

Operation Gift Cards

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

Web site:
www.ctveterans.org

Press Release

February 26, 2007
Contact: See below

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



Photo: Operation Gift Cards

Left to right: Buffert Brooks, Bernie Corona, Al Doak (DAV State Commander), PDC* Tim Kelly and PDC* Al Meadows (not shown) represented 4 units of veterans' organizations.
* Past DAV State Commander



Photo: DAV Dept. HQ

Leaders of the Disabled American Veterans helping at Stand Down 2006 for homeless and needy veterans.

Since October 2005, Connecticut's Operation Gift Cards program has distributed 2,575 "Thank You" kits, including \$51,500 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 four units of the Military Order of the Purple Heart (1) and the Disabled American Veterans (3) visited wounded soldiers and personally thanked them for their service to their country and for their sacrifice for freedom. Each patient was presented with three "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", 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.