



Foundations

A Newsletter from Homes for Our Troops

| www.hfotusa.org

| FALL 2013

Celebrating New Homes, New Lives



Cpl Tony Mullis (L) and his wife Jeanie cut the ribbon to their new specially adapted home in Hawkinsville, Ga. Also pictured: left to right: HFOT veterans Michael Boucher and Jeffery Williams, Georgia Congressman Austin Scott and BGEN Denis Shortal.

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT/CEO

Dear Friends,

The courage and commitment of our amazing veterans and their families as they take on together the daily challenges and obstacles life presents to them is truly inspiring in every sense of the word. They inspire us with their courage to never give up by continually demonstrating their positive attitudes while summoning all their strength and determination to adapt and overcome physical, mental and emotional obstacles. They inspire us by their loving and compassionate commitment to each other while they are negotiating these challenges.

In this edition of *Foundations*, you'll read about a courageous and deeply committed Army couple, Jennifer and SGT Brian Jergens. As Jennifer reflects on her husband's life-altering war injury and recovery, you'll learn about the courage and commitment Brian demonstrates each day to never give up in his rehabilitation so that one day he is able to kick a soccer ball or throw a baseball to his newborn son Jackson.

In another story, "No Legs, No Limits," we introduce you to two Corporals, Tony Mullis and Michael Boucher, both double amputees as a result of IED blasts in Afghanistan. The two together have started a non-profit venture, "Amputee Outdoors," committed to helping injured veterans partake and enjoy outdoor sporting activities.

Throughout the pages of this edition of *Foundations*, I am very proud to introduce you to some of our courageous and committed veterans and their families whose holidays will be marked by the gift of a specially adapted home during our Homes for the Holidays campaign occurring December 1 through December 21.

The truth of the matter is we have far more of these stories in our Homes for Our Troops family. All of our veterans and their families are inspiring and move us to do everything we can to build more homes so these injured veterans and their families can start to rebuild their lives.

This past year has been nothing short of a success and it's with the help of our sponsors, donors, and supporters like you that we have been able to help more than 40 veterans reclaim their freedom and independence by providing them with the gift of a specially adapted home.

As we look forward to 2014, we are poised to honor a decade of service to our veterans. And while we are proud of the work that has been done the last 10 years, there is still much to be done. More than 1,700 veterans have been classified as severely injured, through the loss of limbs, spinal cord injuries, burns and worse. At the end of this year we will have delivered over 150 homes. Each home we need to provide comes at an average cost of \$430,000. Our waiting list for veterans who require a specially adapted home grows each month.

We at Homes for Our Troops want to thank you for your past support. We need your continued support and commitment as a donor, or a fundraiser, a sponsor, a connector to philanthropists or organizations that want to help veterans who have sacrificed greatly for our freedoms and independence.

With your support, we not only continue Building Homes, but Rebuilding Lives.

Thanks for your courage and commitment.

Looking ahead to the next 10 years to complete the mission!



Timothy P. McHale
Major General USA, Ret.
President/CEO
Homes for Our Troops



Timothy P. McHale
Major General USA, Ret.
President/CEO
Homes for Our Troops

A portion of the production costs for Foundations were generously underwritten by Universal Wilde Printing Corporation. This publication is also available online. As stewards of the funds donated to advance the Homes for Our Troops mission – and in our continuing effort to keep administrative costs as minimal as possible – if you would prefer to receive this newsletter in electronic format, please contact us at info@hfotusa.org.



Charity Navigator, one of the premiere charity rating agencies in the country, has awarded Homes for Our Troops with its highest rating of 4 stars.



Homes for Our Troops is a Top-Rated Military & Veteran Charity by the American Institute of Philanthropy.



#12525

Celebrating HFOT's Amazing Veterans - Your Support Helps Us Help Them!

Love of Country. To protect their families' liberties and freedom. To prevent another 9/11. These are just some of the reasons our veterans were willing to sacrifice life and limb by fighting overseas. Empowered by the freedom a mortgage-free and specially adapted home brings, our veterans can now focus on returning to their life's work of serving others. Many embrace their roles as motivational speakers, sharing their messages of perseverance to civic groups and classrooms around the country; others take to a national platform to promote awareness of veteran suicide, homelessness and PTSD. Their incredible stories-far too numerous for us to include on one page-are the impetus for the work we do at HFOT. Here are just a few of the heroes we honor this Veterans Day-and every day. (Read more at hfotusa.org).



Justin Gaertner is working with HERO Corps (Human Exploitation Rescue Operative) to identify and rescue children who are victims of sexual abuse and online exploitation. Justin will receive his specially adapted home on December 4, 2013.



Luke Murphy recently helped the American Legion Post 13 in his community raise funds for the post's food pantry and Tallahassee Veterans Village, which houses 54 homeless veterans. Luke will receive his home in February 2014.



HFOT recipient (2011) Justin Bond created the non-profit "Our Heroes' Dream," which connects veterans to services ranging from financial help to home repair, job counseling and "Healing Safaris" for family bonding.

NOVEMBER HFOT HAPPENINGS - Mark your calendar!

Nashville's well known for having one of the best Veterans Day parades in the country, and this year on November 11, HFOT veterans SPC Andrew Wilson and LCpl Ben Maenza will lead the parade in Classic Corvettes! The Key Ceremonies for both of these veterans will take place in Tennessee on November 9 and November 10, respectively. Additionally, the Key Ceremony for Army 1SG William "Mike" Leonard will take place in Arizona on November 9, 2013. Check out <http://www.hfotusa.org/calendar>.



Andrew Wilson



Ben Maenza



Mike Leonard

Honor our nation's most severely injured veterans this Veterans Day by donating to any of HFOT's 36 home-build projects taking place throughout the country! Make a gift online at <https://www.hfotusa.org/donate>



Announcing Homes for O

Homes for the Hol



Join us this holiday season as we give the gift of freedom and independence to 12 home! Watch the joyous events unfold as Homes for Our Troops turns over the ke in eight states between December 2 through December 21, 2013! We'll be kicking December 1 in St. Augustine, Florida



12/2/13 CPL Travis Greene
El Cajon, CA



12/2/13 SGT Odin Ayala
El Cajon, CA



12/3/13 SPC Justin Perez-Gorda
Dripping Springs, TX



12/6/13 CPL Johnathan Jackson
Williamsburg, VA



12/7/13 Cpl James "Michael" Boucher
Hawkinsville, GA



12/12/13 SGT Brian Jergens
Hollister, CA

Consider making an online donation to Homes for Our Troops to support the sacrifices made by our nation's military to

Our Troops' Second Annual

Holidays Celebration!



2 severely injured veterans, each of whom will receive their own specially adapted
ys to each of these selfless heroes at their respective Key Ceremonies taking place
g off the celebration at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for LCpl Brandon Long on
la. Celebrate with us at hfotusa.org.



12/4/13 SSG Wallace Fanene
Temecula, CA



12/4/13 Cpl Justin Gaertner
Lutz, FL



12/5/13 SSG Alex Dillmann
Tampa, FL



12/13/13 Sgt Zachary Stinson
Chambersburg, PA



12/14/13 SGT Aaron Jolly
Eaton Rapids, MI



12/21/13 Cpl Kevin Dubois
Burrillville, RI

for Our Troops this holiday season to ensure that the
to safeguard our freedoms are never forgotten.

NO LEGS, NO LIMITS

HFOT veterans Tony Mullis and Michael Boucher help other injured veterans return to the great outdoors

Some things have changed for Corporals Tony Mullis and James "Michael" Boucher since they were left double amputees as a result of separate improvised explosive devices (IED's) in Afghanistan. But their love for outdoor activities, namely hunting and fishing, remains intact, something the two credit to the rehabilitation program at Walter Reed Medical Center. That's where they were reintroduced to the activities they loved prior to their injuries.

"The therapeutic sporting activities and outdoor trips reassured us," says Mullis. "They helped us to see that we could have normal lives." Now, both Mullis and Boucher are hoping to give other severely injured veterans that same kind of confidence by guiding them on outdoor activities through their newly launched business venture Amputee Outdoors (AO).

"Our mission is to show people like us that they can still run the show," says Mullis. "They can do the things they once loved to do—they just have to do it differently." Mullis' partner Boucher stresses that AO will be different from other outdoor excursion-based companies, stressing the one-on-one lessons they will deliver to their clients. "We don't want to take a big group and have these guys only sit and watch," says Boucher.

Instead, veterans in AO will learn to master the adaptive techniques needed to climb a ladder stand and manage their rifles safely while hunting, an accomplishment Boucher says for him felt like "winning the lottery."

Their journey of self discovery unknowingly started in April 2011, when Boucher got news Mullis had been severely injured in a blast, the explosion occurring just one day after Mullis had become a dad. Boucher says hearing this gave him an instant "gut check."

"I pretty much thought Tony's life was over," says Boucher, who served his second deployment with Mullis' platoon.

Two months later, though, it was Boucher who was severely injured in an IED blast, waking up in a hospital to realize he had met the same fate as Mullis. A bedside visit from Mullis, who was already up walking on prosthetics, gave Boucher his first bode of confidence that life without legs would indeed be survivable. At the moment, recalls Boucher, "I didn't even think of Tony as a double amputee."

Boucher and Mullis are eager to share that kind of "a ha moment" with patients recovering at Walter Reed and other facilities. AO, the two believe, can assist with the transition from combatant to civilian, allowing them to once again feel a sense of purpose and camaraderie.

As HFOT homeowners with no monthly mortgage worries, both Mullis and Boucher look forward to devoting time helping their fellow injured warriors recover physically and mentally. The two are waiting to receive official nonprofit status for AO from the IRS; once they do, AO will be eligible for charitable donations and federal grant monies. In recent weeks, Mullis and Boucher have also been busy pitching their outdoor adventures to network execs with the hopes of landing a reality TV show.



Amputee Outdoors Co-founders, Michael Boucher (L) and Tony Mullis.

"Our mission is to show people like us that they can still run the show."

Tony Mullis-Cofounder- Amputee Outdoors

More on Tony and Michael: Tony and Jeanie Mullis, and their son Cason, were presented with their new specially adapted home in Hawkinsville, Ga., on June 15, 2013. Michael Boucher is scheduled to receive his new HFOT home on December 7, 2013 as part of HFOT's Homes for the Holidays celebration.



HFOT Welcomes Whirlpool Company to donate appliances on new builds through 2016

We are pleased to welcome another Official Supplier to our family of corporate partners. On September 25, 2013, Homes for Our Troops (HFOT) President/CEO Timothy P. McHale visited the Whirlpool Corporation headquarters in Benton Harbor, Michigan for a ceremony to mark the contract signing between Homes for Our Troops and Whirlpool Corporation.

Also present at the ceremony was Army CPL (Retired) Jeffery Williams, who received his specially adapted home from HFOT in November of 2011.

As part of the three-year contract, Whirlpool Corporation will supply all household appliances for each new specially adapted home constructed by HFOT now through 2016.



HFOT President/CEO Timothy P. McHale (right) and Whirlpool Executive, Robert Lemyre.

"On behalf of Whirlpool Corporation and all of our approximately 500 veteran employees, we are honored and excited to partner with Homes for Our Troops," announced John Miller, Senior Vice President, Global Strategic Sourcing, Whirlpool Corporation last August. "Whirlpool is committed to supporting veterans whether they are currently serving, entering the civilian workforce or rebuilding their lives."

In addition to supplying the entire appliance package, the Whirlpool Corporation family of companies will also be providing Kitchen Aid small appliances to veterans as housewarming gifts at their respective Key Ceremony.

Third Annual HFOT Golf Classic

Annual Golf Classic raises nearly \$60K to build specially adapted homes for injured veterans

Early afternoon rain did not deter 132 golfers from having a great day on the course and dinner, which featured remarks from two Homes for Our Troops home recipients, SSG Luke Murphy of Florida and Cpl Neil Frustaglio of Texas.



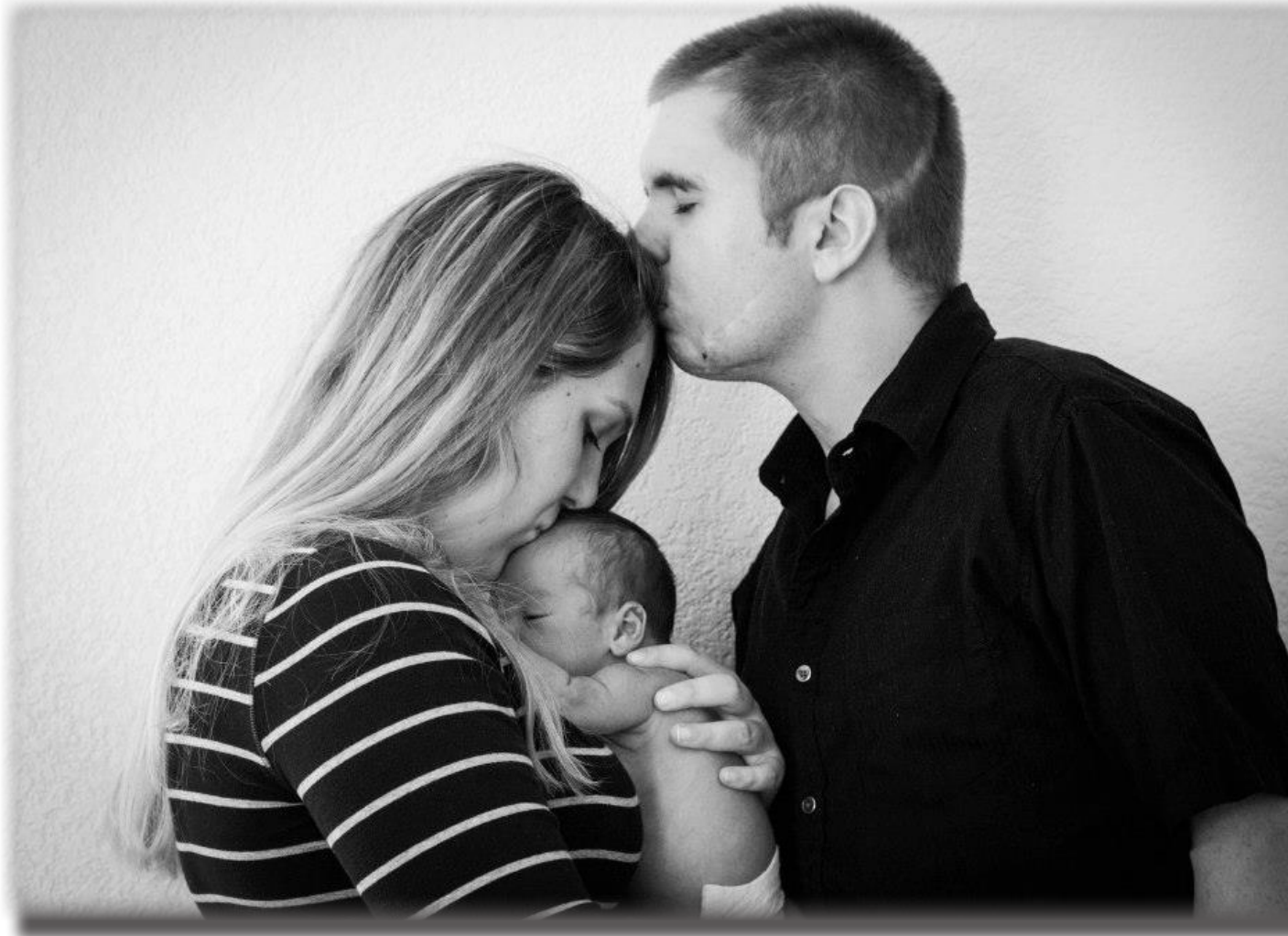
A big thank you to all of our sponsors for their support:

Tournament Sponsor: L-3 Communications
Dinner Sponsor: Wingate Healthcare
Tee Gift & Hero Sponsor: Volvo Rents
Cocktail Reception Sponsor: Rockland Trust
Lunch Sponsor: FW Webb
Silent Auction Sponsor: Mastic Home Exteriors by PlyGem
Cart Sponsor: Harvey Building Products
Beverage Cart Sponsor: Dedham Savings Bank

Gold Sponsors: O'Donnell & Tessitore, Intertek, CertaPro Painters, Braver Technology, The Bryan Company, Crown Point Cabinetry, Intercontinental Real Estate Corporation, Arrow TruLine, Omni Marketing Group, Pro Care Inc, Spectra Energy, Walpole Co-operative Bank, Red Sox Foundation, CertainTeed, Greatbatch, Nixon Peabody.

FROM INJURY TO INDEPENDENCE

Army Wife, Jennifer Jergens, Reflects on Her Husband's Injuries and Recovery



The journey of future HFOT home recipient, Army Sergeant Brian Jergens, who continues to recover from catastrophic injuries he sustained in Afghanistan in 2010, has been nothing short of miraculous. In the story that follows, Brian's wife Jennifer reflects on how the two have persevered through the darkest of days after the blast, and subsequently, through Brian's rehabilitation and recovery.

The call came on August 7, 2011, as Jennifer Jergens, then 18, was returning to her sister's home after a bridal fair: Jennifer's newlywed husband Brian, an Army Medic, had been gravely injured when his HUMVEE was hit by an improvised explosive device.

"I didn't get many details, only that he had lost his legs," recalls Jennifer, married to Brian only 8 months. "Little did I know that was about to be the least of our worries."

Hours later, Jennifer would listen to a

voice on the phone dictate the seemingly endless report of Brian's injuries as a result of being tossed from his HUMVEE: severe traumatic brain injury, hearing loss, internal organ damage, a broken neck, and severe damage to his right elbow.

Doctors managed to stabilize Brian for transport to Landstuhl, Germany, where he would undergo various surgeries, including an emergency (and rare) craniectomy- a last resort procedure in which doctors removed part of Brian's skull to allow room for his swelling brain to expand.

After a grueling week, Jennifer was finally able to visit Brian's bedside at Brook Army Medical Center (BAMC). A doctor and Army Liaison had prepped her on what to expect in the ICU, but to some degree she didn't care. "I couldn't wait to get in his room to hold his hand and tell him it was alright and we would get through this," she says.

Jennifer arrived to see Brian attached to an array of tubes and wires, including a tracheotomy tube in his neck to allow breathing. Says Jennifer, "He was swollen and beat up, but he was still my Brian."

"I couldn't wait to get in his room to hold his hand and tell him it was alright and we would get through this."

-Jennifer Jergens



Jennifer and Brian, weeks into Brian's recovery.

Over the next few weeks, Jennifer would see Brian through a dizzying array of fever spikes and precariously low drops in blood pressure. One night in September nurses discovered him in the middle of the night in a pool of blood. Doctors later cauterized an ulcerated blood vessel in his stomach to stop the bleeding.

"With all the infections and bleeding Brian had, things would change by the minute," says Jennifer, comforted at the time by the prayers of friends. "Growing up my mom always told me that God would never give me something I couldn't handle, so I always said that to Brian."

The turnaround for the couple came in mid-September when doctors cleared Brian for transport to California's Palo Alto Poly Trauma Center. Brian was able to swallow ice chips and move his legs sporadically. By October, his physical therapists were able to move Brian into his wheelchair and actually take an excursion outside to the facility's healing garden. The next month, Brian was able to swallow apple sauce at Thanksgiving.

Over the next year, Brian continued to make progress in physical, occupational and speech therapies, exceeding personal goals set for him by his practitioners at the Palo Alto Poly Trauma Center. Good news kept getting better. In April 2012, Brian and Jennifer learned that they would be receiving a specially adapted home from Homes for Our Troops; they're due to move in on December 12, 2013. And last July, the couple were also on the receiving end of another miracle-this time in the way of a 7 pound, 9 ounce boy-Jackson Christopher.

"Brian surprised all the doctors and nurses who took care of him," says Jennifer. "No one ever thought back then that he would be here today, walking and taking care of his son."

While Jackson's first steps as a teetering toddler are months away, his dad should be a great teacher, walking on his new prosthetics in just a few months. Of course Jackson's been a great motivator for Brian, too.

"Brian wants to be able to kick a soccer ball with him or throw a ball when he grows up," says Jennifer, adding that her husband now prefers to walk without crutches. "He wants to be able to carry our son around which he can't do with his hands occupied by his crutches."

Last August, Brian, Jennifer and Jackson were invited by Homes for Our Troops to San Francisco's AT&T Park to ceremoniously toss the first pitch at a Giants game, which drew nearly 50,000 spectators.

Pivoting on his prosthetics and clenching Jennifer's hand instead of his cane, Brian took to the mound and lobbed the ball toward the catcher. It was a bit wobbly and off speed, but he reached his target. Home.

A Key Ceremony for Brian and Jennifer Jergens will be held in Hollister, Calif. on December 12. The couple would like to express their gratitude to the HFOT community in helping secure their family's dreams for the future.



SGT Brian Jergens cycles for Team HFOT at the Army Ten Miler, Oct. 20, 2013.

BUILDING HIGHLIGHTS AND MILESTONES

GROUNDBREAKINGS

<u>Army SGT Aaron Jolly</u> Eaton Rapids, MI	July 13, 2013
<u>Marine Cpl David Noblit</u> Elysburg, PA	July 20, 2013
<u>Marine Sgt Gabriel Martinez</u> Parker, CO	July 20, 2013
<u>Army SPC Brett Bondurant</u> Lawrenceburg, IN	Sept. 7, 2013
<u>Army SGT Thongpane "TD" Thongdeng</u> Largo, FL	Sept. 28, 2013
<u>Army SGT Nick Koulchar</u> Brighton, MI	Oct. 19, 2013

VOLUNTEER DAYS

<u>Marine Sgt James "Matt" Amos</u> Mount Hope, KS	Aug. 3, 2013
<u>Army SSG Wallace Fanene</u> Temecula, CA	Sept. 7, 2013
<u>Marine LCpl Nicholas Thom</u> Broad Run, VA	Sept. 7, 2013
<u>Army SSG Anthony Verra</u> Stella, NC	Sept. 7, 2013
<u>Marine LCpl Benjamin Maenza</u> Brentwood, TN	Sept. 14, 2013
<u>Army SPC Andrew Wilson</u> Nolensville, TN	Sept. 14, 2013
<u>Marine Cpl James Michael Boucher</u> Hawkinsville, GA	Sept. 14, 2013
<u>Marine Cpl Justin Gaertner</u> Lutz, FL	Sept. 21, 2013
<u>Army SGT Brian Jergens</u> Hollister, CA	Sept. 21, 2013
<u>Army 1SG William "Mike" Leonard</u> Peoria, AZ	Sept. 22, 2013
<u>Army SGT Odin Ayala</u> El Cajon, CA	Sept. 28, 2013
<u>Marine Cpl Travis Greene</u> El Cajon, CA	Sept. 28, 2013
<u>Army SPC Justin Perez-Gorda</u> Dripping Springs, TX	Oct. 5, 2013
<u>Army SGT Matthew Parker</u> Elizabeth, CO	Oct. 19, 2013
<u>Marine Sgt Zachary Stinson</u> Chambersburg, PA	Oct. 19, 2013
<u>Marine Cpl Kevin Dubois</u> Burrillville, RI	Oct. 26, 2013
<u>Marine Cpl Ammon Lang</u> Port Angeles, WA	Nov. 2, 2013
<u>Army CPL Johnathan Jackson</u> Williamsburg, VA	Nov. 16, 2013

KEY CEREMONIES

<u>Marine Cpl Chris Montgomery</u> Mobile, AL	July 14, 2013
<u>Marine Sgt Christopher Santiago</u> Queen Anne, MD	Aug. 3, 2013
<u>Marine Sgt Marshall Kennedy</u> Farmington, AR	Aug. 17, 2013
<u>Marine Sgt James "Matt" Amos</u> Mount Hope, KS	Sept. 28, 2013
<u>Marine LCpl Anthony Yanez</u> Broken Bow, OK	Oct. 5, 2013
<u>Marine SSgt Jeremy Austin</u> Pulaski, VA	Oct. 5, 2013
<u>Marine LCpl Nick Thom</u> Broad Run, VA	Oct. 26, 2013
<u>Army SSG Anthony Verra</u> Stella, NC	Oct. 26, 2013
<u>Army 1SG William "Mike" Leonard</u> Peoria, AZ	Nov. 9, 2013
<u>Army SPC Andrew Wilson</u> Nolensville, TN	Nov. 9, 2013
<u>Marine LCpl Benjamin Maenza</u> Brentwood, TN	Nov. 10, 2013



USMC Cpl. Travis Greene helps with the landscaping on his HFOT home by carrying a roll of sod on his wheelchair at the joint Volunteer Day held for him and Odin Ayala on September 28, 2013. Over 200 volunteers were guided by professional landscaper and television host Ahmed Hassan on the project

PLEASE VISIT US AT

www.hfotusa.org

Rose's Reasons for giving to Homes for Our Troops this season!

As stewards of all financial contributions made to Homes for Our Troops (HFOT), the Annual Giving & Donor Relations Team, led by Rose Dixon, is charged with managing prospects and ensuring that each donation is properly recorded and acknowledged. Need a reason to make a charitable donation to HFOT this season? Rose is happy to give you several.

1. You get to "Pay it Forward." What better way to honor all veterans—especially our nation's most severely injured veterans—this Veterans Day by helping us build the specially adapted homes they need?

2. A chance to be an optimist. Are you a Debby Downer? The carpool complainer? Donating to HFOT changes that instantly. By doing good things, you make the world a better place. Don't you feel better already?

3. Put your money where your turkey is. When your family's sharing all that it's grateful for at the Thanksgiving table, you can smile knowing you've done your part to thank those who have protected your freedoms.

4. Smart investing. HFOT remains a Four Star charity—the highest rating possible—while its administrative expenses stay under 10 percent. (Yeah, go ahead and compare us to the others).

5. Cheaper than therapy. Let's face it, giving to a worthy cause feels great. We want you to feel great. REALLY great.

6. A cure to the post-holiday blues. Donating to HFOT can help you curb frivolous spending on holiday gifts. Won't it be nice not to dread the bills that come in early January?

7. Better than giving a tie. Take a look at how we're putting gifts like yours to work: Visit our website to see how we are building homes and rebuilding lives. Or better yet, attend any one of the 15 Key Ceremonies taking place between November through the end of this year. Or just call me — you're always welcome!



Members of HFOT's Development Team—Rose Dixon (R) and Melanie Auger.

8. Forget the furlough. HFOT is not funded by the government in any way. Ignore all that business (or non-business) happening in Washington D.C. and contribute to a fiscally responsible budget that funds specially adapted homes for veterans throughout the country.

9. Your donation is tax deductible. Quick! Get it done before year's end!

10. Your gift is needed. Help us restore freedom and independence to all 1700 severely injured veterans who have suffered traumatic amputations, severe burns, or spinal cord injuries. These veterans and their families thank you in advance.

11. Really? Reasons 1-10 weren't compelling enough? Donate today at:

<https://www.hfotusa.org/donate>

Homes for Our Troops
6 Main Street
Taunton, Massachusetts 02780
866-7-TROOPS

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Holliston, MA
Permit NO. 20

A portion of the production costs for Foundations were generously underwritten by Universal Wilde Printing Corporation. This publication is also available online. As stewards of the funds donated to advance the Homes for Our Troops mission – and in our continuing effort to keep administrative costs as minimal as possible – if you would prefer to receive this newsletter in electronic format, please contact us at info@hftusa.org.