

The Road to Recovery Report

An Update for Supporters of the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes

Volume 66 ★ March 2018

Providing Emergency Aid to Troops Severely Disabled in the War on Terror



“Thank you for the holiday [meals check] ... As an injured vet living off of my VA disability, there isn't room in my monthly budget for many extras. Your gift makes the holiday season a bit brighter.”

— Disabled veteran Joe K.

It's Not Too Early: Let's Help Struggling Disabled Veterans This Easter!

Pay attention as you read this month's *Road to Recovery Report*, and you'll see a common thread woven throughout its articles: our holiday meals program, which provides checks for a special hot meal to America's disabled veterans for Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Holiday meals are just one way we help our disabled veterans – but it's an important one! The gift of a special hot meal brings struggling veteran families

together ... and it reminds our heroes that grateful Americans around the country haven't forgotten their sacrifices.

But we need your support to make sure we're ready this Easter! We're counting on you to help make sure we don't have to turn away even one severely disabled veteran who needs help putting a hot Easter meal on the table for his or her family. We hope it inspires your generosity and warms your heart to hear the good your giving is doing for our heroes.

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Letter from President David Walker

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Dear Friend of Our Wounded Heroes,

As I sit down to write to you a few months past the holiday season, my heart is still full from the good you and I were able to do this Thanksgiving and Christmas to help our disabled heroes.

During the months leading up to the holiday, we kick it into overdrive to help brighten the holidays for America's War on Terror veterans. Raising money and distributing emergency financial aid, checks for holiday meals, or "Secret Santa" presents for veteran families is truly a rewarding experience.

But the greatest reward comes after the dust settles and messages of gratitude and joy begin to trickle in from the heroes we helped. Often they're powerful enough to move me to tears – stories of hope that are so much greater than you might imagine could come from a simple gift of holiday cheer.

Take, for example, the email we received below from a disabled veteran named Steve M. After we helped Steve and his family – a wife and two young children – with an emergency financial aid check for \$2,200 (\$1,600 in car payments and \$600 for rent), he wrote:

"I'm writing you this email because it's easier for me. If I were to call you right now and tried saying what I want to say to you, I would most likely break down and you wouldn't be able to understand me anyways.

"First, THANK YOU & the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes for helping complete strangers!"

"Just when I had given up hope, you called. November was a rough month for my wife and I, a lot of stress, fear and a lot of crying. Last month when all these issues came up I contemplated suicide. I just couldn't see the point of trying so hard anymore when all this bad stuff keeps happening to us.

"When I said you are my 'guardian angel' I truly believe it. You all are amazing people and Coalition to Salute America's Heroes is an amazing organization!"

Let that sink in. The generosity of donors like you kept a veteran family from going homeless and losing their car just a few weeks before Christmas. And it may have even kept a struggling disabled veteran – pushed to the brink of hopelessness – from committing suicide during the holidays.

I hope you'll keep this story in mind as you consider giving again to help a hero's family this Easter. And I hope you know just how grateful I am to have the support of patriotic Americans like you as we do everything in our power to help those who gave so much to defend our freedom.

With gratitude,

David W. Walker
President & CEO





The Difference Your Gift Makes All Year Long! Emergency Financial Aid Averts Veteran Homelessness and Hunger

Our Emergency Financial Aid program is the bedrock of our mission to provide direct, immediate financial assistance to America's veterans severely wounded in the War on Terror – with the help of generous Americans like you.

There are many reasons our disabled veterans may need our help. The most common is the sluggish bureaucracy that keeps our disabled troops and

veterans waiting an average of 10 months (and sometimes longer) for their first government disability check. The combination of delayed government benefits, crippling disabilities that keep veterans from being able to work, and spouses who serve as full-time caregivers too often spells disaster for struggling heroes.

Your donation to the Emergency Financial Aid program is truly a lifeline

to these wounded warriors. Your gift goes to work in a matter of days to help a disabled veteran with anything from putting food on the table to keeping a roof over his family's head ... paying medical bills or keeping the lights on. But no matter what the emergency, your gift will make all the difference to a wounded hero who otherwise might go homeless, hungry, or suffer another frightening hardship.

From Easter to Christmas, Meals Brighten the Holidays for Veterans' Families

For a disabled veteran who's struggling to pay the bills each month, the holidays can be a time of stress and despair instead of joy. That's where our Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Meals Projects come in.

Your gift helps provide thousands of severely disabled troops with \$60 to enjoy a holiday meal. For a military family unable to put any food on the table, the gift of a special holiday

dinner with all the trimmings provides a welcome respite from worry and the opportunity to enjoy time together as a family. Our meals projects are another wonderful way patriotic supporters like you tell our severely disabled veterans that you're grateful for their sacrifice and that they're not alone – especially at the holidays.

Right now our 2018 Easter Meals Project is in full swing! Read more about it in the enclosed



letter from retired Major General John K. Singlaub.

Your Holiday Generosity Gives Christmas Presents to Struggling Veterans' Families



Another way we support our veterans through the holidays is our Secret Santa and Christmas Angel Projects. Generous donors like you chip in to provide \$500 Christmas gift checks, which we send to veterans who suffered severe, disabling injuries in Afghanistan or Iraq – so they can give their families a few Christmas presents.

Many severely disabled veterans are already choosing between keeping their

homes, paying the electric bill, and putting food on the table. They certainly don't have money for extras like Christmas gifts – especially heartbreaking for their little ones who have already sacrificed so much due to their parent's service and disability.

That's why we created the Secret Santa Project – to give these heroes a helping hand and make sure their kids get a few toys “from Santa”!



He Did It: 31 Marathons in 31 Days for Marine Veteran Double-Amputee Rob Jones!

As promised, our good friend Rob Jones completed a terrific feat in 2017: running 31 marathons in 31 consecutive days in 31 cities in America and abroad.

Rob is a Marine Corps veteran who lost both legs to a terrorist's bomb in Afghanistan. He then went on to win a bronze medal in the Paralympics, bike 6,000 miles across the country

from Maine to California, and, most recently, run 31 marathons in 31 days – all the while using his journey to raise money for the Coalition and two other organizations that helped him during his recovery.

We're so proud of Rob, his accomplishments, and his commitment to helping his fellow veterans ... and we can't wait to see what he does next!



Holiday Meals for Our Wounded Warriors Because of Donors Like You



After distributing \$60 Thanksgiving meals checks to thousands of War on Terror veterans, we were thrilled to receive many photos of their families enjoying their special holiday meals. Thank you for putting food on their tables and brightening their holidays!

Helping Our Severely Disabled Veterans in a Variety of Ways ...

The Coalition rolled into Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, with Feed the Children for another very successful food and essential item distribution event. This time we partnered with a wonderful organization called Kentucky Colonels to distribute free boxes of food, hygiene, and other essential items to local military families.



The Coalition gave a \$5,000 grant check to Veterans on the Rise in their Homeless Stand Down for Health and Employment in Washington, DC. This is another example of where the “Coalition” part of our name comes into play. We constantly work with other organizations to reach as many veterans as we can!



Once again the Coalition was privileged to participate in the annual Hollywood Christmas Parade. Coalition representatives included our President David Walker, Jack Scalia, and disabled veteran J.D. Williams and his family!



Coalition President David Walker presented a \$2,500 donation to Midwest Veterans Closet, which dispenses clothes, food, and assorted household items to veterans and families most in need. (One in four of the veterans served in the Illinois county Midwest Veterans Closet have daily food security issues.)





Improve the Life of a Disabled Veteran: Become a Coalition Partner for Heroes!

Streamline your giving in 2018 and make your gift go further by joining the Coalition's **Partners for Heroes** program today!

Partners for Heroes is a simple and secure way you can make an even bigger difference for our struggling severely disabled veterans. It's our monthly giving program – and it has some great benefits that make it as easy as possible for you to continue your faithful support for America's heroes.

★ Each month your monthly donation is conveniently debited from your checking account or charged to your credit card. You don't have to waste time writing checks, searching for stamps, or keeping track of our letters.

★ We track your monthly giving; at the end of the year you

receive a convenient donation statement for tax purposes.



★ You'll receive less mail from us, and the money we save on postage and printing helps your gifts go further each month. (Don't worry – we'll still keep sharing important program updates and newsletters with you, just like this one!)

★ You're free to cancel your Partners for Heroes membership at any time.

It's easy to enroll – just see your enclosed reply form. Please, become a Partner for Heroes today. By doing so you'll save yourself time, make your giving go further, and help ensure we have the funds we need to provide emergency aid to wounded heroes and their families right away – when they need it most.

In 2018, Resolve to Make a Difference for Our Disabled Heroes

“*To care for him who shall have borne the battle
and for his widow, and his orphan*”

— President Abraham Lincoln

The start of a new year is the perfect time to assess your charitable giving ... decide what really matters ... and resolve to make a difference! Remembering the Coalition in a charitable bequest is a wonderful way to keep your resolution to make a difference by supporting America's severely disabled War on Terror troops and veterans for years to come!

Simple and straightforward options include donating stocks and bonds, transferring a life insurance policy, donating your home or other property, purchasing a gift annuity, or contributing part of your retirement plan.

Now is the time to act – don't wait! For a private and confidential discussion of how to leave the Coalition a charitable bequest, please email us at info@saluteheroes.org or call us at (703) 348-9914 or toll free at (888) 447-2588, Ext. 103.

The Coalition to Salute America's Heroes does not provide legal or financial advice to prospective or current donors. Always consult with your attorney and financial advisor before making any important decisions regarding your estate.



Your Generosity Helped These Veterans Weather the Storm

When a crippling natural disaster strikes, its impact is felt for months by those living in its path. But for disabled veterans, many of whom are already unable to work due to their injuries, the path to rebuilding can be even more of a struggle.

In past months we distributed a number of special emergency financial aid checks – assistance for severely disabled War on Terror veterans whose families were devastated by hurricanes and flooding in 2017. You can read a little of their stories – and one very special thank you – below.



The **Texas home of veteran Felix G.** sustained flooding during Hurricane Harvey. Felix and his family were able to stay in their home, but it sustained significant damage including moisture and mold. Felix requested \$1,000.00 to assist with food and gas.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors: \$1,000.00

Veteran Alex G. from West Virginia was the victim of severe flooding in August. His newly purchased and renovated mobile home incurred water damage due to flooding. His family’s congregation and friends volunteered to assist with the repairs, but Alex requested \$2,899.18 to help with the cost of materials and supplies.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors: \$2,899.18

After Hurricane Irma, **veteran Scott O.’s** home sustained water and debris damage, and his family was unable to move back in until repairs were made. Scott requested \$1,000.00 to assist with food, gas, and a vehicle payment.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors: \$1,000.00

Army veteran Arnaldo M. from Puerto Rico served our country in Afghanistan. He asked for \$500 for a security deposit on a new apartment after Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico and he and his family became homeless.

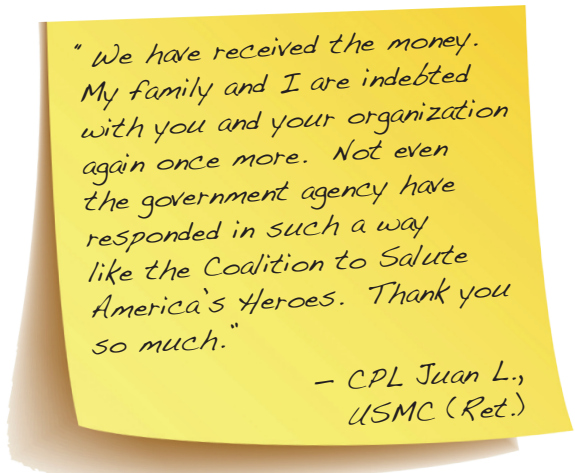
★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors: \$500.00

Veteran Rachel S. from Florida was left homeless after Hurricane Irma. She requested \$1,100.00 to help her pay for an extended stay hotel room, as she did not want to stay in a shelter due to her post-traumatic stress (PTS).

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors: \$1,100.00

Veteran Ringner M. from Texas was evacuated during Hurricane Harvey and had to move into a hotel. Ringner needed \$1,000.00 to assist with hotel expenses, food, and gas.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors: \$1,000.00



Juan’s home in Richmond, Texas, was flooded in Hurricane Harvey. His family – including five small children – had to be rescued by boat and move into a hotel because the local shelters were full. The Coalition helped Juan with financial assistance for food and shelter.

Reminder: Coalition is a CFC Charity!

If you’re a federal employee, we’d like to remind you that the Coalition is on the National/International 2018 Combined Federal Campaign Charity List. Selecting the Coalition as your CFC charity is an easy and exciting way to support our disabled heroes!





“Thank You” for Giving These Heroes the Gift of a Holiday Meal

Even as we prepare for our Easter Meals Project, it’s difficult to put into words the difference the gift of a special holiday meal can make to a disabled veteran who’s lost all hope. So we’ll let them tell you themselves – by sharing the heartfelt thank yous we received from heroes you and I helped together with \$60 Thanksgiving Meals checks.

“As my family heads into the holidays it is always a stressful time. I retired in April of this year and the transition was very hard. We spent most of our savings moving across country and being homeless for a short time. When I received the letter with the check for \$60.00 I was completely overwhelmed. Salute America’s Heroes brought a smile to my face – something I am trying to have more of.”

— John Y., USMC (Ret.)

“It means so much to us that we are being remembered in such a kind and giving manner. Living on disability pay is certainly tight, and this expression of gratitude ... truly made a positive difference, not only financially, but emotionally, for us. It reinforces that war injuries are not in vain, nor go unnoticed.”

— Disabled veteran Clay & Lisa S.

“My family and myself would like to say thank you for the generous gift you have sent us for our Thanksgiving meal. This gift helps us out greatly during our holidays making a difference in affording a Thanksgiving meal for my family. Being 100% disabled and living on a fixed budget is a difficult task in itself. Holidays have become almost impossible to be able to afford. Your gift brings hope and help to my family and myself.”

— Disabled veteran Jeffrey H.

“Thank you so much for the Thanksgiving check. It has helped out so much. I didn’t have any money to provide my family with a Thanksgiving meal until your check came in the mail. You guys have blessed us tremendously.”

— Disabled veteran Aaron B.

“I just wanna take this time to thank you for the 60 dollar [meals check]. If it wasn’t for that I wouldn’t have been able to have a Thanksgiving for my family.”

— Disabled veteran Betty N.

Please consider sharing your e-mail address

By providing your e-mail address on your enclosed newsletter reply form you’ll start receiving thank you notes, photos and updates about how your continued generosity is improving the lives of our disabled heroes and their families.