

Tips and Tricks to Promote the 2011 Boarman Youth Poster Contest

1. Places to approach:
 - a. School (Principal, art teacher, after school programs)
 - b. Scout troops, Brownies and Cub scouts as well as Girl and Boy Scouts
 - c. Summer Camps
 - d. Recreation Center
 - e. Boys and Girls Clubs
 - f. Anywhere there is a group of children
2. Bring poster paper with you no matter where you go.
3. Bring submission forms and rules with you.
4. If you cannot get time in front of the children (often happens due to security reasons or time issues), ask if you can provide the information to the teachers/leaders and have them present the students with the poster board, the rules and the submission forms.
5. Have an outline/list of facts/handout ready to give to the teacher/leader in case your time is cut short and they will be giving the posters. This will provide them with something to talk about while the children are drawing their posters. Consider giving a Met Life Coloring Book to the younger participants and a Sidekicks to the older kids when they leave.
6. Try to set a deadline for the posters to be returned that is only 1-2 weeks away. Be available to pick them up as needed.
7. Ensure the submission forms are securely attached to the back of the poster and completed in full.
8. Be very familiar with the theme and rules of the contest.
9. If a presentation will be in made, bring props such as life vests, pictures of boats and buoys. There are lots of ideas on the membership website and can be ordered using MEMCOM20 form.
10. Make a big deal out of the award presentations. The squadron or district does not need to give big prizes of money, but \$10, \$15 and \$25 or something similar.
11. Don't give Savings Bonds as prizes. This requires social security numbers of the winning children and is not as tangible to a child as cash/check or a gift card.
12. Provide certificates to as many children as possible. It is a cheap way to recognize a child and the tangible item is important. A printable fill-in-the-blank certificate is available on the Membership Committee website.
13. Provide frames for the certificates whenever possible. It means more to the child to have it ready to hang.
14. Today, some schools are requiring background checks. Don't get scared off with this. Ask questions as some counties have multiple levels and if you will be speaking for 30 minutes with the teacher in the room, then they will check with the local law enforcement agency to be sure there is nothing on record. A more comprehensive one may cost money and require a full background check. If it is too complicated, try the other organizations listed above in tip 1. But don't give up!
15. Establish a long term relationship with the organization wherever possible. This could include giving or collecting toys and/or food for less fortunate children and families during the holiday season. This will open the door for the squadron with this organization for other times – like the YPC.
16. Send handwritten thank you notes whenever possible.
17. Check out the USPS National Membership Committee –BoatUS Civic Service Award section for other ideas of how to get involved in your community where there may be children.