

PRESSRELEASE

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Update on Project Cool for U.S. Troops

Michigan City, IN (August 16, 2004) – Michigan City residents answered the call to provide cooling scarves to some of the more than 130,000 Americans who are serving in sweltering Middle East countries where the temperatures often reach over 100 degrees. Project Cool is sponsored by the City of Michigan City and the Great Lakes Museum of Military History. Mothers and daughters, sisters and friends came to the Michigan City Public Library to sew over 100 scarves on a Saturday afternoon, and others delivered bags of completed cooling scarves to the Military History Museum over a period of weeks.

“Cooling scarves are one of the top requests from our troops,” said Terrye Mansfield, director of the Military History Museum. “The neck scarves are filled with hidden water-soaked polymer crystals which feel cool against the neck. The scarf is reusable...over and over again...which makes it perfect for our troops.”

More than 250 scarves were sent to The Ships Project last week for delivery to U. S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. “The Ships Project began in October 2001 when one woman received a letter from the USS Bataan requesting warm items for the ladies on board,” said Jan Kostielney, project coordinator representing the City of Michigan City. “Since then the project has grown to serve many different ships as well as Marines and Special Forces on the ground in Afghanistan and Iraq and members of the Air Force who are deployed in Operation Enduring Freedom. The project has collected a total of nearly 100,000 handmade items for America's troops from citizens across the country.”

Kostielney continued, “One of The Ships Project’s members reported that a staff Sergeant in the Army was recently back in the U.S. after serving in the military hospital in Germany where wounded are sent. The project member told him about the organization and what it does. He said he had seen our "hugs from home" (hospital booties and cool ties) everywhere. He said the men and women are coming into the hospital with their cool ties tied around their wrists so they don't lose them! And when they have to take them off for surgery or a treatment; he said it's the first thing many of them ask for when they wake up.”

Mansfield said, “We will continue to send hugs from home to our service men and women, shipping cooling ties during warm weather and hats, slippers, socks, and afghans during cold weather. The Ships Project accepts knitted, crocheted and sewn items.”

“We invite auxiliaries, church groups, neighborhood groups, scouting troops, youth groups and individuals to make warm and cold weather items to send to our troops,” Kostielney said. “If you can’t

sew, crochet or knit, you can donate materials which we will provide to needlecrafters or you can donate funds for us to purchase those materials.”

Materials and funds may be delivered to the Great Lakes Museum of Military History for this ongoing project. Mansfield said, “We want to thank L.L.A. 1969 for donating \$300 to this effort. The funds are being used to purchase materials and to pay for postage.”

“All items are mailed to The Ships Project, and they send them to their contacts,” Mansfield said. “This project has been approved by each ship's or unit's command, and they are expecting the packages from The Ships Project. Postage help is always appreciated but is not required. If you would like to donate toward our shipping costs or those of The Ships Project, you can deliver the funds to the Military History Museum. Postage costs from The Ships Project in Florida to the ships and ground troops have topped the \$80,000 mark to date.”

Additional shipments of cooling scarves are scheduled to leave Michigan City on August 31st and September 30th. Warm items will be shipped on October 30th, November 30th and December 30th.

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