

August's Ruffled Feathers Newsletter

“I didn't know anyone cared.”

The most often said remark from QOV recipients.

Can you believe that? I have heard this so often from the chaplains that I am no longer surprised. We all know “talk is cheap” and this talk includes those fading yellow car magnets that proclaim “I support the troops.” What does that actually mean? Does putting that magnet on your car make some servicemember/vet feel good or does it make YOU feel good? One thing I have learned is our servicemembers aren't given much. They are given a mission and they do it with what they have. When my son deployed to Iraq, we had to send his company porta-potties, rat traps and good quality goggles not to mention all the Gatorade east of the Mississippi. Why? Their company did not have the funds for ‘fluff’ expenditures. And, we won't even go to the armored humvees or lack thereof. What this translates into is this. These soldiers and marine do their jobs with what they have. They don't expect much and when they get injured, I think they still are not expecting much. They were just doing their jobs.

So when they are awarded one of our QOVs, they are truly amazed.

We are blessed to have such talented quilt-toppers and longarmers working together to make the best QOVs we can for these kids who do not expect anything. Our care and concern is tangible.

Keep up the excellent work. Our wounded troops NEED this tangible demonstration of our appreciation because without it they might become cynical and embittered. We already have ‘been there, done that’ with our Viet Nam Vets. Let's learn from our mistakes.



Catherine C. Roberts

The IRS Has Given Us the Thumbs UP Tax Exemption Status!

I opened the envelope with the IRS return address with a tinge of trepidation. But the first sentence allayed my fears. It said they were pleased to inform me that my application for tax exempt status under section 501(c) (3) was approved. This means that we can start accepting monetary donations and you can start taking your expenses for making QOVs off your taxes. This status is effective as of March 15, 2005. If you have any technical questions re: this, please refer them to Dee at diana_givens@yahoo.com.

The Floodgates are Opening.

Finally! My most frequent refrain lately has been, “I know the wounded are out there...but, where?” This week I made a contact with the Chief of Voluntary Services in a Veteran's Medical Center. I described our program and he signed on. He then emailed his colleagues across the United States. And, guess what? We now have orders for QOVs from the west coast to the east coast! One center alone has 800 wounded vets from OIE/OEF (Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom). And, this is one of over a hundred VA medical centers. I know we will have a barrage of QOV requests for these vets. Are you gearing up with fabric, threads, batting?

Yes, there is still a need for QOVs.

I keep getting emails asking if there is still a need for QOVs/quilts since the guild in southern Maryland has stopped receiving them. The answer is an unequivocal and resounding “YES”. Please spread the word.

Updated Website

I have decided it's time to update the website. The days of mom&pop web designing are over. I have hired a web designer. This costs money. You will also see a “make a donation” link. I have put that there for people who want to make monetary contributions to our group. My goal is to have funds which will help us all in getting more quality qovs in the laps of our wounded.

Special QOVS Requests

1. We have several military facilities where there are many visually impaired wounded servicemembers. If you are interested in making a QOV for a visible impaired wounded servicemember, let me know. I am requesting these particular QOVS be texturally rich, ie, soft flannel, corduroy, minky, etc.
2. I was contacted recently by someone who educated me that the first salvo of this Global War on Terror was sounded with the hostage taking of 52 Americans-from the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, Iran in 1980 for 444 days. They all were brutalized by their captors. Of these 52 Americans, there were 20 active duty military and 32 civilians. Presently, there are 18 military and 25 civilians. I have offered QOVS for the 18 military. The civilian quilts can not officially come from our group. So, if you are interested in either making a QOV for one of the military or for a civilian, please let me know.
3. Anyone in the Chicago area? Please contact me.

Tracking Your QOVS

I thought the postcard system would be the answer to everyone's insecurities re: their QOV arriving where it should arrive. It didn't work out. So, plan "B". Use the tracking system of your shipper. Sometimes you will have to insure it. Right now, this is your only verifiable method of knowing when your QOV arrived at its destination. The reality is the chaplains have many duties to perform besides volunteering to administer this QOV program. Try as they might, sometimes they just can't respond. So, do NOT count on the chaplains to do this. By the same token, if you want to hear from them, you have to include your name, email, phone, address. Thank you for being considerate of these over-worked, under-valued men and women of the cloth.

QOV Pins

Janet-Lee Santeusano and Mary Schilke, founders of the Machine Quilters Exposition (MQX) www.mqxshow.com donated these beautiful QOVS pins at the MQX Show this past April in New Hampshire for our group. As you can see, they are stylish, distinctive and a great way to advertise the QOV program. We will be selling them to raise funds for our group. You can check on the website for more information or email Dee at diana_givens@yahoo.com.



Stats

Casualties

Fatalities August 14, 2005

OIE-Iraq 1,853

OEF-Afghanistan 221


Officially Wounded--- July 09, 2005 13,189

Total QOVS to date: 2,385 +

Finally

I want to say thank you to all who have contributed to the healing of our wounded servicemembers. These kids don't ask for much. They don't realize they give "much". And, for that I believe they deserve the BEST we can muster.

In closing, I wish you all good health, sound body and mind and fantastic fabric sales!


Catherine C. Roberts
Founder "Quilts For Soldiers"