



# Calling All Angels

Volume 5, Issue 10

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- It's not too late to join the Sale-abration!
- The sewing team has a cool new way to make no-sew blankets! Check it out!
- Be sure to read Angel Eye to hear all the exciting things Soldiers' Angels has been doing

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## September 11 - Ten Years Later

On September 11, 2001, America was attacked. With that attack came shock, heartbreak and the loss of life: 3000 men, women, children, military personnel, police and firefighters. Americans worldwide—and humanity at large—were forever changed that tragic day.

This past September 11 was the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of that horrific day. From Iraq to Los Angeles and everywhere in between, Americans took time to honor, remember and reflect on what had happened ten years ago. Throughout our great nation, along with military based in Iraq and Afghanistan and worldwide, there were all types of ceremonies to honor and remember all those that were lost. In New York at Ground Zero they dedicated and opened the new memorial that includes names from the terrorist attacks on both September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993.

As horrible as that day was for everyone, good events coincided with the horror; 50 new lives came into the world in New York, forever sharing that historic day. On the weekend of their 10<sup>th</sup> birthday, the 50 babies who are now 10 years old visited Ground Zero in New York to pay their respects. A few days before September 11, 2010 a group of Soldiers' Angels had come together in support of Army veteran and Operation Top



**For many Angels across the country, remembering 9-11-2001 included a great deal of gratitude for all who have served in the Armed Forces since that awful day.**

Knot Dad Sean Lofland as he and his wife Sarah Anne Bates brought their firstborn child into the world a bit early. James Michael Bates Lofland III celebrated his first birthday with his parents over the weekend of September 11, 2011.

Soldiers' Angel Amelia Carlson said it best, "The word anniversary sounds like a happy event. Unfortunately, this is one anniversary that is not a happy event. Across the country we cried, thanked God for their family and friends, and thanked firemen and policemen, Soldiers, Airmen, Coastguard and Marines. Many of us celebrate *continued page 2*

## Angel Voices

Dear Angels and Friends,

September has been an action packed month for us here at Soldiers' Angels. We started off with a real bang; unfortunately, instead of fireworks we just had fires. Soldiers' Angels founder Patti Patton Bader, her son Brandon, myself and a couple thousand other folks were evacuated from our homes as a wildfire ravaged our neighborhood and town.

We banded together to help our families, friends

and neighbors. It didn't take long to find veterans, wounded warriors and active duty service members—in the shelters, on the news and sitting patiently in the parking lots—waiting to hear about our collective fate. Navy Chief Dan Hugo had been home from Afghanistan only a couple of weeks when the fire ran through his street, completely destroying his home. Another family with their husband deployed struggling to make contact and deal with the catastrophic loss of their homes and belongings. As we continued to be evacuated *continued page 3*



On 9-11-2011, former Marine Mark Dolfini held a Standing for the Fallen event to support his wounded brothers and sisters recovering in the hospital.

**“After ten years, the memories and wounds to our hearts are still very fresh.”**



Across the country, Angels thanked the troops for their wartime service since September 11, 2001.

## September 11 - Ten Years Later (continued from page 1)

brated a happy day of freedom even with the heavy weight of sadness in our hearts as we remembered. After ten years, the memories and wounds to our hearts are still very fresh.”

Let’s take a little trip across this great nation to see what our fellow Angels and friends did to honor and remember that day...

Angels Pam Daigle, Guy Taylor and Sherry Guy spent their day in very similar ways, though in different states. During the Sunday church service that Sherry and her family attended, their preacher referred to that horrible day in his sermon. After services and a bite to eat, “we went to a parade our city put on in honor of the firemen, police, city workers and soldiers,” reported Sherry. “My husband is a fireman and my two oldest boys are both in the explorer program at the fire department”

Pam spent her day reflecting and praying. “This is one of those days you feel and know a piece of your heart also died that day. The rest always holds our military with special prayers and thanksgiving,” she wrote. For fellow Angel Guy Taylor, the tenth anniversary was difficult, especially since he lives ten miles from where the World Trade Center stood. Guy said, “I sat quietly at home, reliving those moments.”



Marines of the Lafayette detachment of the Marine Corps League had their own plans for the anniversary. They held a “Standing For the Fallen” event in Lafayette, Indiana to benefit wounded warriors in Landstuhl. Mark Dolfini and his fellow Marines stood together to raise about \$2000 in cash and physical donations.

In the suburbs of San Diego, Angels danced. Yes, they danced; everyone copes with grief in their own ways. Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church held the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Greek Festival that weekend. Angel Amelia reached out and asked if it would be possible for Soldiers’

Angels to setup a booth at the festival. “They were elated that on 9-11 there would be a military support organization in attendance,” Amelia recalled. “The community welcomed us with open arms and overwhelming support. The sounds of music and laughter were background for the stories and gratitude of those who visited our booth.”



San Diego Angels Cassandra, Toby, Dana, Mikaela, Ashley, Deana and CNC Susan Lawson spent Saturday and Sunday raising awareness and giving the community the chance to thank the young men and women who are fighting for our way of life, and to mourn those who lost their lives on 9-11 and in war since then. Daisy Scouts assisted as all worked for hours getting an entire box of thank you cards signed to mail to deployed troops. They also raised about \$1500.

Just as Soldiers’ Angels in San Antonio Shreveport had a 9-11 run, so did the city of Chesapeake, VA. Originally planned as a 5k run, it turned into a three or four-day festival, but after September 11, 2001 the 5K run was named September 11<sup>th</sup> 5K. Angel Maria took part in it, and viewed the accompanying WTC/Shanksville/Pentagon display.

In Long Beach, CA Angel Vera Lusia took part in a candle light vigil/walk at sundown that went for two miles. The walked to the Long Beach World Trade Center, where there was a brief ceremony with singing of the national anthem, speakers and four moments of silence to mark the four moments of attack on 9-11-2001.

Many more Angels took part in community volunteer activities, thanked troops and first responders, and actively chose to spend the day in remembrance and gratitude, but not all could be included here. Whether you remembered that horrific day quietly at home, went out into your community or attended a ceremony, you all worked to share the most important thing above all else: NEVER FORGET!

## Halloween is Right Around the Corner! Boo!



America's military men and women deployed around the world always enjoy candy in their care packages, and this is the perfect time of year for shipping chocolate—the cooler weather means it's less likely to melt!

Patriotic kids and parents can send Halloween candy to Soldiers' Angels, who will make sure it gets into a care package to brighten the day of a

service member far from home (be sure to send "the good stuff,"—no crushed/melted candy or broken/torn wrappers, etc).

Please spread the word and get your community involved in getting a taste of Halloween for the troops. Buy an extra bag or two and mail it to:

Soldiers' Angels  
HALLOWEEN CARE  
4408 N PanAm Exprwy  
San Antonio, TX 78218

Of course, after the holidays, troops love your leftover Halloween candy as well—but they also need candy in time to celebrate Halloween and the coming holiday season!



**With Halloween on the calendar and Fall coming soon, it's the perfect time to send candy to the troops, especially chocolate. If you have extra candy after Halloween, don't add it to your hips. Send it to the troops!**

## Angel Voices (continued from page 1)

more and more similar stories brought themselves to light.

Just when the fire was starting to wear us down, our spirits were lifted by the first ever *Run for Remembrance*. In San Antonio, under the guidance and mentorship of Board Member Ricky John from Shreveport, the team put on an amazing event. It started as a concept but came to fruition as an endurance run and relay race where individuals and teams ran for nine hours, eleven minutes and one second to memorialize the 10th anniversary of the beginning of this war on terror. The event began with Congressman Francisco Canseco, was entertained by the band *Second Chance* during the run and ended with moments of silence for all events of that fateful day.

At first I thought running for that long was crazy, but as a member of a team of nine—most of which were active duty Soldiers—I found we gained a special fellowship that only sharing in an event can provide... Angels and Soldiers working and sharing together in a mutual cause.

Local CNC Crystal Segner demonstrated what makes our Angels so special and all of us so proud to be counted in the numbers. With a dedicated volunteer force she led and directed while inspiring all of us. The event in San Antonio raised about \$8000 dollars while a sister event in Shreveport led by Trustee Ricky John included a fantastic 5K run also followed by inspiring moments and program.

Things have yet to slow down, as a year of work and coordination with movie studio ALCON

Media and Grace Hill Media all came together with a private screening and red carpet premiere of new movie *Dolphin Tale* starring Morgan Freeman, Harry Connick jr, Ashley Judd, Kris Kristoferson and Austin Stowell, who plays a wounded warrior returning from war. This family movie, made by the same team that made Academy Award winning *The Blind Side* and directed by Charles Martin Smith, tells the true story of Winter, the dolphin who lost her tail as an infant and refused to give up.

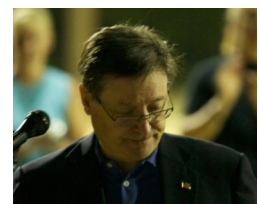
Learning to use a prosthetic, and with human technology helping a fellow mammal... what more could be awesome? I'll tell you: the fact that technology created to help this dolphin helps our wounded warriors and even more than that her spirit and message helps disabled children, wounded warriors and humans of all walks.

I had the chance to meet this special creature with trustee Matt Burden last year and it changed our lives, which began this journey and relationship. Warner Brothers made it possible and are also helping us send a deserving family to meet Winter the Dolphin in person at her home in Clearwater, Florida. If you know of a deserving family send them to [www.mywoundedhero.com](http://www.mywoundedhero.com) to submit and recommend!

Hope everyone is looking forward to a nice fall and getting ready for the Day of the Deployed, Sale-a-bration, Holiday for Heroes and end to an amazing year!!!

Toby J. Nunn  
Executive Director

**"At first I thought running for that long was crazy!"**



**Congressman Francisco Canseco helped kick off the first-ever Run for Remembrance in San Antonio, late in the evening on September 10.**



In San Antonio, over 120 runners ran in an overnight ultra-marathon commemorating September 11, 2001 and raising money to support Soldiers' Angels work with the troops and their families.

**Teams made up of 9 runners ran a relay race for 9 hours and 11 minutes.**



In Shreveport and San Antonio, volunteers cheered on the runners at events raising about \$20,000 for Soldiers' Angels and troop support.

## Running on 9-11

The inaugural Soldiers' Angels Run for Remembrance in San Antonio and Shreveport was a smashing success, honoring the victims and heroes of 9-11 while bringing in about \$20,000 in fees and donations to support those who continue to sacrifice because of that day.

In San Antonio, live music and fun preceded a nighttime run at Olmos Basin Park where 11 teams made up of 9 runners ran a relay race (1 mile loop) for 9 hours and 11 minutes. There were also 30 ultra-marathoners from as far away as Seattle who ran continuously for the duration of the overnight event (September 10-11).

More than 30 local Angel volunteers made the race possible through their supportive efforts, and United States Congressman Francisco Canseco spoke to the participants and volunteers before initiating the race which at 10:00pm on September 10. Olmos Basin Park is set in the highly-forested area of San Antonio and runners ran along a scenic loop on a paved trail that skirts the edge of a well-illuminated part of the park. They were supported with refreshments and routine cheers of encouragement given by the many volunteers who lined the course.



The San Antonio race concluded at 7:11 on the morning of September 11th, followed by an awards ceremony and a San Antonio-style breakfast with fun, patriotic music, and the Texas State University Color Guard presenting the flag for the National Anthem. Throughout the post-race activities, scheduled moments of silence to honor fallen Americans coincided with significant moments in the attacks of ten years ago. Sponsors for the San Antonio race included La Quinta, HEB, Salsalitos, Culligan, Allegra, San Antonio Night Out, Sunstate, United Site Services, and Run In Texas. For more pictures from San Antonio, see [here](#) and the [Soldiers' Angels Facebook page](#).

In Shreveport, 282 runners participated and over 40 Angels volunteered in support roles for a 5K race steeped in symbolism and memory. It began with moments of silence timed to coincide with the moment when the World Trade Center towers were struck. The National Anthem was

sung by a local Airman and runners ran under a large flag that the Shreveport and Bossier Fire Departments had positioned between two ladder trucks at the starting line. Along the race route yellow ribbons were tied to trees as inspiration to the runners. The final length of the race was lined with US flags and those of various military units, and two Army units and one Marine unit ran the race in formation while calling cadence.



Following the Shreveport race, Pastor Bryan Reed of The Simple Church led a memorial service, beginning with a prayer remembering those who lost their lives in 2001. Reed then recognized the numerous local military, police, and fire departments in attendance, and four middle school students from St. Joseph Catholic School (including one child whose father is deployed) read short essays concerning the 9/11 attacks. The ceremony concluded with the singing of God Bless America.

Like San Antonio, the Shreveport race was made possible by generous local sponsors and volunteers. The water stop along the race was manned by a group of Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts, and food was provided by Raising Cane's, The Glenwood Tea Room, and local supermarkets Kroger and Albertsons. Mid-City Pediatrics provided a medical tent. Posters were provided by Benton Signs and banners by The Simple Church. Additional sponsors included Etheredge Electric, Brentwood Hospital, Smith & John, Evans & Franklin; Benton Signs and Lamar; Rice & Kendig; Lane Pittard; Reinhart and Adam Cormier, DDS. For more pictures of the Shreveport event, see the [Soldiers' Angels Shreveport-Bossier Facebook page](#).

*Thank you to the runners, sponsors, donors and all who made the events a smashing success!*



## Dolphin Premiere for Wounded Heroes

Last weekend the Hollywood Red Carpet was rolled out for some true heroes: America's wounded warriors!

On Sunday, Soldiers' Angels and the Santikos' Rialto Theatre hosted a Hollywood-style premiere of *Dolphin Tale* for wounded warriors and their families in San Antonio, with assistance from ALCON Media and the creators of the



movie. Attendees were treated to a 3D showing of the film, complete with photographers, complimentary drinks and popcorn, and a Q&A session with director Charles Martin Smith and actor Austin Stowell, who played the role of Kyle, a wounded warrior central to the story. *Dolphin Tale* is the true story of a dolphin whose injury results in loss of his tail, set within the fictional story of a boy who develops a connection to the dolphin and a wounded warrior who must also deal with physical loss.

Soldiers' Angels Executive Director Toby Nunn is honored to be associated with *Dolphin Tale*, a film he considers very important. "This fantastic family movie really is a special platform that can open dialogue about some tough subjects we as America face but sweep under the carpet," he says. "It's fun, feel-good and real, which makes it so special. Hard to believe we can learn some of the most important life lessons from a Dolphin, but I'm so glad that ALCON Media made this film and is using the power of film to promote important veteran issues into popular culture."

Blog Coordinator and volunteer Lisa Luhrman attended the premiere and was deeply moved by what she saw. "I cannot say enough good things about the movie. It is a wonderful family film," she said. She especially appreciated the dignity and honesty of Kyle's storyline. "It shows the sacrifice and horror of war without being graphic." She pointed out that during a scene at a VA hospital, wounded warriors serve as extras and those with prosthetics (like the dolphin) are highlighted as being active and doing things they probably did before they got hurt. "All I can say is this: go see it. It's heartwarming and inspirational."



With the help of ALCON Media, Soldiers' Angels hosted wounded warriors and their families at a Hollywood-style premiere of the inspirational movie *Dolphin Tale* in San Antonio.

*"This fantastic family movie really is a special platform that can open dialogue about some tough subjects we as America face but sweep under the carpet"*

## Dancing with the Stars... on Angel Wings

Angels and Stars are what heaven is made of... and Soldiers' Angels is proud to stand in support of J.R. Martinez in his dance to the top with [Dancing with the Stars!](#)

J.R. Martinez was deployed to Iraq in February 2003 and suffered severe burns to more than 40 percent of his body. He spent 34 months at Brooke Army Medical Center and has undergone 33 surgeries. During his recovery, J.R. discovered he could be a comfort to fellow burn patients and decided to use his experience to help others

Since then, J.R. has become a highly sought-after motivational speaker, traveling the country to spread his message of resilience and optimism.

Now it is time for J.R. Martinez to inspire a new audience, to dance to the top and share with the world the day-to-day struggles of the wounded warriors of America and how one can overcome hurdles with due diligence.

Soldiers' Angels across the nation are encouraged to watch *Dancing with the Stars* every Monday night and vote for J.R. after the show by calling 1-800-868-3410 (800-VOTE4-10), or AT&T customers can Text code: 3410. Lines open at the beginning of each show for viewers to phone and text vote for their favorite couples, and will stay open for 30 minutes after the end of the show in each time zone.



"The Army taught me a lot, but there's one thing it didn't teach me...the Viennese Waltz," says J.R. Martinez



**“Crash Granny” and her friends the charter boat captains took 32 heroes and their guests on a fishing trip in the Gulf Coast. One soldier even caught a shark!**

**“This fish was as big as Sergeant Watkins!”**



**“Granny’s Troops” enjoy a great fishing trip topped of by a great barbecue, thanks to her ability to inspire others to join in her in support of the troops.**

## Granny Gone Fishin’ II

*In May’s 2011 issue of Calling All Angels we featured “Granny’s Great Adventure,” a story about Angel Jeanie “Crash Granny” Graser of Georgia taking “her troops” fishing with the help of Bay Marina and some charter boat captains. They had such a good time, they said, “Why not do it again?!”*

That’s right. SHEEEEE’SSSS BAAAAACK!

Jeanie, lovingly known by her fellow Angels and her soldiers as “Crash Granny” took “her troops” fishing again. This time the group was a little bigger...well, more than a little... “It was held out of the Bay Marina on the Gulf Coast and we had 32 soldiers come (four Louisiana soldiers drove over on Sunday),” Jeanie reported.

Festivities began with a BBQ for the troops and Hank Tanner, the father of a fallen Marine, was one of the cooks—preparing BBQ burgers, corn on the cob and potato salad. Jeanie said one of the soldiers spent a lot of time visiting with Hank, which made quite an impression on her.

It all began with a joke. “These guys had a great sense of humor. When they told me they wanted to go Gar fishin’, Granny said “I wondered, ‘Why do y’all want to catch Alligator Gar?! They are ugly and don’t taste good and they stink,’” explained Jeanie. “Only a real Cajun eats Garballs, but Cajuns eat anything.”

As Jeanie pulled up to the marina, she was reminded of an old saying: “The early bird catches the ‘warm,’” as she saw all 32 soldiers and their guests already waiting patiently at Bay Marina. In this case it wasn’t ‘warms,” they caught, though. It was Granny’s donuts.



As everyone divided up for their boats, Granny’s boat had some extra-special guests. To keep her adopted heroes close, Jeanie has what she calls “Soldier dolls,” handmade camouflage dolls [see above] that remind her of her deployed adoptees. “Sgt. Trevor and Cpt. Angie are my

soldier dolls that represent my adopted soldiers,” Jeanie says, so SGT Trevor and the CPT Angie joined her on Captain Joey’s boat. It’s not quite clear what kind of luck they brought, but SGT Joe on the boat caught a shark!

Just like the last fishing trip in April, there was a friendly competition to see who would catch the biggest fish. But unlike that first trip, the weather was great and the seas were calm. Another thing that was different was that charter boat Captain Sonny was the lucky a captain who had the only female soldier who attended this trip...

Of course, women often enjoy proving they can do anything a man can do—in civilian life and in military life as well—and this fishing trip was no exception. SGT Watkins, the only female veteran among 32 soldiers, caught the biggest fish. “This fish was as big as SGT Watkins,” exclaimed



Jeanie as she added, “SGT ‘Scotty the Hottie’ and his wife Erica caught a big ugly fish as well.”

The heroes on the fishing trip aren’t just great at what they do for our country, but they’re pretty good fishermen. Jeanie reported that they caught every kind of fish one could imagine—“big fish, Speckled Trout, Triple Tail, White Trout, Red Fish...and a nasty catfish,” she said.

After a fun-filled day out at sea, boats filled with tasty fish headed back to Bay Marina, where members of Southern Anglers and Coastal Conservation were ready to cook a big dinner for the heroes. While the soldiers ate, the charter boat captains cleaned the fish that had been caught, but everyone started to notice that the four Louisiana soldiers were missing. They began to be concerned as they finished eating, but as the awards were presented, in walked charter captain Travis and the Louisiana Cajun soldiers... with eighty cleaned fish.

The next fishing trip is scheduled for November 2012. In the meantime, Jeanie has a message for her troops: “I would like to thank you for your service. I appreciate you and your families.”

## Busy, Busy Angels!

Angels were so busy this August that there wasn't room to include everything in the August edition of *Calling All Angels*...

In late August, Michigan Angels received the honor of having a booth at the 139th Annual Armada Fair in Armada, MI. "This is a small town fair complete with livestock/animal shows, arts & crafts judging and tractor pulls," says Jen Dawson, Soldiers' Angels' Michigan Community Network Coordinator (CNC). Though small town, they had all the bells and whistles of a big fair; there were elephant ears, fresh squeezed lemonade, BBQ, and of course, rides

"Our dear friend Burt Sherrard, whom we met last year, was again staged next to us and even bought us breakfast all the days we were there," Jen recalls. Their location also had some unusual perks—since the booth was outside the Beef Tent, there were cows mooing for their babies

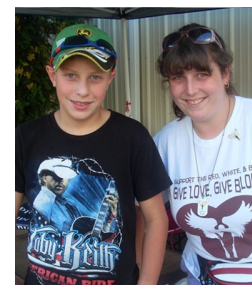


and head-butting the wall behind them. Among the Michigan Angels was young honorary Angel Nick Fifield (see picture) who won a blue ribbon for his Maine Anjou "Hillbilly Bone."

Unfortunately, as you can see in the picture (lower left), "Mother Nature wasn't too cooperative, so the booth was closed early."

In Swansea, MA Soldiers' Angels joined forces with volunteers from the Marine Corps League of Somerset at a local Big Lots discount store, where they collected items to put into care packages. "Tons of items" were collected, along with signed cards that will be sent to the troops during the upcoming holiday season.

*Awesome Angeling by Melissa Greene, Val Durbin, Lynn Horsch, Crystal and Tim Goltz, Kris Shier, Sara Krueger, Maria Wines, Nick Fifield, Sharon Trombley, CNC Jen Dawson and Angels Debbie Mearls, Kim Carvalho Wagner and Paula Rezendes. L-R in the picture at the top of the page: George Donnelly and Commandant Bruce R. Aldrich from the Marine Corps League of Somerset, along with Angels Debbie Mearls, Kim Carvalho Wagner and Paula Rezendes.*



**CNC Jen Dawson with Honorary Angel-in-Training Nick Fifield, who helped out in Michigan.**

**There were cows mooing for their babies and head-butting the wall behind them.**

## Gunbloggers for Valour-IT

Longtime supporters of Project Valour-IT, the gun bloggers of Gun Blogger Rendezvous are at it again. This time they have facilitated the auction of a special Sig Sauer 1911 pistol, and a way to support Valour-IT by buying tactical gear.

The pistol is engraved with the Soldiers' Angels name and logo, making it a unique piece for 1911 fans and supporters of Soldiers' Angels / Project Valour-IT. It will be sold to the highest bidder at an online auction held by [GunBroker.com](http://GunBroker.com) and 100% of the sale will be donated to support Valour-IT. The auction closes at 9 p.m. Eastern Time on Sunday, October 23.

Working with one of its dealers, TacticalGear.com, Woolrich Elite has set up a personalized web store for Elite products. For the next six months, 2% of the cost of all sales made through [www.tacticalgear.com/woolrich-elite-clothing](http://www.tacticalgear.com/woolrich-elite-clothing) will be given to Project Valour-IT. All Woolrich Elite items are eligible for the 2% donation when purchased through this page—from the durable, yet comfortable Elite tactical pant to the latest in concealed carry clothing.

*Many huge thanks to all the gun bloggers for their continuous support for Valour-IT. They've been there since the beginning!*



**Sig Sauer is auctioning off this customized 1911 pistol, with all proceeds going to Project Valour-IT. Current bidding is over \$2,000.**



**PFC Charles says he was “amazed” when he discovered the effort Soldiers’ Angels puts into supporting the troops.**

**Whenever he got down while deployed and didn’t want to push on, he’d walk over to his bag of support and pull out a letter or card.**



**Thanks to Dollar Days, you can buy 145,000 different products online with a percentage of each sale going to Soldiers’ Angels!**

## Interview with a Hero

*This month’s “Interview with A Hero” was a fighter as a youngster...*

“I was pretty reckless growing up. I stayed in fights all the way through high school,” David Charles recalls. “I was pretty upset about 9/11, so I decided that instead of fighting for no reason I would go somewhere that it had some purpose.” In his sophomore year he found he purpose, deciding he was going to join the Marines.

Now a Private First Class in the Marine Corps, Charles was surprised to discover Soldiers’ Angels. “After I found out what Soldiers’ Angels did, I was amazed,” he says. “I knew there were organizations out there that helped military members and their families, but I didn’t know there was one that put forth such an amazing effort and actually followed through on their commitment.”

Usually deployed heroes submitted for adoption are aware that a family member, friend or brother/sister in arms submitted them. But on occasion, the person submitting the hero wants it to be an unexpected joy...“I didn’t know about until my girlfriend told me she had signed me up so it was a bit of a surprise,” says Charles.

PFC Charles is the first service member featured in *Interview With A Hero* (formerly *Interview With A Soldier*) who has been deployed without going to Iraq or Afghanistan, but has still received support from Soldiers’ Angels. “I’ve been deployed three times,” he says. “Once to Cuba, once to Spain, And once to Israel.”

Even though he never went to Iraq and Afghanistan, support from his Angel was vital. Every

branch has a “bag of tricks” that assists in “taking care of business,” but PFC Charles now has a “bag of support” that helps keep him focused during difficult times. In this bag are letters and cards from his Angel and whenever Charles gets down while deployed and doesn’t want to push on, he walks over to his bag of support and pulls out a letter or card at random. “They always bring a smile to my face,” he explains.

When asked if he had a story about his Angel that stood out in his memory, PFC Charles couldn’t come up with anything, at least not like previous heroes who have been interviewed. What did stand out the most for him is best said in his own words...

“The only thing that truly stands out about my angel is the amount of support and love she shows. She sent me an amazing amount of letters and supplies, to books and art supplies. She truly cares. That is just amazing for someone who has her own life and family to take her own time to send me a letter or a card, or put together a package for me and my guys. It’s really amazing.”

Charles adds, “I would like to tell everyone at Soldiers Angels thank you. The support that such generous people offer is amazing. I read the letters and cards to the guys in my unit and it’s a great uplift for morale, knowing that so many people back home support us and have us in their prayers. I know I could have made it without you guys, but having you all behind us has made it so much better. It gives us all a few more reasons other than our families to keep fighting. It puts a name to a mission.”

## Dollar’s for Heroes

Big retailer Dollar Days has long supported Soldiers’ Angels with a special [Wish List](#) that allows donors to easily identify the most-needed items for care packages and backpacks and have them shipped directly to Soldiers’ Angels. Now Dollar Days is stepping up with another big opportunity!

The following link can be used by Soldiers’ Angels, military families, schools, businesses, or anybody who would like to purchase items from the over 145,000 quality products avail-

able on the website while a percentage of profits go to Soldiers’ Angels.

Please share [this great link](#) with friends, families and coworkers. It’s an effortless way to raise needed money to help Soldiers’ Angels continue to support the troops!



**DollarDays™**  
WOWPricing Everything Under the Sun®  
and Across the World



## In the Spotlight: GASP



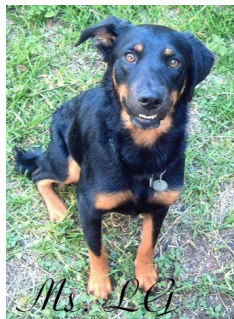
When a loved one is deployed, it affects the entire family. Plans are made—single parents make arrangements for their children, couples arrange for the family that is stateside to have support thru family and friends, etc.

But what if your “son” or “daughter” is a “fur baby,” a beloved pet? According to HumaneSociety.org, there are about 78.2 million dog owners and about 86.4 million cat owners; among those cat and dog owners are many members of the Armed Forces. What do they do with a pet when they’re deployed?

Finding someone to take care of a pet can be difficult for anyone, military or not. A civilian may simply want to go on a vacation and so boards their dog or leaves a cat home while having someone check in on it regularly. That’s not an option for a service member, who can be deployed anywhere from three to twelve months or even longer. It wouldn’t be fair or economically sensible to board a pet for that long, and it can be difficult to find a friend or family member willing to take a pet during a deployment, so many of our service members relinquish ownership of their beloved pets when they deploy.

In January 2005, Linda Spurlin-Dominik founded Guardian Angels for Soldiers’ Pet (GASP) based research into this heartbreaking issue. Where the military pet owner didn’t have a family member or friend able or willing to care for the pets while deploying, they were having to turn over their pet and legal ownership rights to shelters or rescue groups.

Since the creation of GASP, volunteers have helped both couples and singles who are active-duty service members and need someone to care for a pet while deployed or in other situations that develop. Today GASP is run by fifteen volun-



teers who coordinate foster families to take care of a hero’s pet from all branches of service in all fifty states!

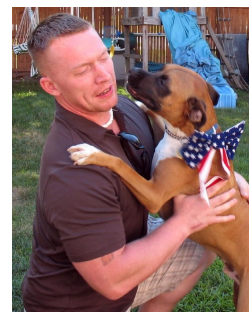
The difference between GASP and a rescue shelter is that GASP works to keep the service member and the pet together in the long-term. Before GASP, too often a member of our Armed Force had to give up their beloved pet to a shelter or a rescue group in hopes that the pet would be placed in a loving home, but never truly knowing if it was or if it ended up euthanized, having to give them up forever.

Today GASP primarily fosters pets for wounded warrior assistance related to a medical and/or homeless situation by working with the various VA medical and homeless transition program representatives (mentor, counselor, social worker, etc). They also help the family of deployed hero if there is a medical situation within the family that would have an impact on the family’s ability to continue to care for a pet during the service member’s deployment.

Finding a foster home for four-legged sons and daughters—or “fur babies” as they are lovingly referred—to has become easy now that GASP has established a foster home network consisting of individuals and families who have registered with the interest to open their hearts and homes to a pet in need. When a submission of a pet is received, a volunteer leader matches the pet and the needs of the pet with a foster home. Once a potential foster family is identified, a meet-and-greet is set up by the pet owner. The pet or pets are taken to the residence of the foster family to see if both the family and pet(s) feel comfortable with each other. Once both parties have made a decision, an agreement is written up and signed by both parties.

If you would like to be a foster family, want more information or—better yet—know a service member who needs GASP assistance please visit the GASP website:

[guardianangelsforsoldierspet.org/](http://guardianangelsforsoldierspet.org/)



**Having a trusted volunteer care for a deployed hero’s pet allows him to focus on the task at hand, confident his pet will be there to greet him when he returns.**

**Fifteen  
volunteers  
coordinate  
foster families  
to take care of  
pets of heroes  
from any branch  
of service in all  
fifty states.**



**Guardian Angels for Soldiers’ Pet helps service members know their pets are well taken care of when they are not at home.**



The Sewing Team includes five sub-teams putting their sewing (and even non-sewing) skills to work. Check it out at [www.soldiersangels.org/g/sewing-team](http://www.soldiersangels.org/g/sewing-team).

*The edges of the blanket will never pucker up, and the blankets will roll up nicer.*



You don't have to know how to sew to make a blanket!

## Sewing Team—Try This... and That!

The “**THIS**” is the Sewing Team’s very own Facebook page! Look up “Soldiers’ Angels Sewing Team (OFFICIAL)” on Facebook and discover all the information, stories, tips, and resources that are available there! Share your own pictures and information—our craft community welcomes your input!

The “**THAT**” is new guidelines on making smoother hand-tied no-sew blankets. Thank you to Maryann Phillips for sharing with us this alternative to knotting the fringe. There are two advantages to this method. First, the edges of the blanket will never pucker up because the knots have been tied too tight. Second, the blankets roll up nicer because this “loop” method creates less bulk than knotting does. The blankets lay nice and flat and look great!

Instead of knotting your fleece “no-sew” blankets, try this method. Your blankets will lay nice and flat and never pucker or bunch up!

Cut your fringe strips wider than the 1 inch typically recommended in most instructions – about 2”.



Then cut a small slit about 1/2” to 5/8” long through both pieces of fleece at the base of each strip as shown. The easiest way to do this is to fold the fringe pieces over and cut about 1/4” into the fold (instead of trying to poke the scissors through the fleece). You’ll need good scissors!



Thread both ends of the fringe through the slits at the base of both pieces of fringe and pull all

the way through.



Done! Your fringe should look like this. A nice even loop that will lay flat and never bunch up. Good luck, and have fun!

Will you make just ONE?! Will you tell just ONE friend or family member?! Will you help us put a smile on the face of just ONE service member this Christmas/holiday season?! Thank you!

Love,  
Dee :)

Dee Jerge, Vice President-Sewing Team

\*\*\*\*\*

### Sewing Team Information & Contacts

Please visit <http://www.soldiersangels.org>.

On the left side of the page, click on “Teams & Projects,” then “Sewing Team.”

### Vice President—Sewing Team Director—Blankets of Hope

Dee Jerge

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[djerge@soldiersangels.org](mailto:djerge@soldiersangels.org)

### Sewing Team Newsletter

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### Germany—Blankets of Hope

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### Sand Scarves – Anita Dice

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### Operation Top Knot

Judy Shervanick

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### Patriot Pillowcases

Katie Williams

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## Soldiers' Angels Germany



In September, Soldiers' Angel and Gold Star Mother Linda Ferrara held one of her regular appreciation luncheons at her home in Torrance, CA for local groups of "Blanket Ladies" she has recruited over the years. The various groups include women from the Wilmington, CA VFW, local members of the West Point Parents' Club, local residents of Torrance, CA, and local Gold Star Mothers.

These separate groups of "Blanket Ladies" meet regularly to make "no-sew" blankets, which are then collected and boxed up by Linda and her

daughter for shipment to Soldiers' Angels Germany. Their efforts generate about 100 blankets each month. The blankets are distributed by Soldiers' Angels at Landstuhl hospital to patients aero-medically evacuated from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Linda began making blankets for the wounded at Landstuhl hospital in Germany in memory of her son CPT Matthew Ferrara, who was killed in Afghanistan in 2007. Linda's other three sons are also in the Army, and one is currently deployed to Afghanistan.



The "Blanket Ladies" from the Wilmington VFW in Southern California are part of a group that sends an average of 100 hand-made blankets to Soldiers' Angels Germany every month.

*Their efforts generate about 100 blankets each month.*

## MOST-NEEDED ITEMS

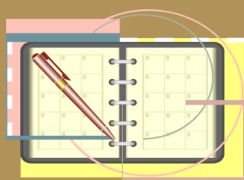
### Landstuhl Hospital October 2011

*Thank you for your help with these items, listed in order of need.*

- Sweatpants and Zippered Hoodie Sweatjackets (sizes M, L, XL, dark colors)
- Plain white undershirts (sizes M, L, XL, crew neck)
- Men's Boxer-briefs (M, L, XL) 2nd choice boxers.
- Calling cards (60-minute domestic cards. International not necessary)
- Blankets of Hope



The "Blanket Ladies" of the West Point Parent's Club in Southern California are part of a group that sends an average of 100 handmade blankets to Soldiers' Angels Germany every month.



*IF you know of an event, activity or fundraiser for Soldiers' Angels that is either sponsored by or for Soldiers' Angels, please let me know. My goal is for every state to take part in this section, so PLEASE email newsletter@soldiersangels.org Thank You!  
—Amy*

## Activities & Events

### OCTOBER

**San Marcos Grand Fall Festival**, October 9 - San Marcos, CA. [susan\\_lawson55@yahoo.com](mailto:susan_lawson55@yahoo.com)

**Wrightwood Jeep Rally & Chili Cook Off**, October 9 from 10AM-4PM - CA Wrightwood Community Center parking lot at 1275 State Route 2 Wrightwood, CA. Denise Goodson will have a table to hand out Soldiers' Angels brochures. Your help would be appreciated. [www.facebook.com/pages/Wrightwood-CA/Wrightwood-CA/297413482330](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Wrightwood-CA/Wrightwood-CA/297413482330) Contact [dtgoodson@cox.net](mailto:dtgoodson@cox.net)

**Walnut Family Festival**, October 9 - Walnut, CA. Set up: 8AM. Event: 10AM-6PM. Suzanne Park: 625 Suzanne Road. For more information: Anita Dice at [anitadice@cox.net](mailto:anitadice@cox.net)

**Ventura Seaside Highland Games**, October 8-9 - Ventura County Fairgrounds Seaside Park, 10 W Harbor Blvd. For more information, please visit <http://www.seaside-games.com/> or email Beth Vandenberg [jandevande@gmail.com](mailto:jandevande@gmail.com)

**Charlotte, NC Wounded Backpacks Donation**, October 11 at 12:00 Noon. For more information, please contact Twyla Choate [events@soldiersangels.org](mailto:events@soldiersangels.org)

**Honoring Our Heroes**, October 15 - Plaistow, New Hampshire. For more information: Twyla Choate [events@soldiersangels.org](mailto:events@soldiersangels.org)

**Houston Bank of America Card Campaign**, October 17 to Nov. 16, 2011 - Houston, TX. For more information, please contact Twyla Choate [events@soldiersangels.org](mailto:events@soldiersangels.org)

**Los Alamitos 9th Annual Wings, Wheels, Rotors & Expo**, October 23, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM - Los Alamitos Army Airfield Joint Forces Training Base 11200 Lexington Drive. Estimated set up 7:00 AM. For more information please contact ANITA DICE at [anitadice@cox.net](mailto:anitadice@cox.net)

**Ventura Veteran Home Birthday** - October 26 in Ventura, CA. 2-4pm. For more information, please contact MaryAnn Foote at [cncca4@gmail.com](mailto:cncca4@gmail.com)

**Nationwide Sale-ibration** - October 21-23. National garage/yard sale to support the troops by raising money and spreading the word about Soldiers' Angels. See story on Page 13.

**St. Petersburg Fundraiser**, October 29 - All day in Florida. For info: [cscott-3539@suddenlink.net](mailto:cscott-3539@suddenlink.net)

### NOVEMBER

**Encinitas Fall Festival** November 9, 2011 Encinitas, CA 9am to 4 pm For more information please contact Susan Lawson at [susan\\_lawson55@yahoo.com](mailto:susan_lawson55@yahoo.com)

**Ventura Veteran Home Birthday** November 16, 2011 Ventura CA 2 pm to 4pm For more information please contact MaryAnn Foote at [cncca4@gmail.com](mailto:cncca4@gmail.com)

**Steppin' For Heroes**, November 15-19, nationwide. To download a pledge form, visit [www.soldiersangels.org/downloads/steppin\\_pledge.pdf](http://www.soldiersangels.org/downloads/steppin_pledge.pdf) or email amyqrf@soldiersangels.org

*The Soldiers' Angels Newsletter, Calling All Angels has a blog to give the reader an additional way to voice opinions, comments, ideas and stories. ALL deadlines for submission—whether stories, announcements or newsletters—will be posted on the blog. There are also links to published Newsletters linked there.*

*Please visit the blog at [callingallangelsnews.blogspot.com](http://callingallangelsnews.blogspot.com), or you can send an email to [newsletter@soldiersangels.org](mailto:newsletter@soldiersangels.org).*

## Veterans in Service

We say, “Mother knows best,” and on most everything a good mom *does* know best. But unfortunately there are some things that a mom cannot completely understand or make better. For example, no one truly can understand what our troops have been through unless they themselves have been in the military, deployed and in combat.

After serving in the Army for ten years former soldier Matt Hagan, who acted as the Physical Training Readiness NCO for deploying soldiers and then later turned Army Medic recognized this problem. Time and time again he saw how many of troops who were leaving the military—whether due to retirement, medical or other reasons—were having difficulty integrating into civilian life.

Having firsthand experience of the difficulties of being deployed, Hagan wanted to give back and help his brothers and sisters both in and out uniform, including those currently deployed. Just like Soldiers’ Angels founder Patti Patton-Bader, Hagan started supporting his brothers and sisters by asking friends to help send care packages. Mail does work wonders, but Hagan also noticed that many of the heroes returning home and in the middle of transitioning back into civilian life were having difficulty doing so.

To address these issues, Hagan founded Veterans in Service, an organization comprised of veterans who understand what our service members are facing these days. In addition to sending care packages to our troops, Veterans In Service gives a portion of collected donations to local community programs and Fallen Heroes grants for students in hoping to pursue further schooling after high school. These individual scholarships are offered in the name of a Massachusetts fallen hero who has lost his or her life in the line of service. The Fallen Hero scholarships continue

to honor the hero’s memory by never forgetting their ultimate sacrifice.

But what is truly special about Veterans In Service is that they offer year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of well-coached Olympic-type sports for veterans with and without disabilities. They do this by providing them continued opportunities to improve physical fitness and prepare for sporting events.

Veterans In Training, the sister organization to Veterans In Service contributes to the physical, social, and psychological development of disabled veterans with athletic challenges. Through successful events and training in sports, athletes gain confidence and build strength, ability and coordination, which they carry into their new civilian lives.

The organization’s ultimate goal is to build a Disabled Veteran Athletic Training facility in the South Shore area of Massachusetts where disabled veterans and returning soldiers will be offered free physical training and outdoor sports activities. By doing this, they hope to allow the nation’s bravest to train to compete in National Disabled Veteran Sporting & Athletic Events. In addition to supporting deployed heroes and the children of fallen heroes in Massachusetts, Veterans In Service reaches out to the returning service members—veterans, active-duty and wounded alike—to build their confidence as they return to civilian lives.

Because Veterans In Service is just a few years old, they are only able to assist their brothers and sisters in uniform in the Massachusetts area, although they will not turn anyone away. Veterans In Service volunteers have been known to travel in order to take part in events, and always welcomes veterans, active-duty and wounded warriors to get involved as volunteers. For more info, see [www.veteransinservice.com](http://www.veteransinservice.com).



**Veterans in Training contributes to the physical, social, and psychological development of disabled veterans with athletic challenges to help them gain confidence, build strength and improve coordination.**

***Having firsthand experience of the difficulties of being deployed Hagan wanted to give back and help his brothers and sisters both in and out uniform.***

## Sale-abration - It’s Not Too Late!!

October 21-23 is the date for a national garage/yard sale to support the troops by raising money and spreading the word about Soldiers’ Angels.

If you would like to hold a sale, please [sign up here](#) and start spreading the news to your friends and neighbors. This could be a great event for a school or church, or a Scout/youth group. Get your whole neighborhood involved in one big yard sale!

If you would like to assist someone else who is holding a sale, [click here](#) to find a location near you.

Sellers who register will receive information packets, including flyers and suggestions for improving the sale and its impact, and help with media and advertising.

*For more info: [events@soldiersangels.org](mailto:events@soldiersangels.org)*



**Sale-abration is a national garage and yard sale to support the troops and share Soldiers’ Angels with Angels’ communities (October 21-23).**

## SOLDIERS' ANGELS

1792 E Washington Blvd  
Pasadena, CA 91104

4408 N PanAm Expwy  
San Antonio, TX 78218

Phone: 629-529-5114

Fax: 626-529-5446

E-mail:

angels@soldiersangels.org

[www.soldiersangels.org](http://www.soldiersangels.org)

**Soldiers' Angels is a volunteer-led 501(c)(3) nonprofit providing aid and comfort to the men and women of the United States Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and their families. Founded in 2003 by the mother of two American soldiers, its hundreds of thousands of Angel volunteers assist veterans, wounded and deployed personnel and their families in a variety of unique and effective ways.**

**"May No Soldier Go Unloved," encapsulates the motivation behind Soldiers' Angels. The volunteers of Soldiers' Angels work tirelessly to demonstrate active care and concern for veterans, the wounded, deployed service members and their families.**



Thank you to all our heroes in uniform who have served so sacrificially  
because of the events of September 11, 2001.