



U.S. Department of Defense

Casualty Statistics (as of Sept. 9, 2013)

Operation Enduring Freedom Afghanistan

Total Deaths 2,265
Wounded 19,277

Operation New Dawn Kuwait and other Locations

Total Deaths 66
Wounded 295



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

THE DRAW DOWN AND OPERATION: QUIET COMFORT

By Jan Hogg, McCormick, SC

In case you were wondering how the draw down is affecting Operation: Quiet Comfort, let me assure you it isn't what you would think. In our case the draw down means more needs have to be met.

Even though there is a draw down in place, our heroes are still being deployed. The white busses are still rolling. For those that have not experienced the sight of the white busses taking our heroes to their deployment, it is very emotional and a reminder that we are still needed. Besides the continued deployments, our troops are experiencing fewer supplies accessible to them. That is where Operation: Quiet Comfort comes in. With their PX's being removed and one meal being replaced with a MRE, we are stepping up our shipments and trying to provide what they need. There will be more and more simple comforts removed as part of the draw down.

Operation: Quiet Comfort, with your help, will be doing everything possible to get them through this and make them aware we know what they are doing for us and appreciate all their sacrifices.

Your donations are needed to continue our stepped up mission to be there for our heroes. Please consider making a monetary donation to:

Operation: Quiet Comfort
307 Palmer Lane
McCormick, SC 29835

Thank you for making a difference.



U.S. Soldiers with the 2nd Platoon, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment, Guam Army National Guard gather to say a prayer before a mission at Main Operating Base Lashkar Gab, Helmand province, Afghanistan, July 19, 2013. (DoD photo by Sgt. Eddie Siguenza, U.S. Army National Guard/Released)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Bargains Can be an Adventure	2	Quilters Needed.	4
2013 Energized Meet & Greet.	2	From the Front.	5
Taking a Flying Leap.	3	A Small Touch of Home	6

Buying Bargains can be an Adventure! *By Jan Houin, Plymouth, IN*

It's been a busy summer and it has gone way too fast in my opinion. That may not be the opinion of family and friends of our deployed troops. Waiting for a safe return is not an easy task for our troops or their loved ones. We continue to send boxes of comfort items to make their deployments a little easier and let them know they are not forgotten.

As many of you know, my sister and board member, Peggy Reynolds, and I do much of the shopping for OQC here in northern IN. I love bargain shopping and the adventures are sometimes "memorable." Let me share a few of our summer shopping memories.

In late June, Old Navy had their famous annual \$1 flip flop sale. There is a five-pair limit; however, we have a connection with one store manager who supports the mission of OQC in a big way. This store manager and his assistant come into the store early for us to make a major purchase for the troops. Peggy, her husband Mike, and I met them there at 4:00 a.m. and spent the next hour and a half purchasing 400 pair of flip flops – leaving before the store officially opened at 7:00 a.m.! We recently heard back from one of our units telling us just how much they appreciate those "shower shoes."

Later in July we went shopping to get the items needed for our normal monthly packing and the Meet & Greet event at the end of July. Our goal was to pack 300 Go Bags. Many items are ordered in bulk on-line but other items are purchased from local stores. On a regular mega shopping spree (ask Cris, our treasurer, about those) we head north to South Bend and Mishawaka, IN. One particular day in July we shared the trip with



Peggy's van is stuffed to the roof with bargains!

my 11- and 13-year-old granddaughters and Peggy's 6-year-old grandson. Our stops included two Targets, two Big Lots, four Dollar Trees, three Walmarts, one Sam's Club and one Christmas Tree Shoppe stores. All in one day!

Then there was last week's adventure. Bailey's Discount Center in North Judson, IN, is a great friend of OQC. They have many close-out items at great bargain prices. The owners are super supporters of OQC.

Peggy, my granddaughter, Summer, and I made the trip there. We had four grocery carts plus a flatbed cart loaded with goodies for our troops. The short story is that half-way through loading Peggy's van the keys got locked in it. My husband, Kenny, drove 10 miles to get the extra key from Peggy's husband, then 40 miles to Bailey's.

In the meantime I tried to pay in two separate transactions, and the bank couldn't see my sweet innocent face so they put a temporary hold on my debit card thinking I was a criminal. Bailey's is a very large metal building (they advertise "seven acres under one roof"), so I had to go to the parking lot to call the bank and convince them I was who I said I was and a very honest person.

Every trip to Bailey's I say we won't get everything into Peggy's van but she's a master packer and somehow, she makes it happen. Thank goodness we own a storage unit because we are already preparing for the holiday packing with 800 pair of socks, hot chocolate, jerky and other goodies we will be sending to the troops in Holiday stockings before you know it.

2013 Energized Meet & Greet *By Jan Houin, Plymouth, IN*

Saturday, July 27, volunteers gathered at the Houin's for the Operation: Quiet Comfort 2013 Meet & Greet event. The number of volunteers was smaller than last year but the energy was amazing! We packed 300 Go Bags, approximately 500 pair of flip flops and over 100 boxes of bread mix. Cards of thanks and appreciation were added to every box to encourage our troops and let them know that a grateful nation truly cares.



Braden Smith, son of SFC Travis Smith, helped pack boxes at the Meet & Greet.

Taking a Flying Leap *By Jan Houin, Plymouth, IN*



Troy Church, General Manager of Plymouth Sky Sports, checks his altimeter just after he and Jan Houin exited a perfectly good airplane!

The weather was iffy. Here in northern Indiana we are used to “lake-effect snow” in the winter, but in all my life, I don’t remember “lake-effect clouds and rain,” but that is what they called it that day. You have to have faith in

the professionals. If it wasn’t safe, the pilot wouldn’t fly the plane and the sky divers wouldn’t jump, right?

It’s a bird, it’s a plane, no wait ... it’s a flying nun?

The “Jump With Jan” sky diving event for Operation: Quiet Comfort took place July 28 at Plymouth Sky Sports, Plymouth Municipal Airport in Plymouth, IN. Six individuals volunteered to raise funds by jumping out of a perfectly good airplane. Last year I jumped as a way to raise donations for OQC. This year my husband suggested that I ask others to jump to raise more funds. Interestingly enough, he was not one of the jumpers.

An unexpected jumper, 80-year-old Sister Michelle Dermody of the Poor Hand Maids of Jesus Christ, raised over \$1,500 to sponsor her jump. Sister Michelle has a very personal reason to help the troops. Her brother, Michael Dermody, gave the ultimate sacrifice during WWII. He was a member of the US Navy Seabees. “It’s

not about me.” Sister Michelle said, “It’s about making people aware that we still have troops out there every day putting themselves in harm’s way for us.”

Her decision to jump was easy to make. “I am pushing myself to send a blessing to someone going to the front lines. They push themselves every day, so can I.”

Three other jumpers were veterans. Andrew Kohman said, “I wanted to challenge my fear of heights while doing something good for other soldiers.” His mom had seen a flyer and encouraged Andrew to sign up. Jerry Jackson was crossing something off his bucket list while giving back to the troops when he jumped. Bob “Wally” Walls was the first to jump. “It was awesome,” he said.

Jo Thomas, a friend of mine since grade school, had a dual purpose for jumping. “I’m raising money for a good cause and it’s my 60th birthday present,” she said.

It was my second time to jump and it was just as thrilling as the first! Even more exciting than the sky dive itself was the fact that over 100 people came to watch and cheer us on (although many called us crazy). I can’t say enough about the support for OQC from the entire team at Plymouth Sky Sports. They are professionals that not only make me feel totally safe, but they make it fun.

To get the full picture you can go to YouTube and view Jump With Jan for OQC. What heights will you go to raise funds for the mission of Operation: Quiet Comfort?



(Photo at left) Jan and Troy are all smiles as they have their feet back on the ground after an exciting and exhilarating successful sky dive!

(Photo at right) Troy Church of Plymouth Sky Sports assisting Sister Michelle Dermody suiting up for their tandem sky dive!



Quilters Needed! By Katie Baron, Byram, NJ

Are you a quilter or do you know a quilter? Is there a quilting circle that meets in your neighborhood, local craft store or place of worship? Operation: Quiet Comfort needs quilters to assemble Four Freedoms Gratitude Quilts from the kits. The kit includes everything you need for the front of the quilt and the dedication block for the back. Quilters are asked to provide the batting or flannel for the inside and the backing material. After resolving some production issues, OQC now has dozens of kits ready and waiting to be put together; we just need the people to do it.

What exactly is a Four Freedoms Gratitude Quilt (FFGQ)? A Four Freedoms Gratitude Quilt is created from denim squares cut from our well-loved blue jeans and signed with heart-felt written messages of thanks, appreciation and encouragement by groups and individuals from all across America. The Four Freedoms Gratitude Quilt became our (forgive the pun) "signature" item to send to injured service members receiving medical care abroad. It is a symbol of the love and respect that we have for our troops.

The Four Freedoms Gratitude Quilt pattern was designed by OQC founder, Lori Pate. She was inspired by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's address to Congress on January 6, 1941, where he cited the "Four Freedoms": Freedom of Speech, Freedom to Worship, Freedom From Want, and Freedom From Fear.

If you are already one of OQC's quilters, thank you! If you are not a quilter, please consider reaching out to quilters you may know or a local quilting circle. Let them know that it doesn't need to be a long term commitment; even if the people you contact can do one quilt, it will make a difference for our wounded heroes.

To request a quilt kit, just send an email to quilts@operationquietcomfort.com.

Completed quilts can be sent to:
 Operation: Quiet Comfort
 c/o The Houins
 17671 13th Rd.
 Plymouth IN 46563



Four Freedoms Gratitude Quilt center with signed squares.



Four Freedoms Gratitude Quilt.

☆☆ FROM THE FRONT ☆☆

Dear Operation Quiet Comfort,

Thank you so much for thinking of us. We appreciate everything you send.

Cpt. _____

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

"Dear Operation Quiet Comfort,

Thank you so much for the care package. It really means a lot to us here at _____. with the mission being to be out of here by 2015, several amenities have also left i.e. laundry service so the extra undies were especially needed.

I did save some for "victims," but the rest the females were ecstatic about! Even the socks were a big hit! The blankets are so lovely just today I gave a blanket to a Marine patient. That worked out nicely. Again than you for your support & kindness.

Regards,
Maj. O-D"

How can we NOT keep those packages going! Please do what you can to support Operation Quiet Comfort and tell everyone you know about our mission and give them the opportunity to show our Military men and women that a grateful nation truly cares!

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Hello Ma'am,

I'm Hospital Corpsman Second Class _____ of the United States Navy. I wanted to let you know that our crew here in _____ Afghanistan really appreciated the care packages that we received while deployed. The packages were addressed to _____ of the U.S. Air Force and fortunately she has made it home. Our crew will officially be gone from Afghanistan as of September 6 and our facility will no longer exist. We would not want any resources to go unused or returned so I'm informing you in advance not to send anything else. Thanks for everything that you all have done for us these past 6 months. Words cannot express the gratitude that we have for you all.

V/R
Johanna Desmonique ____HM2 USN

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Good morning,

I was given your contact information from HN ____ who was the point of contact for the ICW at the _____, MMU. I have heard nothing but great things about your program and I would like to thank you on behalf of all the patients here for your ongoing support. I am really looking forward to continuing what HN ____ had going with you and I am hoping to provide a fluid turn over with her. If there is any information or something I can do to help you please don't hesitate to ask. I understand that this is a volunteer service and I could not be more grateful or appreciative of your support. Your services really do make a difference in the quality of patient care.

She gave me a general overview of your program, however, it would be great to correspond with you about the ins and outs of your program.

Looking to hear from you soon, if I don't reply right away it is most likely due to the time difference and I will respond as soon as I am able, I generally check my e-mail periodically throughout each shift including my days away from the ward.

Thank you again for all you do.

Very Respectfully,
HN _____, Jennifer L
Hospital Corpsman
Afghanistan

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Greetings on this labor day from Afghanistan !

E-mailing you to let you know that we have received your boxes! Thank you! They wouldn't have come at a better time! We were all but almost out of shower shoes for our patients! I am happy to let you know that I was able to give two of the backpacks to some wounded warriors and they were so appreciative, especially of the phone cards and other various hygiene items that were in them it really does make the biggest difference.

The staff would like to send a big thank you for the easy mac, I guess they must have been hungry because they all were very excited when I opened the boxes. Thank you so much for your ongoing support!

Very Respectfully,
HN _____, Jennifer L
Hospital Corpsman

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆



Lainey and her mom, Debby, were "first timers" at a packing event.

A Small Touch of Home for the Holidays *By Jan Houin, Plymouth, IN*



“Santa, we need donations for 800 Holiday Stockings for our troops!”

Touching hearts by providing comfort items for our wounded troops and the medical staff that care for them is what the volunteers of Operation: Quiet Comfort do. It may seem early but the holiday shipment is huge and we need to make sure they receive it on time.

OQC plans to fill 800 Holiday stockings with phone cards, healthy snacks, socks, hand & toe warmers and cards. We can do this with YOUR help! Sponsorship for each stocking is \$10.00 which includes the shipping.

Let's brighten the holidays for those who are sacrificing so much for our freedom! This will not replace their family Christmas, but it will let them know that a grateful nation truly cares and they are not forgotten.

PLEASE pass the opportunity to **EVERYONE** you know, **ASK** them to donate! \$10 is one meal out, 2 fancy coffees, 3 bags of chips . . . the sacrifice you make to send your \$10 is little compared to the sacrifices our U.S. Armed Forces men and women are making for us.

If you would like more “hands on” experience with this project, join us on

Nov. 2 at 10:00 a.m. to pack these stockings at the home office of Ken and Jan Houin in Plymouth, IN.

We appreciate any assistance you give to touch the hearts of our heroes!

Donations may be made via PayPal or mailed to:

Operation: Quiet Comfort
307 Palmer Lane
McCormick, SC 29835

(Checks may be made payable to OQC and NOTE: Holiday)

If you have any questions or would like more information you may contact me personally at: janh@operationquietcomfort.com or phone 574-936-1424

Operation: Quiet Comfort is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit so your donation may be tax deductible.

Fill this stocking and a soldier's heart

~~FOR ONLY~~
\$10



Each \$10 sponsorship fills a stocking with:

- An individually wrapped beef stick or beef jerky
- An Individually wrapped granola bar or protein bar
- 1 - pair of white socks
- A SPAWAR calling card
- A letter or card specially written from an OQC member for the holidays

Donations can be made via Pay Pal (admin@operationquietcomfort.com) or by check mailed to the following address:

Operation: Quiet Comfort
307 Palmer Lane
McCormick SC 29835

Please act soon!
In order to get the
stockings into the
hands of our soldiers
the deadline for
donations is 10/31/2013



Operation: Quiet Comfort is a 501(c)(3), nonprofit, charitable organization registered in the state of Michigan. We graciously accept financial contributions that will help us continue this work. We need your help during this time of war. Donations are an essential part of how our work is accomplished at home and abroad. Your gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please consult your tax advisor with questions.

www.operationquietcomfort.com



The tailgating crowd who came out to watch the skydives for OQC.



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 accepting 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.com
<<http://www.operationquietcomfort.com/>>
 and click on the “Newsletters” button!

Shipped with Love June - August, 2013

By Jan Houin

Category: CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

- 270 pair Flip Flops
- 106 pair Female Underclothing
- 31 Sports Bras
- 114 pair Ladies Crew Socks
- 7 Ladies PJ Pants

Category: BEDDING & LINENS

- 17 Four Freedoms Gratitude Quilts
- 18 Small Quilts
- 3 Lapghans
- 200 Travel Pillows
- 341 Pillow Cases

Category: FOOD & EQUIPMENT

- 160 Bread Mixes
- 73 Spreads (PB&J, Honey, Nutella)
- 1722 oz. *Good Coffee*
- 72 K-cups of Coffee
- 288 individual servings Cappuccino
- 1286 Individual servings Tea
- 108 Grab-n-Go Cups
- 12 Sugar (4-lb. plastic tub)
- 15 Creamer



- 222 Microwave Meals
- 1064 Individual servings Jerky
- 1068 Healthy Snacks
- 2946 Individual Drink Mix

Category: GROOMING & HYGIENE

- 229 Go Bags
- 40 boxes Female Hygiene
- 3 large Lotion

Category: SPECIAL PROJECTS

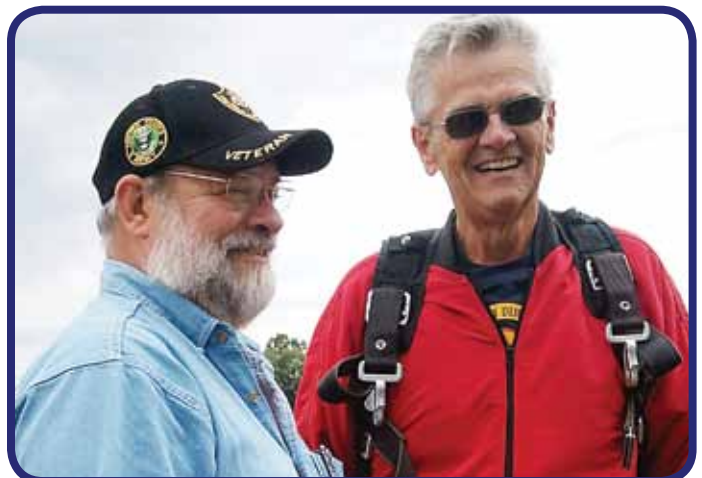
- 225 Cool Ties

Category: SPECIAL REQUESTS

- (At times we hear from contacts with special requests and we try to meet their wishes when possible.)
- 2 boxes Dog Biscuits for our K-9 Troops
 - 20 pkg. of Candy and “not so healthy” Snacks
 - 1 Soccer Ball

CARDS

We sent thousands but sadly some boxes went with none. PLEASE write more!!



Shown are Army buddies, Kenny Houin, left, and Wally. Bob “Wally” Walls has been a friend of Kenny and Jan Houin since they met in Heidleberg, Germany, where both guys served in the 529th Honor Guard. They became friends when Wally, who was a single soldier at the time, discovered that Jan could cook! Wally and his wife, Bonnie, made the trip from Flint, MI, so he could Jump With Jan for OQC.



Board of Directors

President: Janis Schafnitz-Hogg

McCormick, SC

jans-h@operationquietcomfort.com

Secretary: Katie Baron

Byram, NJ

katieb@operationquietcomfort.com

Treasurer: Cristina Conciatori

Bardonia, NY

cristinac@operationquietcomfort.com

Barbara Declément

Hammonton, NJ

Jan Houin

Plymouth, IN

janh@operationquietcomfort.com

Peggy Reynolds

Plymouth, IN

peggyr@operationquietcomfort.com

Ellie Williams

Sylvania, OH

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

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

oqcmembertomember@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

Coordinator: Connie B.

mbfans@aol.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—

Coordinator: Jan Hogg

Newsletter

Design, Editing and

Layout:

Ellie Williams

Sylvania, OH

Contributors:

Jan Hogg

Jan Houin

Katie Baron



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