

News

American Sewing Guild adapts clothing for wounded military

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By Linda May, Macomb Daily Special Writer

As long as we have U.S. military people recovering from war wounds, there will be people from the Sew Much Comfort group adapting clothing for them.

For September, proclaimed National Sewing Month by the American Sewing Guild, there is a display of the clothing at the Clinton Macomb Public Library. It is the handiwork of volunteers from the guild. The Macomb group meets at a Shelby Township church. Another ASG group meets in Mount Clemens.

"For the fifth year, the Macomb-Shelby neighborhood group has set up a National Sewing Month display at the main branch of the library," Andrea DiPaola said. "This year, we collaborated with Sew Much Comfort in order to increase awareness in Macomb County of this worthwhile organization.

"We take ready-made street clothes and adapt them," DiPaola said. "Service people don't want to be in pajamas and hospital gowns all the time. They want to be out in public."

Miki Welch is a Warren resident and seamstress.

"Miki came to the library loaded with lots of great examples of the SMC adaptive clothing. We filled one entire display case with SMC and patriotic items and another display window was filled with the beautiful work of our own members," DiPaola said.

"This display is a splendid record of the good works of some Macomb County folks," said SMC area coordinator Pat Quintero. "Sew Much Comfort is still going strong. Late last year we passed the 75,000-garment mark. We have distributed more than 75,000 garments at no cost to the wounded."

Volunteers open the seams of shirts, pants and underwear for men and women and sew in Velcro so that clothing goes over casts, prosthetics and medical equipment. They make oversized lounge pants from patterns. The SMC organization gets custom orders regularly for whatever an individual soldier needs. Examples are at <http://www.sewmuchcomfort.org/index.asp?pageID=17>

"Patients can get dressed without getting hurt," DiPaola said.

SMC has non-sewing volunteers who cut and iron, and it solicits donations to purchase clothing and sewing notions. Volunteers also make accessory bags and pillow cases.

DiPaola learned of SMC at a one-day workshop.

"My husband is a veteran, and also my dad, and I've sewn all my life," she said. "What people like about this is that even beginning sewers can work on, say, a pair of boxers in one sitting and finish it and have that sense of instant gratification that

they've made something useful."

Anyone interested in the sewing guild may contact DiPaola at (586) 781-2353. For information on Sew Much Comfort, contact Quintero at (248) 546-0038.

Cards for Soldiers

Crafters of a different kind can join with the Disabled American Veterans Chapter 129 and the Stampin' Up! company. They offer a handmade card class called Cards for Soldiers. Demonstrator Karen Trelfa teaches people to make cards, five of which crafters take home, and five that go into care packages for deployed troops. The session is 6-10 p.m. Thursday at 47326 Dequindre Road in Utica and the cost is \$7. Contact Trelfa for more information at (586) 739-3586.

POW/MIA vigil

For the 23rd year, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 154 will have a POW/MIA vigil at Oakland Hills Memorial Gardens in Novi where there is a monument to the 1,731 Americans still missing from the Vietnam War, including 53 from Michigan. Call the Roseville Veterans Support Center at (586) 776-9810 for more information.

The event begins on Friday, National POW/MIA Recognition Day. The national observance is at the Pentagon with former prisoner of war and U.S. Sen. Jeremiah Denton as featured speaker. Ceremonies held around the country focus on 40 years of formally searching for remains and answers through the Defense POW/MIA Office. There have been 852 repatriated remains since the end of the war in 1975. The core belief — to leave no soldier behind — extends to the missing from earlier and later conflicts.

The remains of Navy Capt. Michael Scott Speicher presumed killed on Jan. 17, 1991, the first day of Operation Desert Storm, were recently recovered. Acting on information from Iraqi civilians, a work party of mostly U.S. Marines excavated an area in Anbar Province, Iraq, near the crash site of Speicher's F/A-18 Hornet. The deceased pilot was reportedly buried by Bedouins about two kilometers from where the downed aircraft was discovered in 1993.

U.S. post offices are required to fly the POW/MIA flag on Friday, under statutes in the U.S. Code governing the American and other flags.

Michigan Remembers

A related event is the 11th annual Michigan Remembers Run on Sept. 19. Motorcycles converge on the Capitol steps in Lansing at 1:30 p.m. for a one-hour ceremony.

The run begins from staging sites around Michigan on that morning. Then, the assembled groups ride to the Capitol in Lansing. For information contact Gary D. Moore at (810) 987-9565 or visit www.michiganremembersrun.com

The Macomb County staging site is the Wolverine Harley-Davidson dealership at 44660 North Gratiot Ave. in Clinton Township; departure will be at 10:15 a.m. Ride captain is Ozie Osgood (586) 242-7541.

Toys for Needy

The Toys for Needy Kids eighth annual car and motorcycle show will be Sept. 20 and is sponsored by American Legion Post 4, 401 N. Groesbeck Highway, Mount Clemens. Registration is 9 a.m. to noon, opening ceremonies are at noon, and awards are at 4 p.m. Bring a new, unwrapped toy upon entry. For information, contact Steve LoCicero at (586) 997-1286.

Preserving history

The Veterans History Project collects and preserves the stories and remembrances of American war veterans and the civilian workers who supported them. RSVP of Macomb is a local partner of the project. Interviews are videotaped, a transcript made,

and copies are provided to the veteran, and sent to the Library of Congress. Many of these interviews are on the Internet at www.loc.gov/vets. Interested veterans should contact RSVP of Macomb at (586) 756-1430.

Chicken dinner

The Marine City Lions Club will sponsor a barbecued chicken dinner from noon to 6 p.m. Sunday at its clubhouse at 545 Ward Street. For information about the dinner, call (810) 765-9121. Dinner proceeds benefit the fireworks fund for the downtown Marine City Oktoberfest that takes place Sept. 18-20. Fireworks are on Sept. 20. The Oktoberfest includes bike night, family day, antiques vendors and free appraisals.

Send service club and veterans news to: Linda May, c/o The Macomb Daily, 100 Macomb Daily Drive, Mount Clemens MI 48046; or lindamay@ameritech.net. Phone/fax (586) 791-8116.

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