

Operation Gift Cards

For our wounded and injured troops in Walter Reed and Bethesda Military Hospitals

Web site:
www.ctveterans.org

Sponsored by **CONNECTICUT VETERANS** in 20 chapters, posts, and detachments of the:

American Legion: Fairfield Post 74, Shelton Post 16, Fairfield Post 143, Derby Post 24

Disabled American Veterans: Stamford Ch. 13, Fairfield Ch. 19, Enfield Ch. 52, Greater New Haven Ch. 2, Derby Ch. 4, Milford Ch. 15, Manchester Ch. 17

Marine Corps League: Stamford Detachment 910

Military Order of the Purple Heart: Shelton/Derby Ch. 1, Greater New Haven Ch. 103, New Britain Ch. 51

Veterans of Foreign Wars: Fairfield Post 9427, Derby Post 10,585

Also sponsored by:

Departments of CT: AMVETS, DAV, and MOPH

Press Release

March 19, 2007
Contact: See below

Commander of Walter Reed presents "Award For Excellence" Medallions to 5 Connecticut Veterans for Operation Gift Cards

Connecticut veterans present \$3,500 in Gift Certificates to our wounded and injured troops in Walter Reed and Bethesda Military Hospitals on behalf of 3 Connecticut veterans' organizations



Photo: Ken Hagen



Photo: MOPH Chapter

Left to right: Ken Hagen, Tim Leonard, Al Meadows, Col. Virgil Deal, NARMC and Walter Reed Commander Maj. Gen. Eric Schoomaker, Tom Evans and John Rubino represented 3 units of veterans' organizations.

Military Order of the Purple Heart
Shelton/Derby Chapter #1 leaders

"Award for
Excellence"
Medallion



Maj. General Eric Schoomaker, Commander of NARMC (North Atlantic Regional Medical Command) and WRAMC (Walter Reed Military Hospital in Washington D.C.) presented 5 Connecticut veterans with "Award for Excellence" Medallions in recognition of Operation Gift Cards during their monthly visit to the wounded troops on March 19th.

Since October 2005, Connecticut's Operation Gift Cards program has distributed 2,750 "Thank You" kits, including \$55,000 in PX (military store) gift certificates, to wounded and injured troops at Walter Reed and Bethesda Military Hospitals in Washington, DC.

On the last visit, representatives from the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the Marine Corps League and the American Legion visited wounded soldiers and personally thanked them for their service to their country and for their sacrifice for freedom. Each patient was presented with 3 "Thank You" kits (each from a different unit) containing a custom-designed thank you card with a group picture of the sponsoring chapter or post, a \$20 gift certificate for the military store (\$60 total in gift certificates), and flyers about programs the sponsoring service organization has developed that may be of interest to the patients.

Operation Gift Cards also delivers items that are on the Walter Reed Medical Family Assistance Centers "Wish List" and the Fisher Houses "Wish List, which have been donated by veterans' units and other groups and individuals. The "Wish List" can be viewed by clicking on the Operation Gift Cards link on the www.ctveterans.org web site.

Operation Gift Cards was started jointly by the Military Order of the Purple Heart Shelton/Derby Chapter #1 and the Disabled American Veterans Stamford Chapter #13. MOPH Ch. #1 and DAV Ch. #13 are trying to enlist other Connecticut chapters and posts in veterans' organizations (e.g., AL, AMVETS, DAV, MCL, MOPH, VFW) to join the program so that it can continue. The goal is to have a different group of chapters or posts **collectively** purchase each month between \$3,500 and \$4,000 in gift certificates in order to present all visited wounded patients in Walter Reed and Bethesda hospitals with at least one "Thank You" kit containing a \$20 gift certificate that they could use in their PX. Four American Legion posts, seven Disabled American Veterans chapters, one Marine Corps League detachment, three Military Order of the Purple Heart chapters, two Veterans of Foreign Wars posts, and the Connecticut Department Headquarters of the American Veterans (AMVETS), Disabled American Veterans and the Military Order of the Purple Heart have participated in Operation Gift Cards. Many have participated in multiple visits.

To participate in Operation Gift Cards or to make a corporate or personal donation, contact Al Meadows (203) 929-3357 (e-mail: al.meadows@snet.net) or Tim Kelly (203) 937-3420 (e-mail: kellytmthy@aol.com). Or read the Operation Gift Cards summary page or the Operation Gift Cards press releases (all can be downloaded from the Web site: ctveterans.org). Operation Gift Cards will be an ongoing project; check our Web site (listed at top of page) for future events and our progress reports.