

All the Presidents' Men: How America's Greatest Leaders Can Inspire and Inform the Next Generation

On the third Monday of February, America pauses to reflect on the great presidents who have led our country since its inception. Originally established in 1885 in recognition of George Washington, Presidents Day now provides a moment for the nation to look back in celebration of our most cherished leaders and forward in the development of those yet to come.

Great American presidents understood the importance of boyhood challenge and adventure in raising godly men of character, and looking back at the nation's heritage is integral to developing the next generation of leaders, per Trail Life USA, the nation's premier national character development organization for young men.

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"Theodore Roosevelt rightly noted, 'The same qualities that mean success or failure to the nation as a whole mean success or failure in men and boys individually,'" says Trail Life CEO Mark Hancock. "It is imperative that boys know and read America's founding documents—the Bible, the Declaration of Independence, the preamble to the Constitution, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. These texts provide guidance for molding the sort of men who will continue to lead our country with courage and character.

"Founding Fathers like George Washington, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson enshrined in our Constitution biblical

principles of freedom, equality, fairness, opportunity and human dignity that are endowed by the Creator,” Hancock says. “In fact, the Trail Life program is designed to engage boys with the same principles that guided the Founding Fathers, encouraging young men to work with their leaders to achieve goals, experience adventure and make a difference in their communities, thus inspiring them to greater achievement.

“Let us strive to engage, to inspire, to appreciate, to guide and to ground boys in the truth—that they may grow to become men of character and conviction who will stand for truth, preserve liberty and continue by faith to raise the banner of freedom and be a light to the nations,” he says.

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