

*The note below was written by our marketing coordinator, Miguel Cervantes, to accompany the coins he made for the staff at the holidays. I think he's done an amazing job of summarizing the spirit of the imprint. I am still there as "Founder" and doing my best to be supportive of the leadership of Susan Weinberg, now the senior executive for our group at Hachette Book Group and our publisher, Clive Priddle. The rowboat is a symbol that I have always invoked for us, a small craft in a stormy sea. None of what the imprint has accomplished would be possible without what was made available to us over 20 years ago. Thanks. Peter*

The story of PublicAffairs is a great one. We're small, but scrappy; humble, but proud. We believe in what we do and take pride in how we do it. We're a family set in a row boat traversing waters, both calm and turbulent.

It's with this idea of pride in family and company that I give you a token that endeavors to embody who we are.

What you have in your hands is the first ever PublicAffairs challenge coin.

The challenge coin has a great history typically associated with the military. Different branches have different uses and customs for them, but when they're being given or exchanged, the coins serve as literal tokens of gratitude. They can symbolize everything from a nod of appreciation to a deep personal connection.

As far as the history of challenge coins goes, there's a sort of apocryphal story that traces them back to World War I. According to the story, an American army officer had some special coins minted for his men on whim. Later one of these men was captured by French soldiers and he used his coin to prove he was an American and not a German. But that's just one version of the origin story.

If you'd like to learn more about challenge coins, I would encourage you to read through the article (or listen to the podcast episode) "Coin Check" by 99% Invisible. Of interest, is a video of Obama giving a presidential coin to a fallen veteran's sister and also an image of President Clinton's official portrait — taken in front of his collection of challenge coins.

<https://99percentinvisible.org/episode/coin-check/>

Happy Holidays,

Miguel