

# The USO Insider

9 April 2007

## A Note from the President

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Like every organization, the USO Puget Sound Area needs to reflect occasionally on what we do, where we have been and where we are headed. Your Board of Directors and staff will be doing so on May 11<sup>th</sup> in a Retreat to be held at the Coast Guard Station on Pier 36. We will build on a foundation set last year regarding our mission, vision and Board structure. This year, we will affirm the values we place on USO service, then move into a strategic planning phase that will drive action plans to shape our next two years. I would be pleased to receive Volunteer input with ideas that I can bring to the Retreat on your behalf.

The Retreat will follow by one week the annual USO World Headquarters Conference which will be held this year in Denver. George Cargill and Tom Jaffa, the USOPSA Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board, respectively, will attend along with Kelly and I. Only George has been to one of these Conferences before so the rest of us expect to learn a lot from both the formal program and from other members of the USO community in attendance.

The month of May will also feature the annual Red White and Blue Golf Tournament to be held May 25<sup>th</sup> in Newcastle as described in another newsletter article. Meanwhile, we must remember that these activities are means to better support our primary mission – direct service to the troops and their families through the fine work of our USO Centers in SeaTac and McChord.

Thank you for your service to those that serve our nation.

Regards,

Tom

## Fort Lewis Reservists Receive USO 'Welcome Home'

by Mac McDaniel

On Saturday, March 24th, members of the McChord USO provided packaged snacks for approximately 200 Wyoming National Guard soldiers at the French Theater on Fort Lewis who had recently returned from a deployment in Iraq. These soldiers spent about a week at Fort Lewis upon their return, for the various briefings and processing prior to being discharged back into civilian life.

The soldiers were solemn and standing in the rain when the USO arrived with a smile, a welcome home, and goodies to eat. The McChord USO volunteers laid out packaged snacks and proceeded to hand-out the goodies to the unit.

Water was provided by TriWest, coffee was provided by the Army, and snacks were provided by the McChord USO.

As the USO volunteers were preparing to leave, the First Sergeant thanked them while the troops gave a standing ovation in thanks. What a wonderful opportunity for the USO to welcome home our troops!

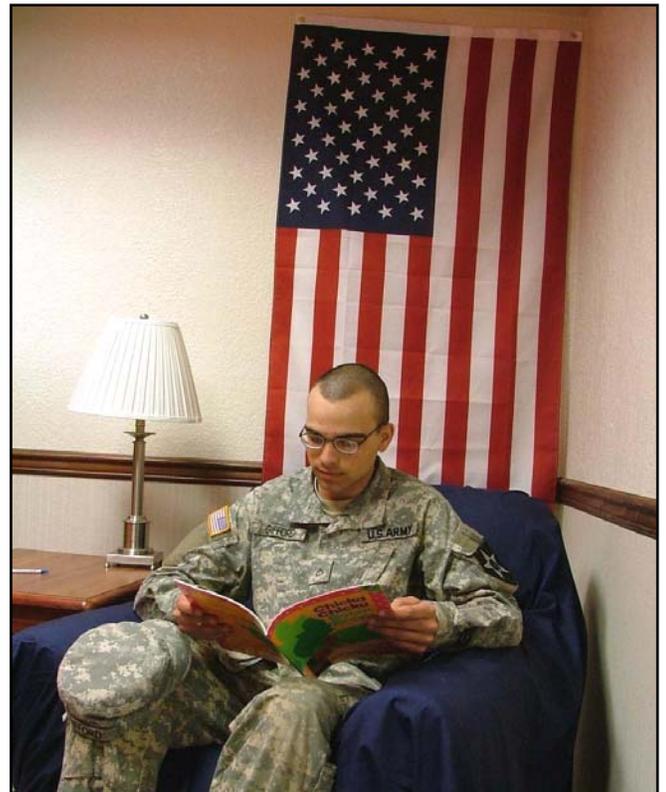


McChord USO volunteers Ron Blatman, Herb Schmeling (slightly hidden) and Angela Swinehart distributing USO WHQ deployment bags to troops deploying through the McChord USO.

## ~ McChord Center News ~



Fort Lewis reservists receive USO hospitality at the "Welcome Home" ceremony in late March.



A soldier utilizing the USO United Through Reading Program before he deploys.

## ~ SeaTac Center News ~

### Volunteer Spotlight

by Sylvia Key

I would like to tell you more about some special volunteers who not only have shifts at the SeaTac Center week after week, but who also make sure we have the food we need at all times.

**Doris Spence and Art Thompson** do the 4:00 am - 8:00 am shifts on Tuesday morning. After getting off their shift, they then take an inventory of all the supplies and plan what we need for the week. It is a full day of shopping, going to Costco and Cash & Carry for most of our supplies, and then Albertson's in Burien to pick up ham and cookies. They also are at the USO every Tuesday and Friday mornings to count the money in our Donation Box.

They are always willing to sub on other shifts when needed and even come when it is snowing since they can walk to the airport. Art is our all-around handyman. Whenever anything needs to be repaired or put together, Art is there. He is also the one who made the boards for our patches and is the one who keeps adding new patches. What a beautiful job! Everyone who comes to the USO always checks the patch boards to see if their patch is there.

**Solveig and Frank Steenerson** pick up bread from Gai's Bakery every Monday. They usually get 100 loaves per week plus cookies, doughnuts and sweet rolls. On Tuesday mornings they go to Sound Produce in Seattle to pick up fruit donated by Dick's Drive-in. Bananas and apples are favored by those we serve. Frank also helps out in the center with Art at times and keeps our supply rooms in tiptop shape (until Sylvia messes them up again). Whenever they are called on to help, they are always willing and able to do so. Frank is also the one who makes our milk shakes during the summer months, compliments of Dick's Drive-In. Besides helping out at the USO they are very involved in their church.

**Doris Carruthers and Michael Ballard** usually do the 4:00 am - 8:00 am shift on Thursday mornings. This is one of our busiest shifts. Unfortunately, Michael Ballard has been absent for several months due to medical problems. Prior to that, he and Doris took the laundry to Northwest Laundry in Kent every week. Before that, they took it to Ft. Lewis every week. Doris is doing it by herself now and it is quite a job. She does a tremendous job and never complains. We are lucky to have her. She also goes to Top Food's in Federal Way on Friday morning to pick up pastry items.

**Rosie Knott** volunteers on Monday mornings on the 8:00 - noon shift. Before coming for her shift, she picks up pastries at Top Food's in Federal Way.

### Special Visitors Enjoy a Trip to the USO

On March 24, Brownie Troop from North Bend, WA paid a visit to the SeaTac USO. The troop arrived at 11:00 am with several boxes of Girl Scout cookies, books for the family room and an electronic game for the kids. Sylvia gave them a tour of the USO and they were very impressed with all the patches on our patch boards. King 5-TV came and the girls were on the 5:00 news - how exciting! When the tour was over, Sylvia and the volunteers on duty served them lunch. After having lunch of tuna, ham & cheese, peanut butter & jelly sandwiches, and doughnuts and cookies – all the best USO staples. Sylvia gave each one of the brownies a gift bag from the USO. Inside the bag was a USO scarf, which the girls immediately put on their heads.



When it was time to go they all gave Sylvia a hug and went down the mezzanine chattering all the way about their tour of the USO. I was later told by Donna Rosenberg they talked all the way back to North Bend about their tour of the USO. They were invited to come back again soon!

**Rosie Knott (cont.)** She also picks up at Top Food's for the USO before volunteering at the Airport on Wednesday mornings.

Rosie is also involved with the youth of the Eastside Grange. She takes June, July and August away from the USO to cook at the summer camps for these young people. Whenever you ask Rosie to do something for you she will always make herself available. A big thank you to a very special lady.

**Richard Holtz** has become involved in ordering and picking up our tuna from Albertson's in Auburn. Richard is recovering from surgery and will not be volunteering for awhile. He will be missed.

## SeaTac & McChord Birthdays

### April

Michael Ballard	April 05
Regina McDaniel	April 05
Richard Powell	April 06
Bonnie Schneider	April 09
Mickey Finn	April 17
Doris Spence	April 17
Solveig Steenerson	April 20
Leoyce Broadbent	April 21
Terry Haines	April 22
Dee Holiday-Osborne	April 23
Shannon Steed	April 23
Patricia Stewart	April 24
Kathryn Reagh	April 26
Jeanelle Waltos	April 28
Phyllis Dickey	April 29



## Professional Development for USOPSA Staff Members

We are happy to report that our Regional Office Manager, **Kelly Carey**, just completed over 90 hours of class and preparatory time as a part of Seattle Central Community College's bookkeeper training program. This program results in certification as a bookkeeper through the American Institute of Professional Bookkeepers. Following completion of this class Kelly will need to take two separate tests to achieve certification in bookkeeping. **Good luck on those tests!**

Kelly will also be participating in this year's WHQ Conference in Denver, CO the first week of May. As the staff representative of our USO Puget Sound Area's contingent, she will be focused on learning how to best meet WHQ reporting requirements, while learning from fellow USOs about practices, policies and service. **Enjoy Denver, Kelly!**

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We are also proud to report that **Tracye Kakely**, our McChord Center Manager, has joined the Lakewood Rotary. Being an active member of the Rotary will enhance Tracye's capacity to build community relations in the area. **Good luck with the Rotary!**



## COMMENTS FROM OUR CLIENTS

Thank you, USO! Everywhere I go, you always make me feel like I am at home! God Bless you all for what you do for us servicemen!

~ CSSR Johnson, USN

Thank you for keeping this facility available 24 hours a day. Your kindness and generosity cannot be repaid.

~ Lt. Benjamin F. Strickland II, USCG

Thanks for being here, every time I need you. Great food, the Internet, a comfy spot to sit for a minute. Will keep coming back! God Bless!

~ E. Croteau - Denver, CO

Thank you so much, staff at SeaTac USO! I don't know what I would have done without you! There I was, in a city I've never been to, sicker than I've been in a long time, and you all gave me a bed and food and a shower, without which this would have been a pretty sad trip! Thank you for all your hard work and caring!

~ Jennifer Stephens

Thank you so much for having such a great place to hang out and relax. You're the best!

~ P. Marlow

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*This is as true in everyday life as it is in battle: we are given one life and the decision is ours whether to wait for circumstances to make up our mind, or whether to act, and in acting, to live.*

~ Gen. Omar N. Bradley

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## USO Golf Tournament

The USO Puget Sound Area's annual Red, White & Blue Golf Tournament is fast approaching. It will be held at Newcastle Golf Club on Monday, May 21st, 2007. This year's tournament is chaired by Michael O'Byrne, Emeritus Member of the Board of Directors. With the help of a great committee including board members and staff, Mike is organizing a tournament that will not only be great to participate in, but will also raise funds for our organization. This year's event will also include celebrities. One of our new board member Mike Flood, Vice President for Community Relations for the Seattle Seahawks, has arranged for USAF reservist and AF Academy graduate and Seahawks defensive end Bryce Fisher and Seahawks coach Keith Gilbertson to join us.

This year we are hoping to have 128 golfers participate in our shotgun start foursome scramble tournament. Golfers will have the chance to win a Lexus from Bellevue Lexus for a hole in one, as well as other prizes for the longest drive, best foursome, and best putt (in a separate putting contest). After playing 18 holes, golfers will be treated to a delicious dinner on the Prestwick Terrace overlooking the city of Seattle. During dinner there will be a silent auction to raise further funds for the USO.

**Registration for the event is currently open and the fees for participation are \$250 per golfer or \$50 for dinner only.** If you'd like to register for the event you can do so online at [www.usopsa.org/golf](http://www.usopsa.org/golf) or by talking to Kelly (206) 246-1908 ext 1 or [Kelly@usopsa.org](mailto:Kelly@usopsa.org)

Volunteer positions are currently available for our registration table, putting contest, hole in one contest, volunteer photographer, auction and overall support. **If you'd like to volunteer for this event, please let Kelly or Sylvia know!!**



**USO Golf Tournament Chair John Drescher congratulates a lucky 2006 prize winner**

## USCGC *Midgett* Homecoming by Cindy Shephard

It was a glorious day down at Pier 36 in Seattle on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March when the *Midgett*, carrying 180 Coast Guardsmen, returned to their joyful families after a six month deployment. Their mission was to support the US Navy in operations involving drugs, terrorism, and piracy in Hawaii, Singapore, India, Oman, Jordan, UAE, Djibouti, Greece, Italy, Spain, Aruba, and Panama. Unlike the Navy, the Coast Guard more routinely board ships and search them.

One of the USO WHQ's new mobile canteens, on its maiden trip, was driven up from San Antonio by Corey Hulse. The canteen's permanent home will eventually be in Las Vegas after a few stops in the Pacific Northwest. USO volunteers from SeaTac came early to set up for the homecoming and handed out a myriad of treats to the eagerly awaiting family members.

Bob Kiga, Deputy Director for Customer Relations Puget Sound Region for The Boeing Company, brought four seventh grade students from St. Anthony's School in Renton to help our USO volunteers. The students, Nathan Tabisula, Jordan Kiga, Kelsey Nolan, and Renee Sullivan, helped hand out goodies to Coast Guard families and friends. A reporter from King 5 television was also present for a news report later that evening

The ladies of the Skyway VFW Auxiliary #9430 also came and brought US Flags for everyone to wave. During the *Midgett's* deployment they supported the families as well as assisted the families in making a 20' x 12' flag that the soldiers kept on the ship. They also provided facilities for pre and post deployment briefings as well as coordinated and sent care packages to the Coast Guardsmen. Virginia Carmen, the next VFW Auxiliary National President, was on site to lend her support.

It was great to see so much support from a variety of sources come together and support the USCGC *Midgett's* return - another USO success story.



**Bob Kiga, George Cargill, Sylvia Key and friend at the USCG *Midgett* homecoming**

## Mobile Canteen Visits Navy Bases

On March 15 -16, the Mobile Canteen showed the USO flag in Everett, Whidbey and Bangor. The 7-person crew briefed Navy personnel on our capabilities, got ideas for our schedule of events, learned about base access or Mobile parking challenges and took a ferry ride to Pt Angeles. The highlight of the road trip was the opening of the Internet Café at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island. **Many thanks to our volunteers** – Driver Wayne Jackson, and crewmembers Jack and Joyce Barton, Lloyd Case, Chuck Dixon (our photographer), and Dave Tennent.



NAS Whidbey Command Master Chief Bagarella joins the Mobile Canteen crew at the EA-6B Prowler Memorial.



Lloyd, Joyce and Dave provide USO-style hospitality to sailors at Whidbey.



CAPT Abernethy (center R), Commanding Officer of NAS Whidbey Island, joins the Mobile Canteen crew after dedicating the new Internet Café on March 16th.

## USOPSA Welcomes USO World's Mobile USO to the Puget Sound

While our Mobile Canteen was in Whidbey Island, the USCGC Midgett was greeted by SeaTac volunteers and one of three Mobile USOs operated by World Headquarters. A custom 40 foot recreation center on wheels with multimedia capabilities for entertainment, Internet and gaming, this was the maiden voyage of their West Coast vehicle based in Texas. Corey Hulse, the manager of the WHQ Mobile USO, met with Tom Hinman, Tracye Kakely and USOPSA volunteer Wayne Jackson at McChord on March 17 to compare notes on the capabilities, operations and scheduling of both Mobiles. The WHQ Mobile will return in June on an orientation trip. We plan to set up a tour for volunteers at that time.



USOPSA Board Chairman and Vice Chairman George Cargill and Tom Jaffa join SeaTac volunteers and the WHQ Mobile USO to greet the USCGC Midgett.



USOPSA and USOWHQ Mobiles rendezvous with a C-17 at McChord AFB.

## Grand Opening of Internet Café at the Northwest Liberty Center

The collaborative effort between the USO and the Moral, Welfare and Recreation Department at NAS Whidbey Island was celebrated on March 16 with a ribbon cutting that honored Mr. W.R. "Ford" Smith, the USO benefactor of this project. The Internet Café provides single sailors on base with convenient Internet access, interactive video-gaming, and a sound booth for aspiring musicians.

Tom Hinman presented Mr. Smith with a Letter of Appreciation from the national USO organization. Ford also received a similar letter from RADM French, Commander, Navy Region Northwest, and a plaque from CAPT Abernethy, Commanding Officer of NAS Whidbey. In response to the thanks from the USO/Navy team, Ford Smith said that his support was a way to show his appreciation for the service and sacrifice of our armed forces and their families.



CAPT Abernethy and USOPSA President Tom Hinman show off the new banner with Russ Gale, MWR Project Manager for the Internet Café.



Ford Smith (left) talks with Internet Café users after the ceremony. Ford and his three guests stayed to have lunch and meet more of the sailors at NAS Whidbey Island.

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Subject line: **Volunteer Email**

Please be sure to identify yourself in the email!

***Thanks in advance!!***