

**Proclamation 7834—National Character Counts Week, 2004**

October 18, 2004

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

Individuals have the power to do much good, and great societies are built by knowing the difference between right and wrong. People of character strengthen our country through their daily actions. To help children fulfill their potential and build a more hopeful future for our Nation, we must continue to encourage and support the character development of our young people and support the institutions that give direction and purpose: our families, our schools, and our faith-based and community organizations.

Americans of all ages continue to inspire others with their compassion and decency by giving their time to faith-based and community organizations and bringing hope to others at home and around the world. The Senior Corps has more than 500,000 caring souls serving in its programs; the Peace Corps has grown to its highest number of volunteers in 28 years; and AmeriCorps will grow by 50 percent to 75,000 members this year. Almost two million students volunteer each year through the Learn and Serve America programs, which incorporate community service as a vital part of education. In addition, more than 1,300 communities have formed Citizen Corps Councils; over 10,000 communities have registered Neighborhood Watch programs; more than 27,000 Americans are serving in the Medical Reserve Corps; over 52,000 citizens have completed Community Emergency Response Team training; and there are more than 68,000 volunteers in the Volunteers in Police Service program. The true strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of its citizens, and these volunteers are making our country better and stronger.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 17 through October 23, 2004, as National Char-

acter Counts Week. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, parents, students, and all Americans to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

**George W. Bush**

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 21.

**Remarks in St. Petersburg, Florida**

October 19, 2004

**The President.** Thank you all for coming. Nothing like spending a Tuesday morning at the ballpark. I can't thank you enough for coming. It lifts our spirits to see so many people here.

It's close to voting time, and I'm here to ask for your vote. We're going to travel your State today, and we'll be back quite often, asking the people of Florida for their vote. I'm also here to ask for your help. See, you can vote now in Florida. So get your friends and neighbors to do their duty. We have a duty in this country to vote. And remind them when you get them headed to the polls, if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

As I travel your State giving people a reason why they ought to put me back in office, perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years. I'm really proud of her. I love her a lot. She is a warm, compassionate, great First Lady for this country.

And I'm proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. He does not have the waviest hair in this race. [Laughter] I didn't pick him because of his hairdo. [Laughter] I picked him because of his experience, his judgment, his ability to get the job done for the American people.