

Dear 2011 "Stockings For Soldiers" Friends:

We Did It THANK YOU to everyone who worked to help us. (Sorry this email is so long..)

Our 8th Annual "Stockings For Soldiers" community project has been successfully completed and we are so very grateful to all of our generous volunteers.

With Everyone's help, we sent over 10,000 stockings to our troops.

From Nov. 30th to December 2nd , we filled three post office tractor trailers and sent our 1500 boxes off to our brave and courageous troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. It has been a tremendous and resounding success. We have had so many wonderful volunteers who worked so hard and so quickly to help us to try to "make a difference" in the lives of our wonderful deployed troops who are in harm's way Serving their Country.

As in previous years, our military contacts, who are West Point graduates, sent us so many, names of their troops, which include fellow Army soldiers as well as military members from Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coalition troops. They have asked us to include them all in our project and we were honored to do so. For some of these troops, our personalized stockings will be the only gift they will receive for Christmas.

Last year, our 500 volunteer elves worked very hard and sent 9,000 homemade, personalized Christmas stockings packed in 1,500 boxes that weighed 42,000 pounds. We also made many small polar fleece blankets and many homemade knitted hats for our troops. We had hoped to exceed those numbers this year because that would mean that more deployed troops would receive some Delaware Love and Hugs for the holidays. In addition, our volunteers are from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, New York, Michigan, Idaho, California, Colorado, and from all over America joined with us.

I am so proud and pleased and thrilled to tell you that this year, we even surprised ourselves with the amount of Goodies that some of our special troops will receive: So many more volunteers stopped by to give us a hand. We have mailed over 1,500 boxes packed with 10,140 homemade, personalized Christmas Stockings that were filled with over 49,000 pounds of Christmas Goodies. We also made 2,500 polar fleece blankets and over 1,000 knitted hats for our troops.

Included in these figures are several special boxes of stockings filled intended for 70 children. One of our wonderful military Chaplains will give them to the children of Afghanistan as a gift from the children of America. In addition, we sent several big boxes of dog biscuits for a K 9 unit. We can't forget about our canine heroes.

We also sent over 10,000 personal greeting cards and several hundred letters of appreciation from children from many, many schools.

We all can be so proud of ourselves for bringing so many smiles to so many of our troops this Holiday Season. This wonderful eight week project was such a Team Effort. Each and every person has played a very important part in its success. We could not have succeeded without everyone's help. Sincere Thanks go to all our 500+ kind and generous friends, who live near and far, who have contributed to the success and completion of this community project.

At this time, I would like to mention just a few of our special Friends in this "short" email. When I hear back from our troops, I will send out their notes intended for all of us. I appreciate everything that all of you did to work so hard, so quickly, so efficiently and so successfully. I know our troops are so grateful and will be so happy to receive our Goodies. Because of our combined efforts, we will be able to touch the hearts of over Ten Thousand of our most precious young men and women who are bravely Serving their Country. 10,000 stockings is almost enough for 10% of the troops deployed in Afghanistan. Amazing....

Bless each of you for doing so much to make a difference for our wonderful troops. Please accept our deepest THANKS for each and every donation, contribution and good wish that we received.

## THANK YOU

Thank You so very much to the generous owners of Branmar Plaza: Louis Capano & Sons. They have graciously allowed us to use the empty storefront occupied by Patterson-Schwartz Real Estate. Again, we want to thank our wonderful friends at Patterson-Schwartz Real Estate for donating their furniture so we would be able to have tables to work on. Our deep appreciation goes to Louis Capano and Jeff Olmstead and Dick Christopher for making it possible for all our volunteers to work in such a fabulous environment. We are so very grateful for their tremendous generosity.

Our sincere THANKS go to the wonderful and generous members of the Rotary Clubs of District 7630, Area 10 and Area 20. Our Rotarians were invaluable in their financial donations and contributions of Goodies for our troops. I would especially like to THANK all the Rotarians in the following Rotary Clubs: Brandywine-Naamans, Elkton (MD), Caesar Rodney, Hockessin-Greenville and Wilmington.

Our sincere THANKS go to the wonderful Chesapeake Bay Area 629 Girl Scouts and their terrific Leaders. These special people were invaluable in their enthusiasm, helpfulness and hard work. We are so grateful for their wonderful Leaders who donated their time and energy to teach their Scouts how to make a positive difference through kindness and volunteering. We are so very grateful for the over 10,000 packets of Snowman Soup that the Scouts helped to make for our troops.

Our sincere THANKS go to over 500+ hard working volunteers who came to our Stocking Store to donate their time, purchase Goodies for our troops, donate needed funds and who brought a cheerful, happy-to-help attitude. Thank You to all these new friends and to our dedicated Team Leaders who maintained the continuity needed throughout the week and who worked so hard to keep this community project going. Our community endeavor was tremendously successful because friendly folks of like-minded attitudes all worked together, beautifully, to achieve such a high level of success and cooperation. My deepest THANKS to these wonderful people for making everything look so "easy." Our winning team was:

Lyn Gill - Elf Extraordinaire,

Janet Armitage - Leonice Bartlett - Ingrid Berlien - Rosanne & Tom Brown - MaryAlice Budd - Jennie Burke - Bonnie Costas - Dawn & Nick Dilenno - Kathy Hankins - Derek Hart - Ann Hein - Fannie Kessler - Paul Kessler - Meg Kinsler - Denise Lazar - Bill McLachlan - Annette Long - Nancy & Dan Meier - Terry Meyers - Cassie Millar - Lori Miller - Cathy & Jim Morgan -Betsy Morocco - Amy Mousley - Nick Paoletti - Sandy Pembleton - Will Petrilla - Mary Remmell - Barbara & Frank Schinchirimini - Kathy Schnepp - Dianne Seidel - Bruce Shumway - Kathie Simmons - Karen Sieber - Anita & Jim Sterling - Peg & Jon Stewart - Maureen Stone - Judy Tarlov - Sharice Thayer - Arthur Travis - Betsy & Doug Wenny - Eleanor Wilson - Jean Woods - Carol Wootten - Pam & Rick Yarborough -Sam Youse - Diane & Ryan

The proud accomplishments of our volunteers include:

- > We received over 10,140 home sewn stockings.
- > We received over 1,000 home knitted hats.
- > We received over 10,000 personal greeting cards to go with each stocking.
- > We received over 800 letters of support for the troops from school children.
- > We received over 10,000 packets of "Snowman's Soup" (hot cocoa).
- > We received over 10,000 decks of playing cards from the Trump Hotels in Atlantic City, NJ.

- > We received over 10,000 Ziploc bags to mail our stockings from The Castle Bag Company.
- > We received over 1,500 lbs. of Halloween candy from the Dr. Greg Fink, Dr. Jake Milunsky, Drs. Greeley & Nista, Dr. Ron Briglia & many other wonderful local dentists and from all the local Walgreen Stores.
- > We received over 1,000 toothbrushes from Mr. Vince McIntosh and Select Amenities, Ltd.
- > We received over 9,000 tubes of toothpaste from Ms. Sherry Schaeffer.
- > We received over 5,000 pairs of socks from the students from Clearview High School in Mullica Hills, NJ and surrounding areas.
- > We received over 1,500 copies of letters that we send to our troops from Ben-Dom Printing Co.
- > We received over 10,000 copies of printed materials for our stockings from Mike Janis of Reprographics Center Inc.
- > We received over 9,000 paperback books from the Friends of Hockessin Library, Avon Grove Lions Club, friends in Lewes, Delaware, Foxfield Residents and many others.
- > We received over 1,200 DVD's created by John & Donna Bell & their students from PS DuPont Middle School in Wilmington, Delaware. Congratulations to the Band & Choral students for making such a very special DVD for our troops.
- > We received over 15 large bolts of magnificent polar fleece to make our 2,500 small blankets from our great friends at Polartec, LLC. of Lawrence, MA
- > We received tons of donated items and extra funds from all the students and staff from the Washington Township Schools in Sewell, NJ.
- > We received over 49,000 pounds of Goodies from many schools, churches, synagogues, community groups, exercise groups, senior centers, Rotary Clubs, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and many new friends.
- > We enjoyed working with over 500 + volunteers who came to help us at our "Stocking Store."
- > We received over 1,200 empty apple boxes, which allowed us to mail our stockings. Special Thanks to Jim Morgan and the Acme Company. Special Thanks also to Frank Schinchirimini and the Smurfit-Stone/RockTenn Company for their 800 boxes.
- > We processed our 1,500 boxes on-line in 3 days, Special Thanks to Caesar Rodney Rotarian Bill McLachlan.

Special Thanks to Mike Behringer and Derrick Caban from the US Postal Service for helping us to easily mail our boxes by using their three tractor trailers.

Special Thanks to Paul, Nick and Tom for helping to organize and load the Post Office trucks. Special Thanks to all the volunteers who closed up the boxes and carried them to the waiting trucks. A special Thank You to the special new citizens of the USA, living in Virginia, who donated funds for our troops and Special Hugs for their wonderful teacher, Ms. Jan Nell Bryant for matching their contributions. WOW. A special Thank You to John Mager, our wonderful accountant who helped us to become a 501.c.3 nonprofit Delaware corporation last year.

Thank You to Ms. Carol Ann Weisenfeld for inviting me to be a guest on her radio show, "Pathways to Service," on Radio Station WDEL. Thank you for your kindness and great assistance in helping to tell our community about the great Rotary contributions to this wonderful project. <http://www.wdel.com/pathways.php>

It has been so fabulous for me to coordinate this wonderful project and to work with so many exceptionally great folks. Thank You to all our volunteers who have helped us to send some special Hugs and Smiles to our troops in Afghanistan. Thank You, everyone, for all your continued support.

**Welcome . . . Welcome . . .**

To the official website for the **2011 Stockings For Soldiers**

This year marks the **8th consecutive year** of our community effort to send personalized Holiday greetings to our brave young men and women in uniform serving their Country half-way around the world.

Thanks to the great generosity of Louis Capano & Sons, the owners of the Branmar Plaza shopping center, we are so pleased to announce that our "Stocking Store" will be located at the same Branmar Plaza location that we have used for the past five years. Our "Stocking Store" will once again be located in the vacant Patterson-Schwartz office, to the left of Happy Harry's at Silverside and Marsh Roads in Wilmington, Delaware. We would like to thank the wonderful folks at Patterson-Schwartz Realty Company for allowing us to use their vacant office all these years.

Our official kick-off date for this year's project is **Monday, October 10th**. At 6:30 P.M. that evening, we will open the doors of our "Stocking Store" and begin work on sewing and decorating thousands of Christmas stockings. Over the next seven weeks, we will be personalizing each stocking with the recipient's name, stuffing them with goodies, boxing them and shipping them to troops in the remotest regions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Last year, over **500** great volunteers helped us to mail out **1,500 boxes** packed with **9,000** homemade, personalized **Christmas Stockings** that were filled with over **42,000 pounds** of Goodies. We also made and shipped **2,500** polar fleece blankets and **500** knitted hats for our troops.

### **How you can help:**

Here are some of the many ways that you can personally contribute to the success of this year's **Stockings For Soldiers** Project:

Start sewing stockings now . . . many of our volunteers have been sewing and stockpiling stockings since early January. The stocking pattern is available by clicking on the "[Stocking Pattern](#)" tab in the left hand column on this page. Be sure to use only colorful, cotton fabric and plain white, red or green **felt** for the cuff.

Knit wool caps. These are valued by our soldiers as warm winter helmet liners in the frigid mountainous regions of Afghanistan. Knitting Instructions are available by clicking on the "[Knitting Instructions](#)" tab to the left.

Purchase and donate fabric for stockings and polar fleece for our small blankets. Even if you do not sew, your contribution of fabric is much appreciated and will be used by those who do sew but don't have the funds to buy additional material. You can also cut out the stockings with our pattern.

Collect “gently used” music CD’s, paperback books (no romance novels, please) and gently used DVD movies. (no VHS video tapes please).

Please make packets of “[Snowman Soup](#)” for our troops. (Hot cocoa in a ziplock bag.) See our link for the “Recipe.” This is a great project for young volunteers to do with their families.

Ask your dentist to contribute toothbrushes, toothpaste and floss. You can expedite this by volunteering to bring the donated items to the Stocking Store anytime after October 10<sup>th</sup>.

Arrange for your school, church, synagogue, scout troop, service club and workplace to sponsor a collection campaign for items that we put into the stockings. A flyer with all the details about the project and a list of supplies we need donated is available by clicking on “[Project Flyer](#)” to the left.

Arrange for your school, church, synagogue, scout troop, service club and workplace to sponsor a contest to see who can collect the MOST Crew Socks or Chapstick or Ramen Soup, etc.,.

Arrange for your school, church, synagogue, scout troop, service club and workplace to write greeting cards and letters of support to our troops.

Finally, **join us** (and tell your friends to join us) by coming to the Stocking Store any evening during our working hours (click on "[Location/Hours](#)") to help us to make the Holidays brighter for our deployed troops. We will be working in the Stocking Store, starting Monday, October 10<sup>th</sup>:

**Monday through Thursday, Evenings Only, from 6:30 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.**

Stop by once, stop by twice or as often as you want . . . and stay as long as you want. But be forewarned: the joy and satisfaction you’ll receive from being a **Stockings for Soldiers** “Elf” is addictive . . . you’ll keep coming back for more!

Please **HOLD** on delivery of any donations until we open on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

**THANK YOU, Everyone. See You All Soon.**

*Judy Travis*

Project Coordinator,

**Stockings for Soldiers – Delaware, Inc.**

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