

The USO Insider

5 March 2007

Inside This Issue

- 1 A Note From the President
- 2 SeaTac Homecomings and Operation Heart-to-Heart
- 3 McChord USO Volunteer: Ella Young
- 4 SeaTac Center Update; McChord & Mobile Canteen Updates; and Regional Office Report
- 5 Regional Office Report cont.; Comedy Show Stars Visit Ft. Lewis; Planning Ahead for Emergencies
- 6 March Volunteer Birthdays and Comments from Our Clients
- 7 Seattle Mariners' Salute to Armed Forces



A SeaTac Welcome Home to members of the 191st Infantry

A Note from the President

Although the USO Puget Sound Area serves a very specific and heroic portion of our community – military members and their families – we are also only one of a large number of non-profit organizations that provide social services to residents of our region.

In my role as President/Executive Director of the USOPSA, I ventured into the world of other non-profit executives several times in February. The annual meeting of the United Way King County was a chance for me to meet peers and leaders of a large organization that contributes to us financially through payroll deductions within the annual United Way and Combined Federal Campaigns. As part of their Executive Alliance I attended a Roundtable where Executive Directors could share ideas and experiences. In both cases, I came back with a sense of pride and the knowledge that the USOPSA is focused, professional and successful at meeting the needs of those we serve. I also have an even greater empathy for those community groups working constantly to improve the lot of the less fortunate among us.

Ways to raise the public profile of the USO, different approaches to organizational development and means to expand our relationships with the business community were some of the workshop topics at a professional development conference I also attended February. There are always improvements non-profits can make in these areas so it was time well spent.

Finally, I spent a day at a seminar on disaster preparedness that built on the experiences of the nasty weather we had in December. (See an article on this subject elsewhere in the newsletter.) Interestingly, the United Way is adding a requirement for an organizational recovery plan as a new condition for their support, further encouraging pre-disaster planning. I am extremely proud of the volunteers that kept our USO Centers operational despite bad weather, no power and difficult travel conditions. We couldn't have done it without your dedicated service. Thank you.

Regards,

Tom

SeaTac Homecomings

By Sylvia Key

Twenty-three happy Army troops and families were reunited in SeaTac on February 18 when a team from the 191st Infantry Brigade returned from 13 months in Iraq where they were training Iraqi police forces. On February 24th, the Washington National Guard's 205th Regiment returned home from Afghanistan. In both cases, the airlines let the families through security for a welcome at the gate and let the troops get off first, to the joy of friends and family eagerly awaiting the return of their loved ones. The children (there were many) proudly held their banners and balloons. You could hear the children calling for their Daddies and Mommies.

After all the hugging and kissing, everyone went up to the SeaTac auditorium which USO volunteers had decorated for the occasion and had plenty of refreshments ready. The returning troops gathered there for a brief ceremony with welcoming remarks from their Commanding Officers and a moment of silence for fallen comrades. There was a lot of picture taking and then it was time to party.

As usual, the USO Volunteers did a tremendous job. They are truly the greatest volunteers any organization could have.



Refreshments served by SeaTac USO Volunteers greet troops returning from Iraq.

Operation Heart-to-Heart

By Tracye Kakely

For four months, the USO Puget Sound has partnered with Support America's Armed Forces (SAAF) and Harborstone Credit Union to support our military in the Puget Sound Area and our troops that are deployed. As McChord Center Manager I work closely with Vicky Mohler, President and founder of SAAF, and Carlene Joseph, Vice President of Military Relations for Harborstone Credit Union.

On Saturday, February 24, 2007, McChord USO volunteers, SAAF and Harborstone sent three hundred Care Packages to deployed military personnel. Each Care Package was sent to a soldier who had requested to be adopted through the SAAF website. The items that were collected at the Puyallup Top Foods were used for the Care Packages and were packed and mailed on site. Additional items will be distributed to the 66th MP Battalion on Fort Lewis and the deployment line at the McChord USO Center.

With the increased need to support our military personnel and their families, now more than ever, we need to show our support to our military. In fact, this was the third event that the USO, SAAF, and Harborstone have done together, and the show of support from the McChord USO volunteers has been incredible!

We are not done, though - the USO, SAAF, and Harborstone have scheduled collection dates throughout the rest of 2007. We have collected cards from children, magazines, books, socks, hygiene products, and non-perishable food items. Each and every item is distributed to our military through Care Packages and/or a designated Family Readiness Group (FRG).

I encourage you to visit the SAAF website at: www.supportamericasarmedforces.com to look at our past events and to contribute a name of a soldier to be adopted. I also would like to encourage our USO volunteers from both SeaTac and McChord to get involved with these collections and show your support to our military!

Anyone interested in participating with Operation Heart-to-Heart, contact Tracye at 253-589-8772.



Care packages for 300 deployed soldiers are packed for shipment.

USO Volunteer Spotlight: One of a series

McChord USO Volunteer

Ella Young

In 1983, McChord AFB requested that the USO Puget Sound Area open a facility in what was then the MAC Passenger Terminal. The McChord USO opened on November 11, 1984 and was opened daily for 24 hours. The present USO is located in the former AAFES snack bar, between the Troop Holding Area and the Passenger Terminal and hours of operation are Monday-Saturday, 6am-6pm. It was completely remodeled in 2000.

There have been many changes in the 23 years the McChord USO has been opened; however, we wanted to feature a volunteer who is a familiar face at McChord USO-Ella Young. Ella has been serving our military for 20 years. Some of the soldiers have even called her their second "Mom".

Ella and husband George moved to the Pacific Northwest from Newfoundland in 1963. In 1967 George retired from the work force. Ella and George volunteered at Madigan Hospital on Fort Lewis for 18 years. Then in 1987, George and Ella started volunteering at the McChord USO working the midnight to 6am shifts. Ella still volunteers every Monday delivering food items to the Cyber Café for the Single Airmen.

When asked why her and George chose to volunteer at the USO, Ella's answer is a very common answer among all our volunteers. Ella and George are so thankful for her military life all they wanted to do is give back to our military troops. The military blessed and embraced Ella when she first moved to the United States in 1952. She never felt like an outsider and appreciates all of what our military soldiers do for us. In Ella's own words, "My heart goes out to them. I would give all of them a hug if I could."

Ella's love for the military is emphasized through one of her fond memories, "A visitor from Alaska left an important book at the USO. Upon returning home, she wrote a letter asking if the book had been found. I searched six weeks in which I had success in finding and returning the book. The lady sent me a beautiful thank you note. I help wherever I can."

Ella states she is here to serve our soldiers as they are here to serve our country. This commitment is why Ella is the "Mom" to all of our soldiers who deploy and travel through the McChord USO.



Ella and George Young

SeaTac Center Updates

Attention SeaTac Center Volunteers:

Remember to get your Food Handler's Permit if you have not already gotten it. The deadline is April 29th. Thank you.

In Other News...

Increased Luggage Security - A locked security cabinet has been installed in the small luggage room across from the reception desk. The key is on the big red heart in the desk drawer. In the cabinet there is a board with two sets of numbers on it. One number should be taped on the article to be locked up and the other number should be given to the client. The client must return the number he has been given to the volunteer on duty in order to receive his/her article. Please pay close attention to the luggage room as there has been items missing and the Police Department is getting concerned about it. **DO NOT TURN OFF THE LIGHTS IN THE LUGGAGE ROOM.** The lights must also be kept on in the hallway leading to the Emergency EXIT door, on the other side of the TV room. **No sleeping is allowed in that hallway.** Thank you for your attention to this.

The Mom's Club of Kent, WA delivered Valentines for our troops on February 9. I asked them if they would like to return on Valentine's Day so their 2-3 year olds could pass out Valentines to the military here in the center that day. They arrived at 10:00 a.m. and distributed their Valentines. We then had valentine cookies and milk for the children. Everyone had a good time and they all agreed to come back next year!

We have had the opportunity to have four teenage students from St. Anthony's School in Renton come once a week to volunteer. They have been given a variety of work to do from helping Kelly in the office to interviewing our clients. They made banners and helped decorate for the soldiers coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan. This has been a wonderful experience for our USO to have these students here. A special thank you to Jordan Kiga, Kelsey Nolan, Renee Sullivan, and Nathan Tabisula for a job well done. It has been a real pleasure having you here.

Vaughn Holden, who has been a volunteer at the USO for five years, has resigned. He did the Midnight - 4:00 A.M. shift on Monday mornings. Thank you Vaughn for a great job - we are going to miss you!

McChord & Mobile Canteen Updates

Attention All McChord USO Volunteers:

Due to staffing difficulties, the McChord AFB 62d Medical Group Public Health Department will be postponing the mandatory health training till March 14th, 2007 from 10:30 to noon.

Other McChord & Mobile News:

Feb 8th - Tracye did an interview with Al Knight to discuss the United Reading Program and the upcoming Whidbey Island trip.

Feb 9th - The McChord USO had their Grand Opening of their United Reading Program. So far, twenty-nine military personnel have used this service.

Feb 12th - The McChord USO provided items for Care Packages to 200 Reservists deployed to do border patrol at the Mexican border.

Feb 16th - McChord USO provided paper products, bottled water, and Albertson Cookies for the Single Airmen Spaghetti Dinner which was held at the Cyber Café on McChord AFB.

Upcoming McChord USO Events:

Saturday, March 24th-Operation Heart-to-Heart with SAAF and Harborstone Credit Union at Top Foods in Lacey. Volunteers needed to collect items and pack care packages. Contact Tracye if interested in participating.

REGIONAL OFFICE REPORT

Number Served

We have wonderful news to share: **Our numbers are up!** Last year, in 2006, the USO Puget Sound Area served approx. 35,650 military and dependents than 2005. We served a total of 149,726* military and dependents, 86,435 sandwiches, 119,124 bakery items, 67,660 cups of coffee, and 1,409 gallons of milk. SeaTac alone served 70,894 military and dependents, while McChord served 35,592*, and 43,153 were served by our Outreach programs at McChord and our Grants Program. Our wonderful USO Center Volunteers put in over 24,108 hours of service to make this all possible. ***Which proves that without you we wouldn't be able to do what we do, so THANK YOU!***

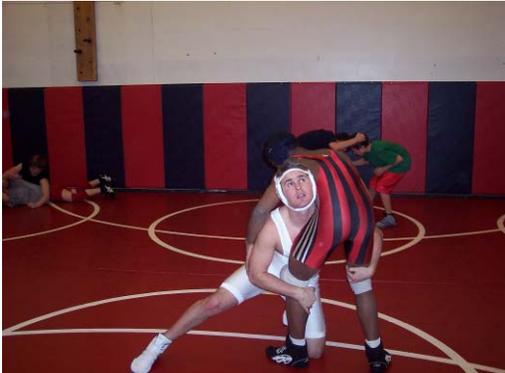
Report Continued on Page 5

REGIONAL OFFICE REPORT Cont.

Helping Hand Grants, aka Program Grants

The Programs Committee is currently working on developing written guidelines for our grant funds and in the process have developed a new name for this outreach program - the Helping Hands Grant Program. When the guidelines are complete we'll post them on the USOPSA website along with an application for funds so that more military will be aware of the program as well as the requirements for funding.

In December of 2006 Helping Hands funded wrestling equipment for SK3 Joe Czerwiec a USCG, from the Integrated Support Command, for his upcoming participation with the US Navy Wrestling Team. We now have a picture of his participation on the team and are excited to share it with you (see below). In January we assisted the Coast Guard further by providing gift certificates to the recognized 'Coastie's of the Year' to the Coast Guard Exchange.



SK3 Joe Czerwiec using Helping Hands sponsored wrestling equipment

Comedy Show Stars Visit Fort Lewis

The cast of 'Everybody Hates Chris' visited Ft. Lewis on 2/9/07. 'Everybody Hates Chris' is based on the childhood of Chris Rock and is on the CW network. Terry Crews and Tyler James Williams, who play the father and son on the show, toured the base including a visit to Madigan Army Hospital, met with children and teens at different facilities on base, and had dinner with the soldiers in one of the dining halls.

The 'handshake and photo tour' was coordinated by USO WHQ, and USO Puget Sound Area was included in the venture. Our Board Chairman George Cargill, as well as our Regional Office Manager Kelly Carey, were able to participate in the tour and learn the ins and outs of organizing entertainment for the troops.

The children, teens and troops were big fans of the actors and enjoyed meeting them, getting autographs and taking pictures. It was heartwarming to see them visiting wounded soldiers and bringing smiles to their faces. We at the USO Puget Sound Area want to thank Tyler and Terry for visiting our troops and USO WHQ's Betty Naylor and Ft. Lewis Special Affairs representative Jon Ridgel for organizing the trip.



Planning Ahead *from Tom Hinman*

If you can survive for three days after an earthquake that occurs in the middle of a winter snowstorm, you will likely be able to survive anything. Time spent in personal or family preparedness planning, gathering of food and supplies at home, at work and in your car and developing a plan to let others know your condition will pay off in well-being and peace of mind if nothing else. For USO volunteers, these are your first tasks. We want you safe for a future shift, even if you have to cancel one out. Some of our volunteers are not comfortable driving in bad weather or have roads that make it tough to get in. We understand but it only reinforces the need for us to have a good communication plan in place and contingency volunteers that can fill in during a pinch. (We can't have Sylvia sleeping at SeaTac for three days any more!)

We are fortunate that our "customers" come to us, that we have supplies on hand and that we have emergency power in SeaTac. Many businesses in the Puget Sound were down for several days and lost quite a bit of money this winter. Loss of computer data and communications with clients, suppliers or sub-contractors were among their most troubling concerns. We were spared that as well. We have a large pool of dedicated workers to draw from, while small businesses with only a few employees were unable to operate as their staffs tried to cope with loss of power, heat, food, gasoline and the other necessities of modern living.

In times of disaster we should examine how we can help others. The USO Mobile Canteen is a potential community resource that we will integrate into our disaster planning in the future. We can't be complacent as we consider all the "what ifs," but it is a comfort to realize that the USO was able to carry out its mission....this time. Let's be ready for next time so that you can protect yourselves, your families and our community.

SeaTac & McChord Birthdays

March

Patty Saint	March 01
Birgit Hunter	March 03
Rudy Joyce	March 05
Wendy Flores	March 07
Luanne Rosenfeld	March 07
Dave Cason	March 08
Nina Green	March 09
Bill Barker	March 10
Robert Talbot	March 12
Doug Hoople	March 12
Blaine Gibbs	March 13
Vicki Robbins	March 13
Priscilla Huber	March 14
Bob Krueger	March 25
Janelle L. Nelson	March 29
Bruce Carroll	March 30



Please welcome the following new volunteers:

McChord

Sharon Barclay
Charles Dixon
Douglas Dutter
Steve Fraidenburg
Belinda Hernandez
Jeffrey Jernigan
Gordon Johnson
Louis Mejia
Regina Phillabaum
Linda Rego
Robin Rego
Linda Russell
Robert Talbot
Jeanelle Waltos
Syl Wiles

SeaTac Center

Suzanne Giffta
Nancy Gundmundson
Roy Hager
Tamara Knecht
Krisit Brovold



COMMENTS FROM OUR CLIENTS

Thank you so very much for the very gracious welcome and the most wonderful treatment. I really felt at home here at the USO. Thank you so much. All are wonderful people here. God Bless.

Dennis and Carolyn (RET MSG US ARMY)

Thank you! It felt like home!

The Murray Family

You guys have done an outstanding job in receiving and caring for this new recruit when our flight was delayed. It was an excellent experience. Thank you, and God Bless!

Seaman Recruit Carlson
Bellevue, WA

Thank you for the excellent service and great place to rest while waiting for our flight! I can't thank the USO enough for everything they do to take care of every service member. Awesome job and I appreciate everything you do!

Joe Delgado, Maj. USAF
Dyess AFB, TX

Thank you for being the very special people that you are, for sharing your smiles, kind words and your time. You are doing great things at this USO and the people of the Military and families appreciate all that you do! Proud to have met you!

Michelle and Zachary Bligh
Okinawa, Japan (dep. USMC)

It's the sense of duty that keeps you going sometimes when things get very, very rough. Somebody's got to do it. And if you don't, who will?

Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf (ret.)

SEATAC Volunteers: If you are interested in being on the Mobile Canteen team, contact Sylvia.

ALL Volunteers: If you are interested in helping at the Mariners Game (4/3/07) or helping with the Golf Tournament (5/21/07) please contact Sylvia or Kelly.

SEATTLE MARINERS' SALUTE TO ARMED FORCES NIGHT

Mark your calendars for this great annual family event on Thursday, April 3, 2007 with the Mariners taking on the Oakland A's at Safeco Field at 7:05 p.m. Join other USO Volunteers & Staff for a special pre-game program honoring the United States Armed Forces, service veterans & support organizations. Festivities begin at 6:30 p.m. More information will be coming for this special evening's highlights but we need to place our order for tickets now in order to get special seating. ***Each USO volunteer is eligible for 1 ticket to the game, compliments of the USO.*** Additional tickets are available for purchase through the USO at \$10.00 each and can be obtained by filling out the form below and turning it in to Sylvia or Tracye with your order. **Please complete and turn in the form no later than Friday March 23, 2007.**



Until Every One Comes Home.®

Volunteer Name: _____

Would you like a complimentary ticket: YES NO

Would you like to buy additional tickets: YES NO

How many additional tickets would you like to buy: _____

Amount Paid: _____ Initial: _____ Date: _____

***USO Puget Sound Area
17801 International Blvd
PMB #313
Seattle, WA 98158***