

The USO Insider

A Note from the President

11 May 2007

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Good communications is an essential component of a vibrant organization. This newsletter is a key link to all of you who serve as volunteers for the USO in the Puget Sound area. It is a way for us to keep you up to date on events and to recognize milestones and contributions from our USO family. It is also becoming a way for us to share our activities with Board members and key partners in our mission of service. By using the Internet, we add the speed, convenience and economy of e-mail. For those who prefer mail in a mail box, we also provide a standard paper version of the newsletter.

Other ways we communicate with volunteers is individually by email, by notes or by flyers and general postings in the USO Centers. As new technology and technical support has emerged, we have increasingly moved to our website, www.usopsa.org, as a way to communicate with those we serve, the general public and members of our USO team – volunteers, staff, Board, corporate sponsors and community donors. Did you know that we recently added an archive of volunteer newsletters to our website where you can check out past issues and link them to your friends and relatives? We expect to add USO Volunteer Applications to the website, along with other interactive features, to make www.usopsa.org a central part of our communications strategy. Watch for some new looks on-line in the next few weeks, including video clips of local television coverage of the most recent USO troop homecoming at SeaTac. The new Web site design and online information is made possible by our volunteer Webmaster, Kasey Frerichs of BrainEacts Web Design and Development.

Between now and the middle of June, we are fortunate to have Carrie Shaw, a veteran communications and public relations expert, working with us to raise the profile of the USO in the region by helping us tell our story in a variety of ways. How the USO assists individual service people, helps them connect with their families while they are deployed and reconnect through happy homecomings are compelling stories of human interest in which you, as volunteers, play an indispensable part. You, as faces and hearts of our community, also symbolize the support our troops deserve. USO volunteers have experiences to share and we want to give you a voice.

As we go forward, I am confident that you will be seeing growing regional recognition of the important role the USO plays in improving the welfare of our men and women in uniform. Telling that story combines pride in our achievements, an understanding of community interests and knowledge of ways to connect the two through effective communications practices. A communications initiative has been an objective of the USOPSA for several years and I am pleased that we are now taking steps in that direction. Each of you are helping write this story.

Thanks for your service to those who serve.

Regards,

Tom Hinman CDR USN Ret
President & Executive Director
USO Puget Sound Area

~ McChord Center Updates ~

Congratulations to Ann Harris for her new job at the McChord AFB Troop Holding facility. We will miss you on the Tuesday evening shift, but are sure to see you often since you will be working in the building next door to the McChord USO!! ☺

We are happy to announce that Angela Swinehart and family arrived safely to their destination in Michigan. She decided to relocate closer to family after her husband Scott left for an 18 month deployment. Angela was detrimental in implementing the United Through Reading Program at the McChord USO. We will miss Angela, Scott, Sarah and Jacob very much!

McChord USO would like to welcome two new volunteers, Kenneth Ellis and Freddie Ellis. We're glad you've joined us!

McChord and Mobile News

April 3rd-11th - Many thanks to the McChord volunteers for successfully supporting the troops, over 3,000 that deployed through the McChord USO the first week of April 2007. It was an extremely busy and stressful time, with many long hours worked. The troops very much appreciated your time, effort and cheerfulness before they boarded their airplane to parts unknown.

April 4th - The McChord USO welcomed Captain Garza and 3rd graders from Visitation School for a brief tour of our facility. The students received wristbands from Tracye, Center Manager and a warm greeting from the McChord volunteers.

April 5th - Tracye Kakely did an interview with Al Knight of KLAY radio to discuss the upcoming deployment needs at McChord USO.

April 6th - Herb Schmeling, Angela, Scott, Sarah and Jacob Swinehart and Tracye Kakely delivered homemade Easter Baskets and gift bags to the families staying at the Fort Lewis Fisher House for Operation Easter Bunny.

April 21st - Volunteers from the McChord USO partnered with SAAF and Harborstone Credit Union for Operation Support at Puyallup, Top Foods. Over 300 Care Packages were packed and shipped to troops deployed overseas and an additional ten boxes of food will be distributed to support military families on McChord AFB and Fort Lewis.

McChord USO Center Recognized for Public Service

The Ft. Lewis Chapter of the Association of the US Army's nomination of the McChord USO Center for a regional Public Service award was recently announced. We are proud of Center Manager Tracye Kakely and her dedicated team of volunteers in achieving this honor. Congratulations also to McChord volunteer Herb Schmeling who was recognized for his sustained leadership and service in a separate award.

The citation reads in part:

"The Association of the US Army Public Service Award for the Sixth Region is presented to the McChord Air Force Base Center, Puget Sound Area, United Services Organization in recognition of their meritorious customer service support to over 29,000 service members, retirees, and their family members during the past year. Center staff and volunteers worked relentlessly to provide each customer with that special 'taste of home' the USO feels they so richly deserve."

Upcoming McChord USO Events

May 18 - McChord USO Center Manager, Tracye Kakely and McChord USO volunteers will be participating in the Fort Lewis Retiree Health Fair at the American Lake Club on North Fort Lewis from 7:30am-noon. All retirees please join us for the latest in health information and preventive screenings. Open to all retired military beneficiaries.

May 19 - McChord volunteers will be showing off the USO Canteen during Armed Forces Day at Fort Lewis. It is sure to be tons of fun!!

May 28 - McChord USO Center Manager, Tracye Kakely and McChord USO volunteer Wayne Jackson will be at Patriot's Landing in Dupont for a Memorial Day Celebration with the USO Canteen.

June 2 - Our next Operation Support with partners SAAF and Harborstone Credit Union will be at Puyallup Top Foods collecting items for our military families. Contact Tracye Kakely at the McChord USO to help with this wonderful event to support our military families.

USO Volunteer Spotlight **McChord USO Volunteer** **Herb Schmeling**

If you ask Herb Schmeling why he does what he does, he will tell you that he does it because it needs to be done and he is willing to do it. To Herb his support to the USO Center at McChord is nothing more than saying thanks for the wonderful work the Center performs on behalf of the many thousands of service members which deploy through the Center each year.

Herb served with the United States Army for over 30 years and retired in 2001 from Fort Lewis. As a Command Sergeant Major, his unit the 168th Engineer Battalion passed through the McChord Center in 1997 and 1999 as they departed for training at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California. Following military retirement Herb worked as the local area manager for an east coast based financial firm and as a project manager for a local firm at Fort Lewis. Herb keeps very busy by being an active member of several volunteer and civic organizations throughout the local military and civilian communities in addition to volunteering at the McChord USO. Herb's volunteer service has been recognized as the 2007 Association of the United States Army recipient of the Sixth Region William G. Bainbridge Award for Excellence for selfless volunteer service.



Herb Schmeling

Herb Schmeling's relationship with the USO Center at McChord began in 2003 as a an in-kind donor when he and his wife provided the center with over 1,000 hot dogs and buns to support the departure of 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). A year later they would support the departure of 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division to OIF, with over 3,000 hot dogs. In June of 2006 they donated over 7,000 hot dogs to support the deployment of 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, to OIF and the relocation of soldiers and family members of the 2nd Cavalry Regiment to Germany.

Herb's most memorable USO moment of being at the right place at the right time was a few years ago when a local National Guard soldier was about to deploy. As she was holding her six month old child she remarked she wished she could have a picture of herself holding the baby. Herb rushed to his car and returned with a new disposable camera and gave it to the family to take the pictures they desired. It was a simple act of kindness and caring that the soldier will probably never forget.

Herb's passion is to be at the departure gate for every flight and ensure each deploying service member receives an USO Care Package and pleasant goodbye. He also makes sure that every service member has ample opportunity to grab a box of their favorite type of Girl Scout Cookies. Herb is always available to grocery shop for the McChord USO, to volunteer for special events, and procure donations in support of deployments. His military knowledge and outgoing personality are evident with his passion for supporting our troops. Herb loves to bring a smile to the faces of America's sons and daughters in uniform. For him it is an honor as well as a simple way to continue serving service members and their families.

SeaTac Center News

ROTC

It is that time of the year again when the ROTC Personnel (Cadre & Cadet's) will be coming through the USO on their way for training at Ft. Lewis. During the month of May, the Cadre will be arriving starting June 4th. Upon arrival the Cadet's will, pick up their baggage and report to Carousel #16, and receive the support of the SeaTac USO. This year we are expecting 5,000 Cadet's during June, July and August.

The USO will be providing sack lunches again consisting of a sandwich (ham & cheese or tuna), apple, chips, desert and a bottle of water. The Military and Department of Defense will distribute the lunches.

I would like to thank all the volunteers who put in many extra hours last summer. We have several new volunteers this year and if they would like to volunteer to help make sandwiches (300-400 a day) There is a sign up sheet at the front desk. We would appreciate any help you could give.

New Volunteers

I am pleased to announce that we have several new volunteers at our Center. They are as follows: Steve Becker, Andrew Bush; Don, Kathy and Joan Fehlings; Alice Miller; Jonathan Randolph; and Harold and Trudy Schenne. Welcome to our Center and thank you for volunteering!!!

Sick List

Just to let you know about our volunteers who have been, or are, in the hospital. **Michael Ballard** is still receiving care in St. Francis Hospital in Federal Way. **"Sarge" Carter** just got out of the hospital and is doing well according to his wife, Arlene. **Richard Holtz** is out of the hospital and is recuperating with his son and daughter-in-law in Kent. **David Tennent** will be entering the hospital on May 9 - best wishes to David. **Mike Gazarek's** hip surgery has been a big success and he is walking much better. Congratulations Mike!

Thank you for all that you do!!!

SeaTac USO Center Hosts Guard Homecoming

Thirty members of the 81st Heavy Brigade Combat Team from Spokane returned from Afghanistan through SeaTac on April 21, 2007. These National Guardsmen were met by a brass band, family, friends and Guard leadership at a reception hosted by the USO Puget Sound. The return of the 81st received local TV coverage that captured the joy as these "Citizen Soldiers" arrived safely home from their deployment.

Volunteer Feedback Wanted

Volunteer Appreciation Event

We would like to honor our volunteers as well as encourage group gatherings and have been talking about different ways to do that. Below are some ideas we've discussed.... Please let us know what you think - what you'd be interested in attending, location, etc.

USO Variety Show - Early evening show for our volunteers with a variety of entertaining acts (act ideas include: some of Seattle's best trapeze artists, acrobalance artists, bands, and other performance acts.) Suggested Locations: Columbia City (1st Vaudeville Theatre in Seattle, simply beautiful) or Burien - Church Stage.

USO Potluck/Picnic - Gathering of all our volunteers to share food and merriment. Suggested Locations: Burien, Federal Way and Fife in a park.

USO Attire

USO Apparel - We are also planning on ordering more apparel and wanted to see what the interest level was and what types of items you'd be interested in... Please let us know if you'd be interested in getting any of the following: USO Patch Embroidered on a: Coat, T-Shirt, Vest, Apron, Baseball Cap, Visor, or ?. Please let me know what you think by leaving a note in the yellow folder, sending me an email (kelly@usopsa.org) or leaving me a message at 206-246-1908 ext 104. I look forward to hearing from all of you on your thoughts, opinions and preferences!

~Kelly

SeaTac & McChord Birthdays

May

| | |
|-------------------|--------|
| Regina Phillabaum | May 04 |
| Joyce Lee | May 06 |
| Lisa Behrmann | May 07 |
| Peggy Tryer | May 07 |
| Dean Lavachek | May 13 |
| James McClue | May 17 |
| Jim McClue | May 17 |
| Stephen Becker | May 19 |
| Trudy Schenne | May 19 |
| Ella Young | May 20 |
| Sue Turner | May 26 |
| Shizuko Costello | May 27 |
| Sally Adams | May 27 |
| Diana Haines | May 28 |



SeaTac Volunteers welcome home the *Polar Sea*. From L to R: Solveig & Frank Steenerson, Patricia Stewart, Sylvia Key, Mrs. Jim Landerdahl, AJ Bilderback, and Ann Schneider.



COMMENTS FROM OUR CLIENTS

Well, you basically saved me and my family from the cold. The kindness and hospitality, yea, it rocks!

~ CSSR Johnson, USN

I am 1SG Mason and we (HHC, 1-38IN) had a great time at the McChord USO prior to flying out. Thank you for all that you offer and God Bless You.

~ 1SG Mason

The USO – as always, thanks for your support and the kindness you showed to all of us. The USO is like a “home away” for some of us. Thanks!

~ Ben, U.S. Army, ret.

Thank you for the great hospitality. This is by far one of the best USOs I have ever been to. Keep up the good work.

~ Sgt. Holly Johnson, 431st QMCo.

Thanks for the break in a long day. And especially a place for my very pregnant wife to relax.

~ Anonymous

Could not ask for a better support to our troops. I'm sure that everyone that has used the USO are very thankful. Keep up the good work.

~ John S., Capt., U.S. Navy, ret.

The secret of happiness is freedom. The secret of freedom is courage.

~ *Thucydides, ancient Greek historian and author*

Armed Forces Night with The Seattle Mariners

On April 3rd, 2007 the USO Puget Sound Area participated in the annual Seattle Mariner's Armed Forces Night. With the assistance of donors like Lockheed Martin and General John & Joan Shalikashvili, we were able to provide over 450 tickets to active members of the military. We also had over 50 volunteers attend the game as a 'thank you' for their dedicated service. Volunteers from the SeaTac USO staffed three tables during the game, running a silent auction, selling our USO Hero bears and USO bags for a suggested donation, and letting attendees know of the great work we do throughout the game. Volunteers from the Mobile Canteen were also there in force before the game. The Canteen was parked right outside of the stadium this increased our visibility and allowed us to serve people as they entered. Thanks to our silent auction, bear and bags sales, as well as individual donations, we were able to raise more than \$3,800 for the USO Puget Sound Area.

Special thanks to our volunteers that helped out: Ann Schneider, Art Thompson, Cindy Shephard, Carrie Thearle, Denny & Julie Hamilton, Doris Spence, Evalena Hatcher, Jack & Joice Barton, Jim Landerdahl & Wife, LLOYD Case, Patricia Stewart, and Sarge Carter; and our USO PSA Staff: Kelly Carey & Sylvia Key.



SeaTac USO volunteers Doris Spence and Evalena Hatcher chat behind the silent auction table at SAFECO Field on Mariners' Armed Forces Night.

USOPSA Team at USO World Conference

The first week of May, your Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board, George Cargill and Tom Jaffa respectively, attended the annual stateside USO Conference in Denver accompanied by President Tom Hinman and Business and Finance Manager Kelly Carey. Only George had been to a World Headquarters (WHQ) event before so the team learned a lot. It was a great opportunity to meet with WHQ staff and peers from other USO Affiliates. Besides getting new "best practices" ideas in a range of program and management issues, there was a chance to better understand WHQ expectations on standardized financial reporting and desired metrics for all USO Centers. Watch for more information from this experience in the future.

Staff Announcement

Great News! Our resident Office Manager, Kelly Carey, has moved up in the world of USO Puget Sound Area. She's been given a new title, Business & Finance Manager, which more clearly reflects her higher level of financial education as well as her roles and responsibilities within the organization. Congratulations, Kelly!

USOPSA to Sponsor IFL Clinic in Everett

On May 30, mixed martial arts combatants and coaches from the International Fight League will hold a clinic integrated with Navy physical fitness training at Naval Base Everett. It will be a great occasion for service members to get some self-defense training from experts and leads up to an IFL match featured at the Everett Events Center on June 1st. This will be a "first" for our USO, who learned of this opportunity from the USO World entertainment staff.