



Soldiers' Angels

"May No Soldier Go Unloved"



# Sewing Team Newsletter



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Publisher: Dee Jerge

Editor: Karen Giffin

comments/feedback: bohnewsletter@gmail.com

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## Christmas in the War Zone

Do you have a favorite Christmas tradition? Mine is pretty ordinary... while I pick up the room of wrapping paper and ribbon, my husband and children fix breakfast. The "kids" are adults now, but the tradition started when they were babies... I'm not allowed in the kitchen. I love every minute of listening to them talking, laughing, whipping up batter and spilling things... our kitchen ends up looking like a cyclone came through! (Dishes duty is mine!) There is no more precious gift than the joy of being with the people I love most, doing something completely ordinary.

For over 180,000 of our beloved heroes, special Christmas, Hanukkah and other holiday family moments will go on without them – their experience will be by email or phone, with pictures sent over the Internet.

We have decided to wrap each one of our deployed heroes in holiday spirit with a "Blanket of Belief" to remind them that we love them and we believe in them.

We will also be reminding our veterans that we have not forgotten them. "Blankets of Gratitude" will direct your knitted, crocheted and sewn blankets, slipper socks, hats and scarves, wheelchair bags, walker totes, trach bibs and catheter bag covers to veterans' hospitals nationwide.

Will you help? If we each make or sponsor just one blanket, and tell just one church, school, quilt, craft, or scout organization about these projects, we will easily meet our goal.

If you go to [www.soldiersangels.org](http://www.soldiersangels.org) and click on "Wrapped in Holiday Spirit," "Blankets of Belief," and "Blankets of Gratitude," you will find all the guidelines, as well as flyers to share locally. Our deadline is November 1. It's hard to think of the holidays now while the temperatures are in the 80's, but they will come quickly!

To find resources for discounted fabrics/fleece, go to [www.soldiersangelsforum.com](http://www.soldiersangelsforum.com), then page down to "SA Team Forums" and click on "Sewing Teams."

With love, thanks and best wishes from your Sewing Team,  
Dee, Katie, Maria, Shelley, Kim, Deb, Anita and Karen

## Contacts

NOTE: You will not be able to link from this newsletter. You can link from the email that delivered it.

### Vice President—Sewing Team

#### Director—Blankets of Hope

Dee Jerge

blanketsofhope@soldiersangels.org

soldiersangels@gmail.com

deejerge@hotmail.com

### Germany—Blankets of Hope

soldiersangels@gmail.com

maryann.phillips@gmail.com

### Captain—Sand and Cooling Scarves

Deborah Delcorio

soldiersangels@gmail.com

delcorio@sbcglobal.net

### Crafts Corner/Crochet Team

sa.veteransvp@gmail.com

soldiersangels@gmail.com

### Operation Top Knot

Caren Vink

operationtopknot@gmail.com



## Have you visited the Forums?

This is an excellent way to learn more about SA and get/give Sewing Team information:

<http://soldiersangelsforum.com>

Page down to the section

"SA Team Forums,"

then click on "Sewing Teams."



### VA Blankets of Gratitude Campaign is Underway — Other Items Needed

Hi, Angels,

We hope your summer is going well. Your VA Crochet Craft Team recently announced the 2008 holiday drive for our veterans staying in Veterans Administration facilities across the United States during the holidays. We have heard from many of you that you are busy creating these “Blankets of Gratitude,” and we thank you for your support with this great project. Our veterans will be thanking you this holiday season when they receive your lovely blanket... it will show the love and gratitude we have for each and every one of them. For instructions and directions, please visit [www.soldiersangels.org](http://www.soldiersangels.org), and then click on “Blankets of Gratitude.”

It has come to our attention through many of our contacts that our VA hospitals, medical centers and nursing homes have a great need for the smaller items our VA Crochet Craft Team can also make, such as slipper socks, hats and scarves, wheelchair bags, walker totes, trach bibs and catheter bag covers.

- Slipper socks can be knitted, crocheted or loomed. They should have some kind of cuff on them, and are requested mainly in the colors blue, green, brown, black and gray. All slipper socks need to be made non-slip by applying stripes or rows of dots of a puff fabric paint product to them.
- Hats and scarves can be knitted, crocheted or loomed. These can be made in any colors... it's a good way to use up those scraps of yarn! A good size for a scarf is approximately 4-5" wide and about 45" long — a good length to wrap around the neck for warmth.
- Wheelchair bags can be crocheted or sewn... we have patterns for both. The difference between wheelchair bags and walker totes is mostly that a walker tote has four straps instead of two, so it can hang from the main bar of a walker and attach to the two legs for support. A walker tote is typically sewn. We have patterns available for them.
- Tracheotomy bibs are crocheted with No. 10 crochet thread. A trach bib is basically a six inch wide rectangle crocheted in an open airy pattern, that when finished has cotton twill tape sewn to the top for ties. It's a very easy, economical project, as you can get dozens of bibs from one large ball of crochet thread. These are requested in white or shades of cream/beige. There are only a handful of ladies on our team so far that are making these.
- Catheter bag covers are sewn and are approximately 14 inch square bags with casing at the top with drawstring ties... very simple sewing. They provide some modesty to our vets who need them. We have a list of VAs waiting for these.

The entire Soldiers' Angels VA Support Team greatly appreciates the help you are providing in showing our gratitude and love to our veterans this year. Please let us know if you would be able to create any of these much-needed items. They are needed year round, and we always have a waiting list to receive these necessary items. Please let your friends, family, co-workers, churches and any community civic groups know about these projects for our veterans. Let's not forget these great men and women who have sacrificed so much for all of us!

***Thank you on behalf of our cherished veterans!***

Soldiers' Angels VA Crochet Craft Team  
Shelley Folkerts, Deb Delcorio & Kim Hightower  
[Va.crochet.craftteam@gmail.com](mailto:Va.crochet.craftteam@gmail.com)



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### Las Vegas VA Stand-down

Lou Kastendick, Nevada State VA Leader, reported in January that the first veterans in Las Vegas to receive backpacks containing crocheted and knitted blankets would get their packs at the VA stand-down in April. We trust the event was successful and that the beautiful blankets are providing comfort and love to our dear veterans.

## Soldiers' Angels Blankets of Belief

### Angel Soldier to the Rescue

We're all used to saying "Soldiers' Angels," aren't we? Well, here's a story that flips it around to "Angel Soldier." Jeanne Lee of Castle Rock, Colorado reports:

"I met an 'Angel Soldier' for the first time in early August. His lady friend is involved in Solders' Angels and she had asked me to make a 'welcome home from Afghanistan' quilt for him. Her third grade class drew the blocks and I created the quilt wall hanging. It was a surprise for him, and I arranged to deliver it on Saturday within hours after he arrived here in Denver for a few days.

While talking I mentioned that I was chairing a mission effort at our church to raise \$1,000 to send 50 of the Blankets of Belief fleece blankets. He asked how much we had collected and I told him we should reach \$200 in a day or two. When I again saw him the next afternoon, he said 'I want to make sure you reach that goal of \$1,000. Here is \$800 in cash.' This Army Sergeant has done a six-month tour in Iraq and eight- and 14 ½-month tours in Afghanistan. HE gave money to us! This is such an awesome blessing that I had to share it with those of you at Solders' Angels!"

### Blanket Making Day, plus Scouts, Nets 50

Kathleen and Larry McCray recently reported:

"Soldiers' Angels sponsored a 'Blanket Making Day' on Sunday afternoon, July 13th from noon to 4 pm. It was hosted by the Women's Ministry at First Lutheran Church in Northridge, CA and held in their large, air-conditioned 'Natterstad Hall.' Forty-one people from a variety of places came together to make over 30 blankets. There were Angels, people from two churches, and some who had heard about the day at recent events where SA had hosted a booth. A local Girl Scout troop had earned their Bronze badges by making Blankets of Belief and added their 22 blankets to the pile! Fifty completed blankets were delivered to the Newbury Park warehouse later that week. Quite a few more sets of fabric went home with participants and will be returned at the next 'Blanket Making Day' which will be scheduled in the near future."



Angels and others working on blankets.

Adding the 50th Blanket to the pile!



Caren Vink reports that Sam at the North Carolina warehouse is receiving BOB's every day! They have received over 500 BOB's so far! Here's just a portion of the shipments received.

Please see page 1 of this newsletter for more information about the "Blankets of Belief" holiday campaign.

***Thank you for your support of our heroes!***

Dee Jerge  
Vice President—Sewing Team and  
Director—Blankets of Hope



## Operation Top Knot

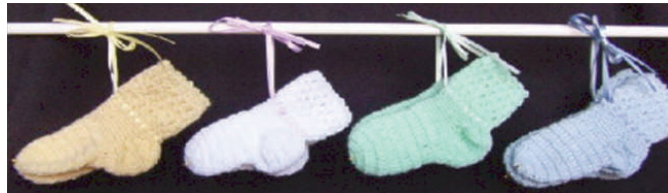
Operation Top Knot, along with a team of wonderful Angels, showers expectant wives/partners of military members who are away from their families when there is a need for items to help care for their babies. Our team of Angels sews, knits, crochets, and purchases much-needed baby items to shower upon these expectant moms. The expectant mothers are identified because they are nominated on our Operation Top Knot webpage by family, friends, and Angels.

The new daddy is sent a box of pink or blue bubblegum cigars to celebrate the arrival of the new “bundle of joy.”

To receive Operation Top Knot support, a military family must have a deployed parent and be expecting a child or have a child under the age of 2. If you know of a family that meets these criteria, please email us at [operationtopknot@gmail.com](mailto:operationtopknot@gmail.com) to nominate them for OTK support.

For more information on Operation Top Knot, please visit [www.soldiersangels.org](http://www.soldiersangels.org), then click on “Operation Top Knot” under “Teams and Programs.” Thank you!

Caren Vink  
Soldiers’ Angels Vice President  
National CTL Coordinator



## Soldiers’ Angels Mourns the Loss of Sewing Team Member Connie Karr

Joanne Cuddeback in Kirkwood, Missouri, reported the loss of a fellow sewer at a shooting at a city hall meeting. Joanne says: “Attached is a picture of our group taken at our last work day in January. Connie is 4th from the right in the back row - you can see the start of ‘Kirkwood’ on her shirt.”

Our thoughts and prayers are with the Karr family and all of Connie’s fellow Angels.



God bless our troops!

## Sand and Cooling Scarves

### Provide Comfort for our Brave Soldiers

It's hot, hot, hot in Iraq and Afghanistan. We know that the troops appreciate the cooling ties and sand-protection scarves we send. Don't miss out... be a part of this relief effort! For instructions on making Sand Scarves and Cool Ties, please visit [www.soldiersangels.org](http://www.soldiersangels.org), then under "Teams and Programs" click on "Scarves."



"Sand Scarves at Work"

### The Power of One

Ken is a retired gentleman from New York. His daughter bought him a sewing machine. He has made over 200 quilt tops for cancer victims. His daughter Susan has been making cool ties. So when Ken heard about cool ties he started making them... so far he has made 220 cool ties and plans on continuing to make them until they are no longer needed!

### The Power of Many

Angel Beth Schultz got a group of women from her church together and made 258 cool ties that were sent to Cpt. Rob Rodock in Afghanistan.

Thank you, everyone!

Deborah Delcorio  
Captain — Sand and Cooling Scarves



## Medical Facilities in Landstuhl, Germany

Approximately 500 patients are medevaced to Landstuhl each month for a variety of reasons, including battle injury or medical conditions such as kidney stones, tumors, etc. The average stay is 1-2 weeks before being sent on to the U.S. or back to Iraq or Afghanistan.

Some soldiers are hospital inpatients and others stay in outpatient barracks during treatment and evaluation. In both cases, blankets are used (and appreciated!) on beds or litters. Most patients take their blanket with them when leaving.

For instructions on making a blanket, please go to [www.soldiersangels.org](http://www.soldiersangels.org) and click on "Blankets of Hope."

Maryann Phillips, Vice President, Warrior Medical Support Europe, provides the following instructions for sending blankets to Germany:

- Please roll each one up tightly, tie with a ribbon, tag with a note..... "Made with love and gratitude for your service by \_\_\_\_\_ from Soldiers' Angels".....add your name/address/email.
- Please enclose a note inside the box with your name/email/number of blankets on it so I can notify you of their arrival.
- Please send them to:  
21<sup>st</sup> TSC, Transient Medical Detachment  
Attn: Soldiers' Angels – Maryann Phillips  
Unit 23203  
APO, AE 09263

***Thank you so much for your support!***



## Blankets of Hope

### Blankets of Hope at Parkdale High School

Susan Baudoin, Family and Consumer Sciences Department Chair at Parkdale High School in Riverdale, Maryland, provided the following pictures of blankets made by her students. Susan wrote "My classes are done with the blankets for the soldiers..... I'd like to display them here in school and have our local newspapers come out and cover our 'packing party.' The blankets look great this year and the kids are very excited about sending them off."

To Susan and the students at Parkdale High School, many thanks on behalf our Soldiers' Angels and all the soldiers who will receive your beautiful blankets!



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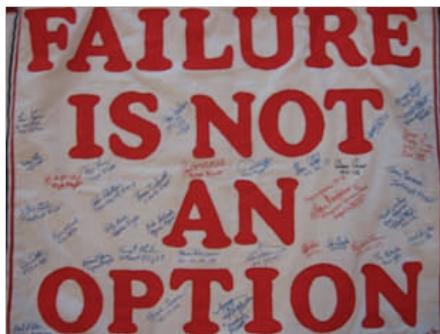
### NASA Flight Directors and Astronauts team up with Soldiers' Angels to Support Wounded Service Members

Some of you may know about Soldiers' Angel Joan Kranz, who works at NASA's Johnson Space Center. Her father is retired Flight Director Eugene Kranz, best known for his role in directing the successful Mission Control team efforts to save the crew of Apollo 13, during which he coined the famous "failure is not an option" motto. Kranz continues to be an inspiration to others today, including hosting wounded service members at VIP space shuttle launch events.

As a Soldiers' Angel, one of Joan's projects has been making blankets like the one below. She then asks her Dad, current astronauts and flight directors to sign the blankets. Autographed photos, mission patches, and other mementos go into a NASA binder, and an autographed copy of Gene Kranz's book, *Failure is Not an Option*, completes the package before it is sent.

This blanket was signed by astronauts Kevin Ford, Terry Virts, Hans Schlegel, Tim Kopra, John Phillips, Chris Hadfield, Pamela Melroy, Jim Dutton, Rex Walheim, Alvin Drew, Tony Antonelli, Steve Robinson, Tracy Caldwell, Leland Melvin, Steve Swanson, Randy Bresnik, Stan Love, and Joe Acaba, as well as flight directors Mike Moses, Kwatsi Alibaruho, Brian Smith, Chris Edelen, Richard Jones, Norman Knight, and Bryan Lunney (son of another Apollo 13 Flight Director, Glynn Lunney).

What a great expression of support and encouragement! Well done, Joan, and our sincere thanks to everyone at the Johnson Space Center who participated.



The "Failure is Not an Option" blanket, signed by NASA astronauts and flight directors.



Kranz autographs a blanket for a wounded service member.

## Messages from the Troops receiving Blankets of Hope

Angel Patsy received this message in March:

“Dearest Patsy-

I just wanted to thank you for doing what you do for all the soldiers! I think this is a WONDERFUL thing you do – I got one of your quilts from the guest house at “Brooks Army Medical Center” in San Antonio, during the Xmas season. I was there visiting my daughter. She was flown back from Iraq with face cancer. I will save it for her with your card. It was truly beautiful of you to do this for our troops! You just don’t know how really special you are! The quilt beautiful as well! Thank you for being there for our troops. ... Thank you again for all you do for our troops -

In Christian love,

Sandy– for daughter Otela “



Gayle Wilder received this thank you note sent by a medic/attendant to a severely wounded soldier who received one of our blankets:

“Hello,

My name is Stephen and I recently flew and Aero medical evac out of Southwest Asia. The patient was a young man who's legs were most likely going to be lost from a IED. On the foot of his bed lay a blanket you had made. I wanted to write to say thank you to you for looking out for your troops. I know a lot of the time We may not respond to your acts of kindness but it doesn't go unnoticed. Here is a picture of your blessings to us in action. I pray for you and your family and I hope you will continue to support what we are doing.”



This message was received by Soldiers' Angels:

“I just wanted to thank this website and the people that contribute to it. I never knew about this organization until my husband went to the Wounded Warriors Ward in Landstuhl, Germany where he still remains at this time. He received a very beautiful blanket that he shipped home and I thought it was very thoughtful of everyone in this country to support my husband and all the other Soldiers wounded and/or deployed. I want to personally thank the family in Parker, Colorado that made this contribution. It really helps to know there are people out there that can lift our spirits in our time of need. Thank You Kindly,

S.D.”



In March, this message was sent to Angel Annemarie, who made a blanket:

“I just wanted you to know how much it meant for my husband to receive the blanket that you especially made for him. It is very refreshing to know that there are women like yourself that are thinking about our American soldiers. Henry was injured in Balad, Iraq and was air-lifted out to Germany. He has a broken right ankle and his left knee is going to have to be ‘totally’ reconstructed. He wanted to stay in Iraq until his tour was up, but the doctors said he needed surgery right away. So he is in Fort Knox waiting for surgery.

I just wish there were more people like yourself that take time out of your busy life to put a smile on an injured soldiers face! My husband is a true American soldier and is proud to serve this great nation!

Thanks,

Henry and Julie”

