ would like to publicly recognize these generous people.

In selecting your candidate, please keep in mind that the only criterion for receiving the award is that the nominee must have made significant contributions to the community. Please send your nominee's name, address and your reasons for making the selection to the above address prior to \_\_\_\_\_.

The recipient of the Book of Golden Deeds Award will be presented a special plaque to commemorate the occasion. His or her name, photograph and description of achievements will be placed in the Exchange Club's Book of Golden Deeds, and a news release will be sent to the local media.

We thank you for your cooperation. Please be assured that your candidate will receive every consideration in the final selection.

Best Regards,

President  
The Exchange Club of \_\_\_\_\_

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public officials. Request that a local newspaper insert an advertisement with a nomination form in the community section of the paper. This gives everyone an opportunity to participate. It will also provide positive public relations for your Exchange Club.

After the Book of Golden Deeds Award Committee has selected the winner, be sure to follow-up with a thank you letter to those groups and individuals that submitted candidates. It is also a kind gesture to invite them to the award presentation for community fellowship.

### Selecting the Recipient

When searching for the appropriate volunteer to honor, keep in mind that it is important to choose a person who is sincere about helping the community, has an exceptional track record of continued, unselfish giving and enjoys volunteering to help others. The recipient can be from any profession or a member of any organization, including Exchange. He or she can be from any walk of life, and should be someone who deserves acclaim, but rarely receives it.

The Book of Golden Deeds Award is not limited to a single volunteer, but can also be presented to a group of individuals such as civic groups, sororities/fraternities, religious groups and charitable organizations.

### Presenting the Award

Many clubs choose to organize an annual Book of Golden Deeds Award banquet which becomes a social event within the community.

When planning for this type of event, be sure to invite local dignitaries, past Book of Golden Deeds Award recipients and other Exchange Club leaders. It is also a good idea to send news releases to the local media in an effort to generate positive public relations for your club (see the *Public Relations Resource*, available from your National Headquarters).

The banquet can be as elaborate or as simple as your club chooses, but successful results will be achieved if the banquet is held in a private dining room setting with lunch or dinner available. It should be organized to include as many members of the community as possible.

The focus of the banquet is to present the Book of Golden Deeds Award to the recipient, but it is always a



nice gesture to ask a local dignitary to provide some brief remarks about the importance of volunteerism in the community. As a part of the presentation, a club member should introduce the recipient, giving some background on his or her accomplishments. It is also a good idea to explain the purpose of the award.

Your National Headquarters has a variety of supply items to choose from when presenting the Book of Golden Deeds Award. For more information on these items, contact the Supply Department at 800-924-2643 or refer to your Supply Catalog or visit our website at: [www.nationalexchangeclub.org](http://www.nationalexchangeclub.org)

# OTHER IDEAS

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## Sunshine Special

The Sunshine Special is a heartwarming event which focuses on children, especially the fostered, underprivileged or disabled. It can be an annual event held any day that is most convenient, and as many times during the year as the individual club desires. What's important is that the event be carefully planned and effectively implemented so that its purpose — to bring happiness to children — is successfully achieved.

Each club should imaginatively utilize the resources available to organize the event. Your club may decide to seek the cooperation and endorsement of other organizations or business groups in the community.

First, organize a committee. Be sure to cover all important areas of event-planning including: finance, publicity, invitations, transportation and refreshments. Second, decide the time and place for the event. Finally, conduct the event, and have fun!

## Sunset Special

A variation of the Sunshine Special is the Sunset Special which consists of an outing for elderly people.

Your club may provide refreshments and an opportunity for fellowship for the participants.

## Environmental Awareness

Exchange Clubs across the country have focused their efforts on preserving our environment. Basic recycling programs, Adopt-A-Highway, park clean-ups and tree planting are a few suggestions. Contact your local chamber of commerce to determine the specific needs of your community.

Within your own club, however, efforts can be made to improve the environment. For example, assign a member to act as the "recycler." He or she can pick up remaining papers from meetings including ballots, agendas, newsletters and announcements. These papers can either be reused at the next meeting, or disposed of in a clean paper recycling bin. Another suggestion: conserve paper. Get in the habit of printing on both sides of the paper. Post general announcements on a community board.

Make telephone calls instead of writing a note to remind your members of upcoming meetings and activities.

## Family Days

Exchange's Family Days program helps to heighten the respect for the concept of family as well as foster a greater appreciation of family living among our citizens. It is a special gathering to which all club members and their families are invited. Attendance is not limited to immediate family members. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and cousins should also be invited.

The event can include entertainment and special competitive events designed to allow entire families to work together for a common cause. Family Days can also become an inter-club event involving several Exchange Clubs within the community or geographical area.

## Sponsor a Youth Sports Team

By sponsoring a youth sports team you are providing an opportunity for more children to participate in youth sports by keeping the cost of such programs low. You are also encouraging children in your community to be healthy, active and stay out of trouble. Many times your club name and/or logo will be imprinted on the team uniforms. Your donation will go toward the purchase of t-shirts/uniforms, caps, and awards for the team at the end of the season. Your club could even receive a commemorative team photo to display at your club meeting place.



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## Helping Homeless Shelters/Soup Kitchens

There is always work to be done to help the less fortunate. Exchangites can volunteer their time renovating and doing general cleanup of shelters and other such service buildings. Your club can hold a food drive for nonperishable food donations. Collections can also be held for toys, winter clothes, personal items, etc., that can then be donated to a needy shelter. Contact your local shelter or soup kitchen to find out what services and goods are most needed.

## Home Safety Check Program

Exchange Clubs, working independently or with a local social service agency, can visit the homes or apartments of older residents and check for potential safety hazards, making necessary repairs at no charge to the seniors. Areas to be checked include electrical wiring, lighting, fireplaces, space heaters, smoke detectors, locks, handrails, stairs, medication expiration dates and others.

Club members could also assist seniors by installing items such as wheelchair ramps and easy-to-operate door handles and sink faucets, which enable older residents to maintain their independence longer.

## Meals on Wheels

The Meals on Wheels program takes food to seniors who are unable to leave their homes. It provides both nutritional meals and a friendly face to a lonely senior. Be a driver, or donate funds. For more information, contact your local meals on wheels organization.

## Pet Therapy

The Pet Therapy project is a great project for brightening the day of nursing home residents who may not get much company. Set up a visit with your local nursing home and simply take your pets along for the residents to enjoy. It offers them some great company and a cuddly, affectionate cat, dog or other friendly animal to pet.

## Habitat for Humanity

Contact the local Habitat chapter in your area, to help build simple, decent, affordable houses for those who lack adequate shelter. If you're not sure where a local Habitat chapter might be contact the Habitat Help Line at 800-422-4828, Ext. 2551 or 2552. Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit nondenominational christian housing ministry. Homeowners are selected based on their need for housing, their ability to repay their mortgage and their willingness to work in partnership with Habitat. Houses are sold through a no-profit mortgage. The soon to be homeowners and volunteers build the houses themselves, under trained supervision.

## City Beautification

Organize a city beautification project in your community to make it more enjoyable and safe for the children and adults. A clean and beautiful city makes good business sense and results in a healthy economy. It attracts highly skilled workers and investment, and enables us to live, work and play in well maintained, safe and pleasant surroundings. There are several ways to do this such as planting trees and flowers, planting a community garden in a vacant lot or making it into a playground. Contact your city officials to see where help is needed.

## Blood Drive

Setting up a blood drive is easy. Contact your local Red Cross and work with their representative to find a suitable location. The committee for this event will need to recruit donors within the organization and schedule them for their appointments. The club should also work with the Red Cross to publicize the drive.

## Adopt-A-highway

The Adopt-A-Highway program provides an opportunity for your company or organization to be recognized for sponsoring the clean up of a section of highway. Often times bags and gloves are provided and the city will pick up the full bags. Benefits of the program include recognition from thousands of people driving by your sign every day and an everlasting, positive impression on the community. Contact your local department of transportation for more information.

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# The National Exchange Club Mission Statement

Exchange, America's Service Club, is a group of men and women working together to make our communities better places to live through programs of service in Americanism, Community Service, Youth Activities, and its national project, the Prevention of Child Abuse.

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**EXCHANGE**

THE NATIONAL EXCHANGE CLUB

3050 Central Avenue

Toledo, OH 43606

419-535-3232 800-XCHANGE

Fax: 419-535-1989

[info@nationalexchangeclub.org](mailto:info@nationalexchangeclub.org)

[www.nationalexchangeclub.org](http://www.nationalexchangeclub.org)