

# National Wreaths Across America Day

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2024



## 2024 Media Guide

Remember



Honor



Teach



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# Introduction



This document will familiarize you with the national nonprofit Wreaths Across America and its effort to honor our nation’s interred heroes while bringing attention to our yearlong mission to **Remember** the fallen, **Honor** those who serve, and **Teach** the next generation the value of freedom.

We are sending you this media guide in hopes that you will find it helpful in your research as you develop your stories for Wreaths Across America Day 2024. In it, you will find the following:

- WAA History
- 2024 Achievements and News
- Pictures, Videos, Web, and Social Links
- Donation/Sponsorship Information

As part of our introduction, we’ve provided a [digital media page](#) containing all the necessary information and materials.

For those familiar with our organization, first, thank you for all you have done to help share the mission. I also want to remind you that National Wreaths Across America Day will occur on **Saturday, December 14, 2024.**

## HQ Press Contacts:

Amber Caron  
Director of Communications  
[acaron@wreathsacrossamerica.org](mailto:acaron@wreathsacrossamerica.org); (207) 513-6457 M

Rachael Wilson  
Public Relations Coordinator  
[rwilson@wreathsacrossamerica.org](mailto:rwilson@wreathsacrossamerica.org); (207) 230-4599 M

# A Letter from Karen Worcester

*Wreaths Across America's Executive Director and Organization Cofounder*



Dear Media Professional,

Thank you for opening (and reading) this media guide. We hope you find this document helpful and informative as we work to fulfill our mission to **Remember, Honor, Teach** about our nation's veterans, service members, and their families in 2024.

We look forward to helping you build great media stories that inspire and unify a nation by highlighting stories of service and community.

By caring enough to read the information in this document, you are "serving and succeeding" in your community by serving our Gold Star families and passing along our message of thanks for their service and sacrifice for our freedom.

2024 is the 18<sup>th</sup> year Wreaths Across America the nonprofit has existed, and in that time, it has grown to include more than 4,700 participating locations and more than 7,000 sponsorship groups nationwide. From 1992 to 2006, my family placed 5,000 veterans' wreaths at Arlington National Cemetery as our personal thank you to all those who enabled us to be free. We hope you will join us in volunteering and sharing the message as we endeavor to unite people in solidarity as we place sponsored veterans' wreaths to honor our interred heroes across America.

Your media support is welcome and needed as our volunteers work towards local, state and national goals for wreath sponsorship and placement. Thank you for reading this message and showing interest in helping us in our mission to **Remember** the fallen, **Honor** those who serve, and **Teach** the next generation the value of freedom.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Worcester".

**Karen Worcester**

# WAA Mission



Our yearlong mission to **Remember, Honor, Teach** is carried out, in part, by coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery, veterans' cemeteries, and other locations in all 50 states and beyond. Although people may be most familiar with National Wreaths Across America Day, the organization's mission lasts far beyond one day in December.

## **“Remember” the fallen.**

When a volunteer places a wreath on a servicemember's grave on National Wreaths Across America Day, we encourage them to speak that person's name aloud, thank them for their service and sacrifice, and reflect on their life along with our wreath-laying ceremonies. WAA also holds special memorial ceremonies at all cemeteries throughout the country.

On the tip-lands in Maine, where the tips of balsam fir trees are harvested to become veterans' wreaths, replica dog tags representing thousands of veterans create a living memorial of fallen veterans giving back to other fallen veterans.

Learn more at: <https://wreathscrossamerica.org/About/RemembranceTree>

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## **“Honor” those who serve.**

The WAA team participates in veteran-centric events throughout the country throughout the year. Our veteran outreach efforts include partnerships with Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) working to support living veterans and their families nationwide. Our website offers information and access to support, and we host open discussions about important topics impacting this community via our own channels.

Learn more at:  
<https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/Resources/ResourcesForVeteransAndMilitaryFamilies>

**Wreaths Across America Radio**, a Voice for America’s Veterans, is a 24/7 Internet stream on iHeart Radio, Audacy and the TuneIn apps. Its unique format provides informational and inspiring content about members of the U.S. armed forces, their families, military veterans, and volunteers throughout the country and overseas who support the mission to Remember, Honor, Teach.

Learn more at: [www.wreathscrossamerica.org/radio](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/radio)

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### “Teach” the next generation the value of freedom.

Wreaths Across America is committed to teaching younger generations about the value of their freedoms and the importance of honoring those who sacrificed to protect them. Through our **TEACH Program**, WAA offers free, downloadable lesson plans and service-based learning for youth of all ages.

Learn more at: <https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/Resources/EducationalResources>

Visit the **National Museum** and **Gold Star Family History & Hospitality House** at the National Wreaths Across America Headquarters in Columbia Falls, Maine. These exhibits allow guests to learn more about the mission while experiencing the many stories of service, sacrifice and success shared with the program over the last 17 years.

Learn more at:

<https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/About/NationalWreathsAcrossAmericaMuseum>

Our **Mobile Education Exhibit** allows us to unite the local community, veterans, active-duty military personnel, and their families through interactive exhibits, short films, and shared stories. The exhibit is a mobile museum that educates visitors about the yearlong mission and our nation’s heroes.

Learn more at: <https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/About/MobileEducationExhibit>



# WAA History Timeline

- ★ **1992:** The first wreaths (5,000) were donated, and a tradition started by Maine wreath-maker Morrill Worcester, owner of Worcester Wreath Co., as a gift of thanks. He and his family quietly continued this tradition for 15 years.
- ★ **2005:** An iconic photo of wreaths in the snow became a viral sensation.
- ★ **2007:** Wreaths Across America formed as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.
- ★ **Since 2008,** Congress annually proclaims a Saturday in December as National Wreaths Across America Day.
- ★ **2012:** Millionth wreath placed at Arlington National Cemetery.
- ★ **2014:** Every headstone at Arlington National Cemetery received a sponsored veteran's wreath for the first time.
- ★ **2016:** 25th year that veterans' wreaths were placed at Arlington National Cemetery.
- ★ **2018:** Mission advances overseas with the first placement of 9,387 veterans' wreaths at Normandy-American Cemetery in France.
- ★ **2021:** Marked the 30th year veterans' wreaths were placed at Arlington National Cemetery.
- ★ **2022:** 2.7 million wreaths were placed at over 3,700 locations nationwide and abroad.

## 2023 Recap

- ★ Three million sponsored wreaths were placed nationwide.
- ★ More than three million volunteers participated at 4,224 participating locations nationwide. More than a third of the volunteers were children.
- ★ At Arlington National Cemetery, 68 tractor-trailers delivered 259,000 veterans' wreaths, which more than 30,000 volunteers placed.
- ★ 675 loads of wreaths were delivered across the country by over 332 transportation companies.

## 2024 Theme: Live with Purpose

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‘Live with Purpose’ draws inspiration from the remarkable stories of these volunteers whose impactful work in their communities is a beacon of inspiration for all. “Over the course of the last year, and then especially on the escort to Arlington last December, I listened to people who had gone through great adversity, and they’d taken that adversity and turned it around as a call to action to spend the rest of their lives making sure that every day was meaningful and that they lived with purpose,” said executive director Karen Worcester. “For me, living with purpose is a mindset.”

## WAA Sponsorship Information

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Each \$17 sponsorship supports WAA’s yearlong program and places a live balsam veteran’s wreath on the headstone of an American hero. We endeavor to honor all veterans laid to rest on Saturday, December 14, 2024, as part of National Wreaths Across America Day.

“Every sponsorship is a meaningful gift from a grateful American who knows what it means to serve and sacrifice for the freedoms we all enjoy,” said Karen Worcester, executive director of Wreaths Across America. “We are so grateful to the good people of this great nation for participating in our mission to Remember, Honor, Teach.”

**To make a sponsorship or donation online, visit [www.wreathscrossamerica.org](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org).**

**To find a participating Location or Group near you to support, [click here](#).**

**To learn more about volunteering to place wreaths, [click here](#).**





## Upcoming Wreaths Across America Calendar

Please note that times, dates, and routes are subject to change and may vary by local area. To confirm your media participation, please get in touch with [pr@wreathscrossamerica.org](mailto:pr@wreathscrossamerica.org) for information on groups in your area and to connect with local volunteers.

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- ★ **November 11** Veterans Day
  - ★ **November 29** Black Friday
  - ★ **November 30** Small Business Saturday

- ★ **December 1** Cyber Monday
- ★ **December 3** Giving Tuesday

- ★ **December 7** **The Escort to Arlington begins!**

*We will post [updates here](#) with the full schedule of events for this weeklong convoy traveling from Maine to Arlington, Va.*

- ★ **December 14** **NATIONAL WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY!**

# 2024 WAA News Stories



WAA is committed to the mission to Remember, Honor and Teach year-round. These are just some of the stories on the national stage this past year.

## Wreaths Across America Announces New TEACH Partnership Agreement with the Korean War Legacy Foundation

National nonprofit Wreaths Across America proudly announced its new TEACH partnership agreement with the Korean War Legacy Foundation (KWLF) in 2024. Through this new partnership, both organizations will create engaging and relevant content designed to educate and inspire students with a curriculum that encourages character development, civic responsibility, respect, and honor.

With the help of the KWLF and other partners, WAA will provide abundant free lesson plans, resources, and activities [on its website](#) that teach history, honesty, integrity, gratitude and patriotism. WAA launched the standards-based K-12 curriculum in 2022, offering free lesson plans and student activities encouraging community service. All WAA lesson plans are original content developed by award-winning educator and American Gold Star Mother Cindy Tatum.

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## Wreaths Across America Invites Community Throughout the Country to Wave Their Flags on Tuesday, September 10

Wreaths Across America has invited citizens across the country to join in waving their flags on Tuesday, September 10, 2024, between 9-10 am EST in remembrance of those lost on 9/11/01. In addition to local efforts, a national event was hosted LIVE on WAA's [official Facebook page](#) and broadcast over [Wreaths Across America Radio](#).

Every Tuesday morning from 9-10 am EST, WAA volunteers raise the American flag from the Freeport Flag Ladies Monument on Route 1 in Jonesboro, Maine. The monument was built by WAA in partnership with its cofounder, Morrill Worcester, in September 2019 in honor of the [Freeport Flag Ladies](#), who retired after 18 years of waving the American Flag in Freeport, Maine, each Tuesday since September 11, 2001.

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## **Wreaths Across America Seeking Carriers to Help Move the Mission This December**

National nonprofit Wreaths Across America (WAA) kicked off the 2024 wreath season and already has more than 20 new loads that will need carriers' support to deliver this December. WAA is seeking carriers and professional drivers to join the mission to Remember, Honor, Teach. As the program continues to grow, with over 4,700 participating locations nationwide this year, several opportunities exist to find the perfect lane and make a meaningful impact.

To learn more or find an open load, please [click here](#).

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## **WAA Mobile Education Exhibit National Tour**

Wreaths Across America (WAA) proudly announced early in 2024 that its Mobile Education Exhibit (MEE) will travel the country. The WAA MEE mission is to bring veterans, the military, and the community together to teach patriotism while remembering the service and sacrifice of our nation's heroes.

In 2024, the MEE visited and other notable veterans' events in NC, SC, GA, FL, AL, TN, OH, IA, IL, ME, NY, VA. For the remainder of 2024, the MEE will be traveling to DC, DE, and GA before joining the "Escort to Arlington" in December to help deliver veterans' wreaths as part of National Wreaths Across America Day on Saturday, December 14, 2024.



**The Escort to Arlington**

The Wreaths Across America annual “Escort to Arlington” is what many people consider the country’s longest veterans’ parade. This 12-truck convoy begins at the organization’s headquarters in Columbia Falls, Maine, the week before Wreaths Across America Day.

As the convoy travels to Arlington National Cemetery to deliver veterans’ wreaths to our nation’s interred veterans, it is accompanied by Chevrolet vehicles, the Wreaths Across America Mobile Education Exhibit, local first responders, and supporters as they make their way down the East Coast.

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**Wreaths Across America Radio**

Wreaths Across America Radio announced a series of live broadcasts focused on milestones and important events to the veteran community. These live broadcasts have become essential to Wreaths Across America Radio for sharing stories of resilience, purpose and success.

In addition, Wreaths Across America Radio has announced partnerships with many other veteran-oriented radio programming and podcasts to give our audience a true veteran’s perspective.

**For a complete list of programming and to tune in to Wreaths Across America Radio, please visit [www.wreathscrossamerica.org/radio](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/radio). The station can also be heard on the iHeartRadio, Audacy, and TuneIn apps.**

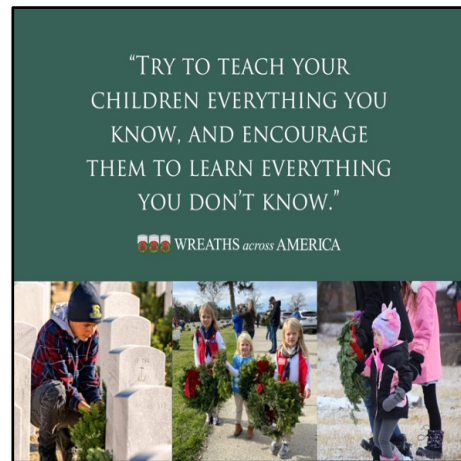
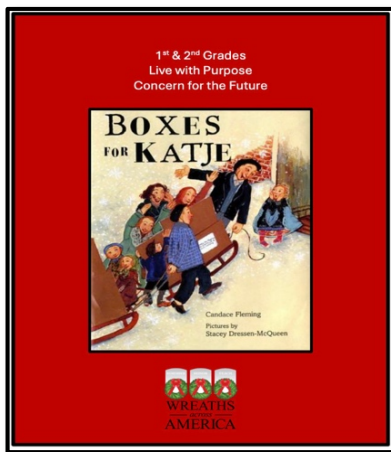
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## Partnerships

This year, we have been incredibly fortunate to work with some of the most enthusiastic, supportive, and generous organizations. Wreaths Across America signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the [Military Order of the World Wars](#) in April.

The TEACH Program expanded its Teach Partnership Agreements to include the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) and the Korean War Legacy Foundation. It held a four-part webinar series with the Library of Congress Veterans History Project!

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## Wreaths Across America Teach Curriculum

WAA hit a major milestone in 2024 of more than 25,000 FREE educational materials and curriculums downloaded by professional educators! The team has added over 80 new lesson plans this year.

Learn more: <https://www.wreathsassamerica.org/Resources/EducationalResources>

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### **WAA “Stem to Stone” Road Races**

Wreaths Across America held its 5th Annual Stem to Stone Race in July 2024. This program included both live and virtual races for participation across the country. The races were highly successful this year, and we want to take a moment to thank everyone who took part!

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### **National Wreaths Across America Day!**

National Wreaths Across America Day is an event held every December. During this day, millions of volunteers unite to place sponsored veterans’ wreaths at the final resting place of millions of service members in thousands of participating locations across the U.S. and abroad. These wreaths are delivered through the generosity of hundreds of volunteer truck drivers and their companies and are sponsored by individuals and businesses. This year, National Wreaths Across America Day will be held on Saturday, December 14, 2024.

**Learn more:** <https://wreathscrossamerica.org>

# WAA Quick Reference Guide



## **Wreaths Across America National Headquarters**

4 Point St.

Columbia Falls, Maine 04623

Phone: (877) 385-9504

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

[Media Resources Page for Pictures and Video](#)

[Wreaths Across America News Stories](#)

[Wreaths Across America Official Facebook Page](#)

[Wreaths Across America YouTube Channel](#)

[Sign Up for the Monthly Newsletter](#)

[Wreaths Across America Mobile Education Exhibit](#)

[Wreaths Across America Remembrance Tree Program](#)

[Wreaths Across America Radio](#)

# WAA Leadership

*An advisory board of volunteers governs Wreaths Across America.  
(Non-voting) Volunteer Executive Director Karen Worcester manages day-to-day operations.*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Wayne Hanson** — Chairman, Vietnam veteran, Maine State Society

**Michael Edgecomb** — Vice Chairman,  
Veteran

**David “Mel” Russen, Jr.** — Treasurer,  
Veteran

**Renee Saunders Worcester** — Secretary

**Debbie Ruane Sparks** — Executive Director,  
National Motor Freight Traffic Association

**Lorna Harris** — Gold Star Mother

**Randy Lewer** — Veteran, Location  
Coordinator

**Pamela W. Slaven-Lee** — DNP, FNP-C

**Patrick Simmons** — Veteran, VP of Tyson  
Foods

**Col. Dan LeClair (ret)** — Civil Air Patrol

**Kevin Haley** — Law Enforcement, Gold Star  
Brother

**Daniel Patrick Mead** — Veteran, Location  
Coordinator

**Nathan Lewis** — Logistics, Tyson Foods

**Chaplain Karen Diefendorf** — Veteran

**Col. Ron Sailor (ret)** — Veteran

**Jenny Lovering** — Logistics, Walmart

**Graig Morin** — President, Brown Dog  
Transportation

**Sarah J. Worcester**

## ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

**Scott DeMasi** — Location Coordinator, Houston National Cemetery

**Michael Calenda** — Ponaganset Middle School

**Duane Belanger** — Knights of Columbus

**Remember**



**Honor**



**Teach**