

Dottie's House Conducts Campaign For Female Troops In Iraq

We all wake up in the morning and get started with our daily routine. We awaken the children and get them ready for school, take a hot, steamy relaxing shower, browse through the newspaper, and rush out the door hoping to make that 9:00 a.m. meeting on time. However, for others their daily routine is not as predictable.

There are 142,000 U.S. troops in Iraq who wake up each day unsure of what lies ahead of them. Dottie's House recently learned of the 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion of the New Jersey Army National Guard through Michele Eventoff, Executive Director of the Brick Township Chamber of Commerce. The battalion consists of 300 troops, 60 of which are female soldiers who are deployed in Iraq until February 2010. While the military provides its soldiers with the necessities, most of the items supplied are geared towards the male soldier population and the commissary, which is the only store in sight, is the size of a small convenience store and does not have much of a section. When Dottie's House read of the Chamber of Commerce's collection of items for the female troops, that's when they decided to get involved and developed the "Home of the Free Because of the Brave" Campaign wherein they

reached out to staff, residents, board members, volunteers and members of the community to collect items for the female soldiers of this unit.

Dottie's House is a 501(c)(3) non-profit transitional housing program for women and children who have survived domestic violence. The two-year program is designed to empower women to gain emotional and financial independence and break the generational cycle of domestic violence.

Throughout the eight week campaign, Dottie's House collected a wide range of items including feminine shampoos, soaps, deodorants, hygiene products, pajamas, flip flops, photo frames, and stationary so they can keep in touch with their loved ones back home. They also collected beach umbrellas for the troops which serve as a shield from the blazing sun when they escape the cramped headquarters to go outdoors to read and write mail. Every Dottie's House resident participated in the campaign and together collected two boxes of personal items for the women. Dottie's House would like to thank all who contributed, especially our large donors including Mueller's Bakery in Bay Head, Donna Bradley of Arbonne International, Jim and Lisa Dowd, Girl Scout Troop # 1849, and Maria Sessa, Thomas Maydish and Barbara Sheridan of JCP&L who also helped us package and transport all 15 boxes to the troops.

"It's the least we could do. These troops risk their lives each and every day for us and we are grateful for all the freedom they have provided for our country," said Carol A. Wolfe, Executive Director of Dottie's House. "We honor their courage and pray for their safe return home," she added.

Join Dottie's House at their Holiday Cocktail Party on Thursday, December 10th at The River House in Brielle. Tickets are \$100 per person and include dinner and open bar. There are also sponsorship opportunities available, many which include tickets to the cocktail party. To learn more about Dottie's House or their upcoming events, please call (732) 295-7380 or visit their website at www.dottieshouse.org.