

## Salute to Veterans



**Toy Soldier** Purchase inexpensive plastic toy soldiers. Let each resident choose one. Have them place the soldier in a visible spot in their room to remind them to say a prayer or thank a soldier every time they see it.

**Flag-Raising Ceremony** Does your community raise the flag every day? Weather permitting, outdoor flag-raising ceremonies permit residents to participate in an activity that normally takes place without notice. Such a ceremony, although brief, could include the Pledge of Allegiance and the singing of the National Anthem.



**Moment of Silence, Taps** While Veterans Day is primarily a tribute to America's living veterans, and should be observed more as a celebration than as a somber remembrance, it is always appropriate to include a moment of respect for those who gave their lives for their country. Although 11 a.m. remains a traditional hour for this type of tribute, a moment of silence is appropriate at any point in the program. This may be followed by a rendition of "Taps."



**Veterans Day Puzzles** Check your local thrift shop or toy store for inexpensive jigsaw puzzles featuring patriotic themes. Set up a puzzle table for residents and guests to put puzzles together.





**Veterans Day Parade** Many towns and cities hold Veterans Day events such as rallies and parades. Make arrangements for your residents to attend the parade, or better yet put together a float for your Vets to ride on.

**Veterans Wall** Create a Veterans wall using large sheets of paper. Write the name of a war on each one. Invite your residents and staff to add names of family members and friends who are veterans of the wars. Be sure they include themselves, parents, grandparents, children, and grandchildren.



**Letters to the Troops** Many men and women in the military never receive letters from home. Your residents can help boost the morale of US troops by sending letters of thanks and support. [A Million Thanks, Any Soldier](#)

**Tomb of the Unknown Soldier** The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier refers to a grave in which the remains of an unidentified soldier are interred. The tomb is dedicated to the common memories of all soldiers killed in war. Learn more about the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington Cemetery [Tomb Guard](#). Watch a short video of the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier [Changing of the Guard](#)



**Gratitude Campaign** Watch a short video and learn the sign for thank you. For Veterans Day have your resident veterans wear something special that identifies them as a Veteran. This will give other residents, staff, and visitors a chance to say thank you.

**Fold the Flag** To honor the Stars and Stripes, there are strict instructions on how the flag should be folded. Invite one of your residents or a special guest to teach your community how to properly fold the American flag. [Flag Folding](#)



**Essay/Poster Contest** Hold a Veterans Day essay contest for local students. Have students write essays honoring American veterans. Hold a special assembly and invite the students to read their essays aloud to your residents. You may also have students create posters thanking veterans. Recognize the writers and artists with special certificates signed by your veterans.



**Musical Program** Veterans Day is the perfect opportunity for a local musical group to perform patriotic songs for your residents. Another idea is to have groups perform songs that were popular during particular wars.



**Alert the Newspapers** Elicit war stories from your veterans. Invite the local newspaper to visit your community to interview and photograph your heroes.

**Screen a Movie** There are plenty of war movies, some more violent than others. Carefully select one or more to screen for your staff and residents on Veterans Day.



**Expert Speaker** Arrange for one or more of your residents to visit a local school, boy or girl scout troop, or club to speak about their

experiences during the war.

**War Stories** Partner with a high school class and invite the students to come and interview your residents about their experiences during the wars. Non-veterans can share their stories about what life was like at home in the US during the war. Some of your residents might have been residents of other countries during the war. Encourage the students to create a book or power point presentation of these fascinating true stories.



**Flanders Field and Poppies** One symbol of Veterans Day and Remembrance Day is the red poppy. The flower became a symbol as a result of John McRae's famous poem that describes a World War I military cemetery in Belgium covered with poppies. Read the poem [In Flanders Field](#). Decorate with crepe paper poppies [Poppies](#).



**Origami Peace Cranes** Asian legend states that when 1000 origami cranes are folded, a wish can be granted. Origami cranes have become a symbol of peace. Make it a goal for your community to complete 1000 Origami Cranes for Peace. Follow these simple instructions for [Origami cranes](#).

