

A Nation Unites for Victims' Rights

"Fulfill the Promise"

**A
National Candlelight Observance
of
2003
*National Crime Victims' Rights Week
in Washington, D.C.***

Thursday, April 10, 2003

*Sponsored by the
Office for Victims of Crime
U. S. Department of Justice*

*In Conjunction
With
Communities Across America*

**STATE & LOCAL
FIELD RESOURCE PACKAGE**

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**About “A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights”:
America’s First Nationwide National Crime Victims’ Rights Week Observance**

This year marks the 23rd commemoration of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week, a longstanding observance that honors those who bring honor to victims, and pays tribute to countless people in America who have been hurt by crime.

For the first time in the history of the crime victims’ movement, a national observance sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, and co-sponsored by national victim assistance and allied professional organizations to commemorate National Crime Victims’ Rights Week (NCVRW) will be held in Washington, D.C. “A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights” will bring together crime victims and those who serve them at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial on April 10th to observe this year’s NCVRW theme – Victims’ Rights: Fulfill the Promise – in an environment that:

- Offers support and honor to people who have been victimized by crime.
- Provides a place to respectfully honor crime victims, including homicide family survivors whose deceased loved ones have not been found, for a communal tribute to their loved ones’ lives and loss.
- Celebrates the 20-year anniversary of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, which has provided a strong vision and leadership to promote victims’ rights and services for the past two decades.
- Recognizes the significant accomplishments of the past 31 years of our nation’s victims’ rights movement.
- Addresses the challenges we face to ensure that *all* victims of crime receive the support and services, and implementation of their rights, that they need and deserve.

Special thanks is extended to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Foundation and its Chair, Craig Floyd, for their support of this special observance.

**The Theme of 2003 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week
and Resources Available for Victim and Public Awareness**

The theme of 2003 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week – “Victims’ Rights: Fulfill the Promise” – offers us all the opportunity to promote our commitment to and concern for crime victims, as well as our national commitment to treat them with compassion and dignity; help them *identify* and *meet* their most important needs related to their physical, emotional, financial and spiritual losses; and provide them with information about their statutory and constitutional rights, and information to help them implement those rights.

The “theme colors” for this year’s commemoration are *blue* (PMS 2757) and *orange* (PMS 138). The Office for Victims of Crime – in partnership with Justice Solutions – has published a National Crime Victims’ Rights Week Resource Guide and Theme Poster to help communities commemorate this special week. Both are available *free* from the OVC Resource Center.

Please call (800) 627-6872 and request the Resource Guide (*Order Number NCJ 198169*) and

Theme Poster (Order Number LT 000473).

**“A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights”:
Maximizing National Impact With State and Local Concurrent Events**

As you plan your 2003 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week activities, OVC invites you to join in its National Candlelight Observance in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, April 10, by sponsoring a concurrent event in *your* community. The overall impact of “A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights” will be truly significant if communities across America join together in unity on April 10.

This Field Resource Package is designed to:

- Help you plan “A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights” observance in your community.
- Provide you with resources to help publicize and implement a community-based event – linked to Washington, D.C. and communities across America – on the evening of April 10.
- Coordinate similar events that will be held across the nation on April 10, and provide national media relations to highlight this inaugural nationwide observance.

**For More Information About the Washington, D.C. Observance or
How to Sponsor a Concurrent Event in *Your* Community**

Please contact:

Office for Victims of Crime Resource Center
Toll-free Telephone: (800) 627-6872
Toll-free TTY: (877) 712-9279
Web Site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovcres/>
E-Mail Address: AskOVC@ojp.usdoj.gov

A Nation Unites for Victims' Rights **State and Local Events Coordination Checklist**

- T Order copies of the *free* National Crime Victims' Rights Week Resource Guide and Theme Poster from the OVC Resource Center by calling (800) 627-6872, and requesting *NCJ 198169* (Resource Guide) and *LT 000473* (Theme Poster) to augment public outreach and visuals for the April 10th observance.
- T Create a 2003 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Planning Committee and, specifically, a Committee to coordinate the April 10th "A Nation Unites for Victims' Rights" Observance.
- T Contact the Office for Victims of Crime to inform them of your participation, which will enhance national, regional and local media coverage of this nationwide event (*state/local concurrent event response form enclosed*).
- T Determine who should be involved as co-sponsors (*sample list enclosed*).
- T Distribute a "save the date" announcement for April 10th (*sample announcement enclosed*), and post it on all relevant web sites.
- T Widely distribute a press release to print, broadcast, and web-based news media (*sample enclosed*).
- T Widely distribute public service announcements to broadcast media (*sample enclosed*).
- T Develop and disseminate an "at-a-glance" fact sheet (*sample enclosed*).
- T Develop a Program for the evening:
- Recognition of co-sponsors.
 - Linking local event to the national initiative (*a national press release will be sent via e-mail to all local communities that return their "state/local concurrent event response form" to the Office for Victims of Crime*).
 - Invited dignitaries.
 - Guest speakers.
 - Any awards offered.
 - Musical performances.
 - Concluding with a Candlelight Ceremony.
- T Provide participants with resources from the NCVRW Resource Guide:
- Theme poster and three small "I Have the Right" posters.
 - Buttons.
 - Commemorative lapel ribbons on ribbon cards.
 - Other resources that you can replicate for your observance.
- T Follow-up with thank you letters to key participants (*sample enclosed*).

Who Should Be Involved at the State or Local Level?

- T Crime victims/survivors.
- T Community- and system-based victim service programs' staff and volunteers.
- T Governor.
- T Attorney General.
- T Legislators and public policy makers.
- T County, city and municipal elected officials.
- T Criminal and juvenile justice professionals.
 - Law enforcement.
 - Prosecution.
 - Defense bar.
 - Judges and court administrators.
 - Diversion programs.
 - Probation.
 - Parole.
 - Institutional corrections.
 - Offender community service programs.
- T Mental health and medical professionals.
- T Child protective services.
- T Adult protective services.
- T Social services.
- T Mental health association.
- T Civic and business leaders.
- T Representatives of schools.
- T Representatives of academia and higher education (including faculty *and* students).
- T Representatives of inter-faith communities and clergy.
- T Public and community safety advocates.
- T Representatives of Neighborhood Associations.
- T News media.
- T *Anyone* who has been touched by crime and victimization.

SAVE THE DATE!

Please join
(co-sponsoring programs or coalition)
on
Thursday, April 10, 2003
at
6:30 p.m.

for the

“A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights” Ceremony

to commemorate

2003 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week

“VICTIMS’ RIGHTS: FULFILL THE PROMISE”

(Location and Address)

DETAILED INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS IS AVAILABLE BY:

Telephone: *(area code/telephone number)*

E-mail: *(e-mail address)*

or visit our web site at
(web site address)

This special ceremony is being held in conjunction with a National Candlelight Observance sponsored by the Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice, and co-sponsored by national victim assistance and criminal and juvenile justice organizations, in Washington, D.C.

on April 10th at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial.

Please join us at (location) in (city) on April 10 to promote unity in honoring crime victims and those who serve them, and publicly “fulfill the promise” to crime victims here in (community or state).

Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
(Date)

CONTACT: (Name/Title/Agency)
(A/C-Telephone)

“A Nation Unites for Victims Rights”
(Community) to Participate in
Nationwide Commemoration of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week

(City/State) – Communities across America will join together on Thursday, April 10 to honor crime victims and those who serve them, in conjunction with the 23rd commemoration of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week. “A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights” National Candlelight Observance will be sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime on April 10 at the National Law Enforcement Officers’ Memorial in Washington, D.C. Here in (community), our concurrent ceremony will be held at 6:30 p.m. at (location), located at (address).

In keeping with this year’s theme – “Victims’ Rights: Fulfill the Promise” – participants will be encouraged to write a “promise” to crime victims that can help them recover in the aftermath of crime; access supportive services in our community; or be assisted with the implementation of their rights. Our individual “promises” will be prominently displayed together to emphasize our community’s commitment to crime victims.

Co-sponsors of “A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights” here in (community) include: (list all co-sponsoring agencies).

Speakers for this special ceremony will include: (list speakers and dignitaries). Music will be provided by (musical group/s). (Community’s) observance of “A National Unites for Victims’ Rights” will conclude with a candle lighting ceremony.

Anyone who has been touched by crime, or anyone who is concerned about safety in our homes, schools, neighborhood and community, is encouraged to attend. All participants will be provided with a National Crime Victims’ Rights Week button, and commemorative ribbon lapel pin, to show unity in support of crime victims. Resources about victim service programs and crime victim assistance in (community) will also be available.

“A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights”
Press Release
Page two

According to (*USDOJ/OVC spokesperson*), this inaugural nationwide event provides us with the opportunity to honor crime victims, and recognize the devastating impact of crime on individuals and communities.

“When we join together across America on April 10, we will send a strong message to crime victims in our nation that we care about them, and that we stand ready to provide them with support and services,” (*spokesperson*) said.

Local event coordinator (*name of coordinator*) noted the significance of this first-ever nationwide observance to recognize victims’ rights and needs.

“We are so pleased to join together with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, and countless other communities across America on April 10,” (*spokesperson*) noted. “In making our promises and lighting candles together in unison with thousands of people across the nation, we re-commit our individual and collective energies to better serve those among us who have been hurt by crime.”

“We hope members of our community will join us on April 10 to show our concern for, and commitment to, victims of crime in (*city/state*),” (*spokesperson*) concluded.

For additional information about “A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights” in (*community*), please contact (*name/title*) at (*area code/telephone number*); via e-mail at (*e-mail address*); or visit our web site at (*web site address*).

END

Sample Public Service Announcements

:30 seconds

On Thursday, April 10, join together with people in our community who are concerned about crime and victimization, as well as communities across America, at the “A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights” National Candlelight Observance.

April 6 to 12, 2003 is National Crime Victims’ Rights Week, with the theme of “Victims’ Rights: Fulfill the Promise.” Our community’s observance will take place at 6:30 p.m. on April 10 at (*location*), located at (*location/address*), and will include a tribute to crime victims; a display of our promises to help meet their needs; and a candle lighting ceremony.

If you are concerned about crime victims and safety in our homes, schools, neighborhoods, and community, please join us and “fulfill the promise” to crime victims on Thursday, April 10. For more information, please contact (*agency*) at (*area code/telephone number*), or visit our web site at (*web site address*).

:15 seconds

April 6 to 12 is National Crime Victims’ Rights Week. If you are concerned about crime victims and safety in our homes, schools, neighborhoods, and community, please join us on Thursday, April 10, at (*location*), located at (*location/address*), for “A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights” National Candlelight Observance, which will be celebrated here and in communities across America that evening.

For more information, please contact (*agency*) at (*area code/telephone number*), or visit our web site at (*web site address*).

Web Site Announcement or “At-a-Glance” Fact Sheet

A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights “Fulfill the Promise”

A Nationwide Candlelight Observance of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week

Date: Thursday, April 10, 2003

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Event Site (with directions via driving and public transportation)

Co-sponsors: (List of co-sponsors)

Theme: “Victims’ Rights: Fulfill the Promise

Who Should Attend?:

Crime victims/survivors and those who serve them, and *anyone* in our community who is concerned about crime and victimization, should attend this special event.

What to Bring:

In keeping with this year’s National Crime Victims’ Rights Week theme – “Victims’ Rights: Fulfill the Promise” – participants are encouraged to:

- Consider the promise *you* can make to help victims of crime.
- Write your promise in *bold black ink* and bring it on April 10.

If you have a loved one who was murdered, please bring a photo so that his or her memory can be honored. Candles and candle holders, National Crime Victims’ Rights Week buttons, and commemorative lapel ribbons will be provided on April 10 to *all participants*.

This special ceremony is being held in conjunction with a national ceremony sponsored by the Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice, in Washington, D.C. on April 10th at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. Communities across America will join with us in unison on April 10 to show our national concern for, and commitment to, victims of crime.

Create A Community Display for April 10th

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- T Display boards.
- T Two-inch stick pins (or double-stick tape).
- T Colored construction paper (NCVRW theme colors are *blue* and *orange*; derivatives include yellow, green, and red) with a large hand print that includes the NCVRW theme “pre-printed” on each hand print: “Victims’ Rights: Fulfill the Promise” on the bottom of the “palm.”
- T Black pens (“Sharpies” are the most suitable).

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS: *PRIOR TO APRIL 10TH*

- Determine number of boards needed based to accommodate anticipated number of “promises” from the community.
- Create a heading for the display boards, with this (or a similar) inscription at the bottom:

*A Nation Unites for Victims’ Rights
2003 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week
“Victims’ Rights: Fulfill the Promise”*

- Have a ready supply of “hand prints” on colored paper prepared for April 10th.

ON APRIL 10TH

- Set up a central table or booth where participants can fill out their own “promise hand” with a clear black felt pen.
- Assign volunteers to help participants place their “promise hands” on the community display.
- Depending on the turnout, individual “promises” can be read out loud, or simply pinned to the community display, using the two-inch stick pins (or double-stick tape) to secure them.

Sample "Thank You" Letter

(Date)

Name/Title
Agency
Mailing Address

Dear :

On behalf of the (community) 2003 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Committee, I would like to thank you for participating in the "A Nation Unites for Victims" Rights" observance.

Your support of and participation in this special event are sincerely appreciated by crime victims in our community, as well as those who serve them. We hope you will join together with us to make this an annual commemorative event here in (community) in the future.

We truly appreciate your support, and look forward to working closely with you on issues related to crime and victimization in our community.

Sincerely,

