

HOMETOWN HEROES: THE "HOW-TO" PROCESS

1) Establish the Basics

- A. What size will the banners be?
 - I. Most common sizes are 24x48" and 30x60"
 - a. Is there existing hardware to match?
 - II. Widths must conform to 18", 24", 30", or 36". Height is entirely customizable.
- B. Who is allowed to be on the banners?
 - I. Residents and former residents only? No limitations?
- C. What's the deadline?
 - I. Most towns create these banners for Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies.
 - II. The deadline for resident submissions should be at least 6-8 weeks before the planned event, with an UNADVERTISED 2-week extension for late submissions.
- D. Who will be paying for the banners and brackets?
 - I. Residents typically pay for the banners, while towns usually pay for the hardware.
 - II. At-cost for residents, or fundraising for town?

2) Create a Design

- A. Work with our graphic designers to pick or create a banner design.
 - I. Colors, theme, town seal/logo, wording, etc.
- B. Solidify what Hero information will be printed on the banner.
 - I. Typically, we recommend:
 - a. Hero's name
 - b. Photo (ideally in uniform)
 - c. Branch(es) of military served in
 - d. War/Era served
 - e. Dates of service (i.e., Sept. 1942 - Nov. 1945)
 - f. Sponsor's name
 - II. Display prestigious medals earned (Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Silver Star, etc.).
 - III. Veterans who were KIA, POWs, or declared MIA should be distinguished with special graphics.



**SCAN TO SEE
EXAMPLES OF
PRESTIGIOUS
MEDALS**



3) Promote!

- A. Spread the word to your residents via social media and local newspapers.
- B. Create a link to the printable submission form on your town's website.
 - I. Our team will provide you with a customized form that includes a banner mock-up.

4) Receive Applications and Payment

- A. Plan to accept both emailed and/or hard copy forms and photos from residents.
 - I. Create a plan to return any original hard copy photos and paperwork, if received.
 - II. We HIGHLY recommend requesting a copy of the Hero's DD-214 (discharge papers). This will ensure all information on the submission form is accurate and factual.
 - III. All payments should be sent and made out to the municipality. PLEASE DO NOT HAVE SPONSORS SEND PAYMENTS OR MAKE OUT CHECKS TO GATES FLAG.

5) Submit Applications to Our Team

- A. Submit all Hero applications in one batch after announced deadline; late submissions can be sent to us as they come in.
 - I. The best way to send applications to our team is via a file sharing service (Dropbox or WeTransfer preferred).
 - a. SCAN ALL PHOTOS AT 600dpi.
 - b. File names should include the Hero's name (i.e. "John Smith - DD-214", "John Smith - Photo", "John Smith - Form").
 - i. It is best to make individual folders for each Hero.
 - ii. An additional multi-page file with ALL forms and DD-214s in alphabetical order is not required, but is GREATLY appreciated!
 - c. PDF, JPG, and PNG files are preferred.

6) Artwork and Production

- A. Our graphic designers will get to work on your banners! They will:
 - I. Photoshop EVERY veteran image to the best of their abilities (fixing discoloration, rips and tears, water damage, etc.)
 - a. If we cannot restore an image that is print-worthy, we will notify you and/or the sponsor.
 - i. There is a generic saluting veteran silhouette we can use instead.
 - II. Ensure information is factually correct
 - a. We will call/email sponsors if there are any discrepancies.
- B. We will send you a link and/or proof sheet(s) so you can review and approve the banners before they go to print. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO REVIEW ALL BANNERS THOROUGHLY!
- C. After you approve your banners, they will be sent off to the factory for production.
 - I. Turnaround time is approximately 2-3 weeks.

7) Install

- I. Will your DPW be installing, or will you need our professional team to assist?
 - a. If you have existing hardware, is it in good condition?

8) Honor your Heroes

- A. Many towns conduct a "reading of the names" ceremony on Memorial and/or Veterans Day, especially after the first banner order.
- B. Send photos and videos to our team!
 - I. We are always looking to share your Heroes' banners and their stories on our social media pages and in our monthly newsletters