

OQC Online

Operation: Quiet Comfort • 307 Palmer Lane • McCormick, SC 29835 • *Honor and Comfort for our Wounded Troops*

U.S. Department of Defense

Casualty Statistics (as of June 2, 2015)

Operation Enduring Freedom Afghanistan

Total Deaths	2,355
Wounded	20,68

Operation New Dawn Kuwait and other Locations

Total Deaths	66
Wounded	295



by Jan Schafnitz-Hogg, McCormick, SC

No truer words have been written. Can you imagine what your life would be like if our Heroes were not making sure we are safe?

The amazing men and women serving in harm's way still need to know they are appreciated.

We know by the letters we receive, that we are making a difference.

They still need the comfort items that are packed with love each month, until we get all of our sons and daughters home.

Our Heroes chose to serve, and we hope you will choose to step up and support our mission.

There are many ways to show your support and provide the comfort items. Please take the time to explore the possibilities. You can make a difference for those serving under very difficult conditions.



OQC Online is a quarterly publication of Operation: Quiet Comfort designed for our online community. Publication dates are June, Sept., Dec. and March. The deadline for submissions is the 20th of the month preceding publication. To submit articles for consideration, please contact Janis Schafnitz-Hogg, Board President, jans-h@operationquietcomfort.com

www.operationquietcomfort.com
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4th Annual “Celebrate & Support Our Troops” Another Success Story! *By Jan Houin, Plymouth, IN*

The first half of 2015 has been a busy time here in northern Indiana. The biggest (so far) event of the year took place in Plymouth, IN, on April 9th, when we held the 4th annual “Celebrate & Support Our Troops” dinner and auction friend and fundraiser. Over 200 people packed the Knights of Columbus Hall here in Plymouth for an evening of fun, food and friendship.

This community is very generous, and I could never list all of the people who helped this event to be the great success that it was. Everyone’s contribution was appreciated whether they gave of their time, talents or treasures. The planning committee did a wonderful job and without them, it just wouldn’t have come together.

Irene and JoAnne kept the ticket sales organized and gathered many auction items for people to bid on. Carol rounded up volunteers to donate desserts - pies, cake, cookies and ice cream! YUM!! Kenny contacted local restaurants for the food and arranged for the roast hogs. Peggy and Mike set up a packing line to give guests an opportunity for “hands-on” experience packing 100 Go Bags at the event. Dianna made the auction process look easy once again. Pam helped with every step of the planning, coordinated the many volunteers and kept the kitchen running smoothly that evening; and was the last one out

of the parking lot at the end of clean up. Pam also wrote many of the more than 100 thank-you notes. A BIG thanks go to each of you!

The purpose of this event is to fundraise to keep OQC care packages going to our troops. It is also to “friend raise” to share our mission with those who may not know what we do. It is also a time to honor those who have served and are continuing to serve our country.

Each year Kenny spotlights one or two veterans. The first year he shared Lester Reed’s story of being at Iwo Jima when the first flag was raised. The second year Lida Thompson Norris was honored for her service as a WAC in WWII. The following year he shared John Davis’ story of landing on Omaha Beach. Also spotlighted was Brian Pike who had recently returned from a tour in Afghanistan. This year the spotlight was on Jim DeWitt of Culver, IN, who was at Pearl Harbor on “the day that will live in infamy!” Look for Jim’s story in this newsletter.

Everything for the evening was donated including the hall, the food, the auction items, table service and labor. That means all money collected from ticket sales to auction sales went to OQC. We even sold the leftover food! It seemed like a lot of money until you see what we spend each month on purchasing and shipping



Enjoy the annual OQC Banquet.



OQC supporters are eager to line up for the great food.

to our troops. The need is great, so whether you are hosting a large event or writing a card to the troops, everyone doing a little makes a BIG difference. Consider what you can do to support Operation: Quiet Comfort and show our troops that a grateful nation truly cares.



Banquet guests try their hand at packing Go Bags to ship to our heroes.



A table was set for the Fallen Soldier.



MC Rodney Jacobs confers with Ken and Jan Houin.

WWII Navy Veteran Chief Yeoman Jim DeWitt *By Ken Houin, Plymouth, IN*

Naval Chief Yeoman Jim DeWitt lives in Culver, IN. Jim and his sister and two brothers were raised in an orphanage in Mexico, Indiana. At the age of 12 Jim was assigned to a foster family who was more interested in free labor than loving a child. At the age of 15, after a series of conflicts, Jim decided to run away from his foster family. Upon being detained by the local sheriff in Ligonier, IN, and spending another year in the orphanage, Jim got a job on a farm with another family, where he says he was treated as a real human being for the first time in his life.

Living with his new family Jim applied himself in his school studies and began to plan for his future. On one occasion his boss' niece from Florida visited the farm he lived on and Jim was immediately attracted by her beauty and demeanor. In their conversations he acquired her address in Florida and said they should keep in touch. Her father even told Jim that if he was ever in Florida he was welcome to stay at their home.

While in high school, Jim wanted to enlist in the Navy but had to wait until he graduated before his guardian would sign for him. Following in the footsteps of his older brother, John, in December of 1939 Jim joined the United States Navy. Jim was able to hitchhike to Florida with eight dollars in his pocket to visit with Miss Mary Banks three months before he had to report to the Navy.

Jim was sent to Newport, Rhode Island, for his Naval training because at that time the Great Lakes Naval training station was experiencing a disease problem. Since Jim had taken shorthand in high school, the Navy assigned him as "yeoman" or officer's personal staff writer to Commander Charles Madix, squadron commander on board the USS Antares in the South Pacific fleet.

In early December of 1941 the USS Antares, a Greenville Victory Class Cargo Ship, was at Canton Island, a British holding near Australia. It was headed to Palmyra Island to pick up a 500 ton tow of engineering equipment for transport to Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, a U.S. Territory. Jim knew his brother John was stationed at Palmyra Island and wondered if he would have time to visit with him. While taking on cargo, Jim saw a man in a Marine uniform that resembled his brother who was in the Navy. The man even sounded like his brother, so Jim called out his name and the two brothers had a happy visit on a remote island in the Far East before Jim had to ship out.



While underway, the USS Antares was escorted by a destroyer, the USS Selfridge, which was testing the Navy's new sonar equipment. A suspected submarine was detected several times, but they could not confirm its presence. On December 7, 1941, the USS Antares with its tow was the only ship scheduled into Pearl Harbor that morning. They arrived at Pearl Harbor at 5:30 a.m. and later at 6:15 a.m. local time, while waiting for a tug to come retrieve the barge in tow, the USS Antares circled with its crew on submarine watch scanning the shallow waters. A submarine was then spotted and confirmed just outside the harbor entrance. Jim remembers that at 6:17 a.m. the destroyer USS Ward depth charged and sank the submarine - less than two hours before the Japanese aerial attack on Pearl Harbor.

During the attack, the USS Antares remained in shallow waters in order to beach the vessel and its barge in tow if necessary to keep from possible sinking in deeper water. The unarmed supply vessel was strafed by Japanese Zero's, but was not severely damaged.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Jim learned that his brother John had earlier contracted jaundice and was transported

to the military hospital in Pearl Harbor prior to the attack so both brothers were there during that "day that will live in infamy." Jim was allowed to visit his brother the day after the attack. (Jim broke down and could not share what he saw at the hospital that day.)

Yeoman DeWitt remained in Pearl Harbor for 2 ½ years, where he wrote to the girl in Florida that he had met only twice. Returning state-side Jim was stationed at Treasure Island, California for 1 ½ years doing pre-commissioning training for new ship crews.

Nearly a year later Jim remembers leaving the Guam receiving station on Thanksgiving day 1945, and since he had never taken a paycheck his entire enlistment nor did he use any leave time, he received his total 6 ½ years of military pay totaling \$3,783.00 as a single payment.

Discharged on December 21, 1945 in San Francisco, Jim could not find any available ticket for a ride to Florida so he began hitchhiking. Arriving in Florida on January 2, 1946, he proposed to his correspondent date Mary Alice Banks and they were married on January 27th. Jim and Mary Alice were married 60 years and have 2 sons and 2 daughters.

Thanks to Jim DeWitt for his service and sharing his story of love and war.

Imagine What it's Like ... *By Diane Schneider, Morrisville, NC*

Imagine what it's like to be injured far from home and family. Imagine how you would feel knowing that a stranger from back home took the time to write a message in a card for you. Imagine the smile that card will bring. That's what OQC's card project is all about.

I've been OQC's card project coordinator for about the last eight years. I joined OQC way back in 2004 when I saw the request for old blue jeans. A few years later, there was the need for someone to handle the cards sent in for our troops; I knew it was something I could do. My hobby is making cards. Back then, I was able to supply cards to members to sign since we were only sending out 10 gobags a month. The need is much greater now. Thousands of cards are needed, and I'm sure you've seen my posts acknowledging cards received and also begging for cards, cards and more cards. I can never have too many and I never have enough!

This is an overview of the card project to help you understand what it is all about. OQC needs thank you, thinking of you, cheerful hello or patriotic cards. "Get Well Soon" cards are not needed as we do not know the extent of the injuries of our troops and some have a very long road to recovery.

When I receive a card, I first read it to make sure the message is appropriate. Rarely is there a problem with a message from an adult, however, kids' cards are another matter. If you do have children writing a message, please try to steer them away from questions about the war or injuries. If the message is questionable and may upset the recipient, I cannot send it. An easy project for kids is decorating one side of an index card and writing a message on the other. They can be as creative as they want as long as NO GLITTER is used! Cards with glitter cannot be sent at the request of our medical staffs.

After cards are approved for sending, I fill a gallon-size baggie with 30 cards – 20 adult and 10 children and a quart size baggie with five cards—three, adult and two, children. The five-card packs are placed in our gobags. The 30-packs are placed in care boxes to be passed out by the medical staff. I also collect thank-you cards specifically for the medical staff. Although these cards don't come in regularly, once in a while, I am able to get a few packs of about seven to ten cards bagged up.

I have a lot of people say, "I don't know what to write." This is easier than you think. A simple "thank you for your service" or "we support you" work fine. You can write the same message on every card. Sentiments and quotes can be found on various web sites. Write from your heart. Thank these young men and women—America's sons and daughters—for protecting America.

Cards can be store-bought, handmade, computer-made. Write a message on a 4"x 5" sheet of paper; I can attach it to a blank card. There is no deadline for receiving the cards. I am always in need of many, many cards.

Email me at diane8587@gmail.com if you have any questions. Mail your cards to:

Diane Schneider
119 Brentfield Loop
Morrisville, NC 27560



Special Salute to our Heroes *by Jan Schafnitz-Hogg, McCormick, SC*



Lisa's dad displays the completed flag.



The flag wall hanging is in process.



Lisa's niece helps with cutting.



Lisa works on the flag wall hanging made from jeans waistbands.

On January 6, 2015, I received the following email:

"My husband is a Coast Guard veteran and rides with the Patriot Guard in our area. My dad is an Air Force vet, my father-in-law and two of my brothers-in-law are also AF vets, a nephew is in the National Guard in AK, my grandfather served in WWII. I would be honored to be a part of your efforts."

Sincerely,
Lisa C.
Lancaster, CA

It did not take long to realize how talented and dedicated Lisa is in honoring our Heroes.

Lisa's first commitment was a very special flag wall hanging made from jean waistbands.

Her imagination and talent created a very amazing piece of art. Lisa graciously donated one of her "flags" for the live auction held at the April fundraiser dinner in Plymouth, IN.

It was a big hit and raised considerable funds for our mission.

Lisa is also taking on Four Freedom Gratitude Quilts and is willing to tackle the Cool Ties.

Many Indiana and a few Michigan residents attended the dinner and were able to see her flag up close.

Enjoy the pictures showing the process and the talented creator, Lisa. The gentleman is Lisa's Dad and he is holding up his flag. The other photos show the process. The young lady cutting stars is Lisa's niece.

Thank you, Lisa, for your very generous donation and your continued support.

★★ FROM THE FRONT ★★

Dear Patriot,

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your generosity, kindness, and support of our unit. You have made a contribution to the well being of our Army family, and by extension our families back home. Please know that your efforts, gifts, and kindness are very much appreciated. Knowing that folks back home are thinking, praying and supporting us is a huge morale booster, and goes a long way to remind us that here is value in what we are doing. You and your sacrifice remind us that our sacrifice is well worth it. Please enjoy your freedom and help us in our fight to preserve it for generations to come!

Thank you and God bless!

Very Respectfully,

Carl E. _____

Chaplain (CPT)

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Operation Quiet Comfort,

We would like to sincerely thank you for the thoughtful care packages.

The simplest gifts can made the biggest difference. It makes the days shorter and brighter.

We are extremely grateful for the support we receive.

Thank you, Lt. Peter _____

Thank You! Maj _____

Much Appreciated!! CAPT _____

★★★★★★★★★★

Operation Quiet Comfort,

Thank you so much for your awesome donation of hand warmers. (Almost stole a pair myself! It was cold :) Your continued support keeps the smiles on the troops :)

Sincerely,

Kelly

★★★★★★★★★★

Operation Quiet Comfort,

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your donations but also for your fabulous dedication and support for the troops. :)

Sincerely,

Kelly _____

★★★★★★★★★★

Operation Quiet Comfort,

Your organization is SO CRAZY AMAZING!!! We love the hygiene kits. They are filled with all the perfect items. Thank you for so wonderfully fulfilling our mission to the troops!

Sincerely,

Kelly _____

★★★★★★★★★★

Thanking Those Who Serve Those Who Serve *By Jan Houin, Plymouth, IN*

In November 2012, I received a nice surprise from Price Nurseries of Plymouth, IN. They had selected me to receive a gift certificate for a Celebration Tree! Even though I may be the "face" of Operation: Quiet Comfort in our community, I realize that I couldn't do any of this without the help of many volunteers. In fact

it takes volunteers from across the United States to keep this organization going.

After talking it over with my husband, Kenny, we decided to have the tree planted at Centennial Park in downtown Plymouth where many people could enjoy it. Price Nurseries and Plymouth Park's Department took care of planting a nice little red bud tree and maintaining it.

This past spring we finally got the plaque (donated by KENTEC Enterprises) posted which reads: "To honor Operation: Quiet Comfort Volunteers serving our military men and women who serve our country."

THANKS to each and everyone of you for what you do to keep the mission of Operation: Quiet Comfort alive!



To those who serve.



The Celebration Tree



JUMP with Jan!

She's doing it again?

Will you join her?

Sunday Aug. 9th

(weather permitting, of course)

at Plymouth Airport

Approx. 12:00 p.m. EST

Plymouth Sky Sports offers tandem skydiving experiences and Jan Houin has agreed to dive for **Operation Quiet Comfort!** www.operationquietcomfort.org **AGAIN!**

Jan is challenging others to jump too! Plymouth Sky Sports has blocked time for 8 consecutive jumps for OQC on Aug 9th – will you fill one of those spots??? Each jumper will be raising money for OQC.

You can contribute in one of two ways:

Make a donation to sponsor a jumper, OR
Contribute the money you would pay NOT to jump.

Either way, *every dollar you donate* goes to **Operation: Quiet Comfort!**



If you just can't make yourself jump, come for the tailgate party and cheer those falling from the sky.



Make checks payable to:

Operation: Quiet Comfort

NOTE: Jump with Jan

17671 13th Rd.

Plymouth, IN 46563

If you would like to Jump with Jan for OQC, call 574-936-1424 for more information.

Flying High! *By Ken Houin, Plymouth, IN*



On Saturday, July 11, 2015, the Mentone Flying Club will hold its annual Pancake Breakfast at Rochester Airport in Rochester, IN. On that day everyone will have an opportunity to take to the skies with an experienced pilot. The club has voted to donate all proceeds from the plane ride sales that day to Operation: Quiet Comfort! So if you're anywhere near Rochester, IN, on July 11th, come on over for pancakes and a plane ride.



See if you can find your house.



We're ready to fly!

More Happenings in Plymouth, IN By Jan Houin, Plymouth, IN

Volunteers are welcomed here on the second Thursday of every month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. EST to prep and pack care packages for the troops. We have “sit-down” jobs and heavy lifting and everything in between. Everyone just pitches in to do what needs to be done each month.

During the winter months, we tell people to use their own judgment and be safe. We will always be here because we live here. If we happen to be out of town or at a grandchild's program, my sister, OQC Board Member Peggy Reynolds, coordinates the volunteers. In January it was quite a snowstorm and we weren't expecting anyone, but Boy Scout Rylan, and his dad Ted showed up!

Sometimes we schedule extra packing events. One Saturday in February seven volunteers from a company called Southwire came as a special project. In May we had six employees from Key Bank choose OQC for their “Neighbors Give Back” project, and they gave four hours of work here. We even have residents of a local nursing home that come for a couple hours every other month. It's so much fun to share the workload and the mission of OQC with these willing helpers!

We also set up displays around the community. In March we had a window display at our local Chamber of Commerce. Throughout the month of May there was a display at Key Bank and currently there is a large window display at the local newspaper office.

When I first got involved with OQC, I mentioned the phrase KEEP TALKING! Tell everyone you know what we do and why we do it. I tell people that I will talk to anyone that will listen whether it's one or one thousand because I believe in the mission and learn more every day about what these cards and care packages mean to our troops when they are far from home and family.

You may not be comfortable talking to a large group, but tell your friends, family and co-workers what OQC is all about. Point them to our web site and find a way that you can contribute, whether it is writing a card or organizing a fundraiser. See if there is a place in your community for a window display. If you need ideas, contact me at janh@operationquietcomfort.com



Volunteers fill Go Bags.



The Key Bank crew.



Packing night.



Key Bank's Neighbors Give Back program.



Jan Houin makes a list and checks it twice.



Notice:

In compliance with IRS regulations, receipts are sent for all donations of \$250.00 or more, or for any lesser amount upon request.

REMINDER...

OQC is grateful for financial donations as we "friend-raise" and "fund-raise" to get existing supplies to the troops.

Send donations to:

Operation: Quiet Comfort
C/O Jan Hogg
307 Palmer Lane
McCormick, SC 29835

Download this newsletter from our website. Go to

www.operationquietcomfort.org

www.operationquietcomfort.com

and click on the "Newsletters" button!

Shipped with Love

Jan. - May 2015

By Jan Houin



We shipped 111 large boxes, 5 large Flat Rate and 2 medium Flat Rate boxes. They had a total weight of 3,052 lbs., 6 oz., and the total postage cost was \$5,072.16

Category: CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

402 pair Flip Flops
4 Men's Underwear sets (T-shirt, Boxers, Socks)
10 Men's Underwear sets + Shorts
6 Men's Underwear sets + PJ pants
12 T-shirts
12 pair Shorts
32 pair Socks

Category: BEDDING & LINENS

21 Four Freedoms Gratitude Quilts
45 Small Quilts
5 Lapghans

Category: FOOD & EQUIPMENT

17 Sugar (4 lb. plastic tub)
17 Creamer (plastic tub)
1488 oz. *Good* Coffee
318 individual servings Hot Cocoa
844 individual servings Tea
304 K-cups Coffee
264 K-cups Tea

96 K-cups Cider
1,521 individual servings Drink Mix
6,456 individual Healthy Snacks
31 larger pkg. Healthy Snacks
296 Microwave Meals
821 individual servings Jerky
25 bags Candy
92 Bread Mix
43 Spreads (PB&J, Honey, Nutella)

Category: GROOMING & HYGIENE

329 Go Bags

Category: SPECIAL PROJECTS

118 Hand Warmers

Category: MORALE, WELFARE, RECREATION

47 Puzzle Books

CARDS

Over 3,000 cards were sent with messages of appreciation and encouragement, but sadly, some boxes went with no cards. This is a simple way for you to contribute at no cost. **PLEASE keep the cards coming.** We put 5 cards in every Go Bag and try to top off every box we send with a bag of 20 to 30 cards for all of the troops to know that a grateful nation truly cares!



Packages are ready to go to our troops.

Board of Directors

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elliew@operationquietcomfort.com



Established in July 2004 for the purpose of honoring and comforting members of the U.S. Armed Forces injured while in harm's way, and providing support to those who care for them.

About Our Work

We're creating care packages for U.S. Military men and women receiving care at medical facilities abroad. Often our injured men and women arrive for medical care without their belongings and it can take weeks before those belongings catch up with them—and sometimes they don't arrive at all. Even when injured our troops need items like hygiene and grooming products, clothing, entertainment and support from the home front.

It is the mission of this effort to help assure those individuals are honored for their sacrifice and comforted by creating "GO BAGS," or transition kits, that include comfort items like our "Four Freedoms Gratitude Quilt," personal care items and products that entertain and provide "down time" for their spiritual, emotional and physical healing.

We rely on the expertise of Pastoral Care Services and others knowledgeable about what items are most appropriate for their particular unit or facility. As a result, the program focus will change to meet the needs of those we sponsor. The Go Bags and Four Freedoms Gratitude Quilts are just part of our work ... there are opportunities for everyone to show their thanks and appreciation.

Everyone brings different gifts to the table ... we invite you to share yours!

In-Kind Donations

(including quilts, knit items and cool ties)

Operation: Quiet Comfort

c/o The Houins

17671 13th Rd.

Plymouth, IN 46563

www.operationquietcomfort.com

www.operationquietcomfort.org

Founder Lori Pate, La Salle, MI

lpate@operationquietcomfort.com

Volunteer Project Coordinators

PROJECT: OQC Online Newsletter

Coordinator: Janis Schafnitz-Hogg

jans-h@operationquietcomfort.com

PROJECT: Four Freedoms Gratitude Quilt Kits

quilts@operationquietcomfort.com

PROJECT: Quilt Assembly Questions

Carol Anderson

chateau@cablespeed.com

PROJECT: Small Quilts - 3' x 5' Cot/Gurney/Litter Quilts

Coordinator: Cristina Conciatori

cristinac@operationquietcomfort.com

PROJECT: Member-to-Member Program-Quilt Supplies & Blank Denim Blocks, matching Angels with members needing supplies

Coordinator: Sandy Scharf

qocmembertomember@gmail.com

PROJECT: Cool Comfort Neck Ties

Coordinator: Heidi Bristol

heidibristol@att.net

PROJECT: Crochet & Knitted Items

Coordinators: Katie Baron

katieb@operationquietcomfort.com

Julie B. Barrett

jbarrett5@cox.net

PROJECT: Travel-size Pillowcases

Temporary Coordinator:

Janis Schafnitz-Hogg

jans-h@operationquietcomfort.com

PROJECT: Sea to Shining Sea - Recycling Printer Cartridges and Cell Phones

Chair Cristina Conciatori

cristinac@operationquietcomfort.com

PROJECT: Fundraising, eBay & Amazon Sales

Contact: Cristina Conciatori for

information, to register for selling on eBay or Amazon for OQC

cristinac@operationquietcomfort.com

PROJECT: Cards of Thanks and Well Wishes and Volunteers to Sign Them

Contact: Diane Schneider

diane8587@gmail.com for guidelines

119 Brentfield Loop
Morrisville, NC 27560

PROJECT: Membership

Questions/Comments/Posting Guidelines

Coordinator: Cristina Conciatori

cristinac@operationquietcomfort.com

Signed Blocks:

Operation Quiet Comfort

17671 13th Road

Plymouth, IN 46563



Special thanks to the Newsletter Crew—

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Jan Houin

Ken Houin

Diane Schneider



OQC is proud to be working in partnership with AnySoldier.com.