

Trail Life USA Gives Honor Where Honor Is Due, Paying Tribute to Veterans July Fourth

Trail Life USA proudly stands with the brave men and women of the U.S. Armed Services this Fourth of July as Americans celebrate and commemorate this great nation and those who fought and fight to defend it.

“Trail Life USA wants boys to understand these veterans are living examples of courage, determination and sacrifice. With freedom comes responsibility, and few are better equipped to teach that to our boys than American veterans of war,” said Mark Hancock, CEO of Trail Life USA. “It is a great honor to live in the land of the free and the home of the brave. We love it when boys honor the people who make freedom possible. It’s a practical lesson. Boys hear us talk about adventure, character and leadership, but these men and women embody those traits.”

The Trail Life mission is to guide generations of courageous young men to honor God, lead with integrity, serve others and experience outdoor adventure.

Richard Haritan, chaplain for Trail Life Troop IL-0412, tells the story of his troop’s adventure volunteering with veterans and participating in past local parades in Palatine, Illinois.

“We honor that which deserves honor. Our U.S. military has earned honor through over 240 years of defending freedom and protecting our great nation’s citizenry, and by keeping the world safe for other freedom-loving countries,” he said.

Each boy in Troop IL-0412 sought out veterans in the parade,

introduced themselves, then gave veterans a flag, followed by a proper salute. "Saluting the veteran was our final act," Haritan wrote, "and the door to a greater realization of the immensity of gratitude that is due toward our men and women in the U.S. military ... as emotion welled up, it was often met with surprise, and at times, tears held back by the veteran ... on occasion those around us thanked us for taking the time to honor that which is honorable."

Hancock recognized the exemplary work of Troop IL-0412. "What these young men did is exactly the display of character and respect we want Trail Life boys to represent. They honored the veterans, demonstrated respect and then surprised the veterans with a proper military salute. This is two different generations, each inspiring the other."

Read the full inspiring story of Troop IL-0412 in the blog "Honoring Veterans—a 4th of July Story" on the blog page of the Trail Life USA website.

Trail Life USA is the premier national character development organization for young men producing godly and responsible husbands, fathers and citizens. Trail Life's mission is to guide generations of courageous young men to honor God, lead with integrity, serve others and experience outdoor adventure. Troops exist in all 50 states and are growing as Trail Life USA expands around the country. Get involved in a troop near you, or start a troop in your community today. {eoa}

*Since **Trail Life USA** launched on Jan. 1, 2014, it has grown to over 30,000 members in over 850 Troops across the nation. The K-12 program centers on outdoor experiences that build a young man's skills. A robust awards program motivates young men to grow on a personal level to become role models and leaders among their peers. Living the Trail Life USA is a journey established on timeless values derived from the Bible.*

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