

**Firm helps spread patriotism**

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A real-estate firm's Fourth of July publicity stunt elicited heartwarming patriotism when metro-area residents awoke to find U.S. flags in every yard.

There is a decidedly foreign footnote, though.

These star-spangled banners were made in Taiwan.

But free enterprise is the American way, and this was a display of Americanism where the bottom line counted.

The Taiwanese flags cost only about 21 cents a piece, compared with the 58-cent price for the U.S. version, said one employee of Coldwell-Banker, which orchestrated the massive giveaway.

Dozens of the company's agents and employees planted the 11-by-16-inch plastic flags in most neighborhoods under the cloak of darkness, leaving tens of thousands behind.

"It really made you feel good after that sun came up and you drove down the streets and saw what you did," said William Huspeni, a Coldwell-Banker Realtor who personally deposited more than 1,100 flags.

The realty company sent postcards to residents a couple of weeks ago informing them of the stunt, allowing anyone who didn't want a flag to respond.

"Most people were real receptive to it," Huspeni said.

The company actually had problems coming up with enough flags, Huspeni said.

"The phone has been ringing off the hook.

"We've had people call and say they wanted extra flags or they didn't get one. We had people who called and said someone had stolen their flag, too."

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