

USCG FLAGS ACROSS AMERICA

General Guidelines

- 1. LOCATION OF USCG GRAVES:** There is no cut and dried way to find USCG graves. They may be at private cemeteries and certainly at military cemeteries. At private cemeteries, chances are the grave will not say "USCG" on it. Also, anyone who has served in the Revenue Cutter Service, US LifeSaving Service, US Lighthouse Service as predecessor organizations should also certainly qualify for a flag. We should also ask local reps to "Map" the location of the graves (cemetery name, city, state, etc) and we can begin to document where they're all located. Make sure you obtain permission from the cemetery before you place these as some cemeteries are very particular about what can be placed and what cannot on gravesites.
- 2. FUNDRAISING/ORDERING USCG FLAGS:** Should be privately funded by CPOA or other military organization (via bake sales, car washes, etc.). Flags can be obtained by USCG members through Coast Guard Special Orders, 13920 West Parkway, Cleveland, OH 44135 or contact Peter DeCrane at 1-800-242-9157, ext. 3019. **Prices were recently updated in August 2001 and are as follows (but are subject to change): 4x6 USCG stick flags, \$1.20 each; 8x12 USCG stick flags, \$3.41 each.** If you have the funds, the D.C. CPOA Chapter recommends the bigger flags; they can be seen easier from a distance. Also, the DC Chapter of CPOA also sells the 4x6 flags for \$5.00 each, the 8x12 for \$7.50 each. The monies they raise go directly back into the program to purchase more USCG flags. Watch "The Chief" Magazine for more information and/or contact Brad Carpenter, USCG HQ, 202-267-2062 or e-mail: bcarpenter@comdt.uscg.mil
- 3. DATES TO PLACE:** Flags can be placed on USCG flags on any "patriotic" holiday, including Armed Forces Day (third Saturday in May), Memorial Day (Last Monday in May), Flag Day (June 14), Fourth of July, Coast Guard Day (Aug. 4), Columbus Day (Oct. 12), Veterans Day (Nov. 11). Might also consider Martin Luther King Day (third Monday in January), President's Day (third Monday in February), Labor Day (first Monday in September), Pearl Harbor Day (Dec. 7), Thanksgiving Day, USS Serpens Day (Jan. 29). Other special USCG dates like Feb. 19 (same as Iwo Jima) for Coast Guard Reserve birthday and June 23 for Coast Guard Auxiliary birthday.
- 4. RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS:** Get some fellow chiefs, Coasties, family members or retirees to come out and help. It'll be an education for everyone! Make a day of it. We had 72 chiefs, family members and retirees come to Arlington for Vets Day 2001 to help out and had a great time! Have some treats on hand and perhaps some sodas.
- 5. FLAG TAKE-DOWN:** At Arlington National Cemetery, we only have permission to keep the flags up for a few days, but this may vary depending on locality, so again, make sure you talk with cemetery officials before you venture out to place the flags.
- 6. LESSONS LEARNED:** Here are some lessons learned from past events. When placing a flag on the grave, make sure you place your hand at the base of the stick to ensure it does not break in half. Also, a small weeder or other device should be taken along in case the ground is hard – it helps to break up the ground ensuring that your flag will go into the ground easier. The D.C. Chapter also dovetails this effort with our Remembrance committee by sending a USCG Flag to family members of recently deceased Coasties along with a letter to the surviving spouse/family members.

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