

EUP Knitting Effort To Benefit Overseas Soldiers Is Growing; Donations Raised at Car Show

Knit Hats: From page 1

group a donation. The group raised \$419.14 for the cause Saturday, \$200 of which was presented at 10 a.m. as a check from the St. Ignace Women of the Moose.

Warmth for Warriors is thankful to the group for their donation, as well as to all of those who visited the booth and contributed Saturday, Mrs. Welcher said.

"Everyone down there was very supportive," she said. "We did very well."

Since its tent was set up next to the Kewadin Casino tent featuring John Schneider during the show, the group got the chance to have 10 of its hats signed by the celebrity guest. The women said they have not yet decided how to use these autographed hats.

The group was formalized in September 2008 under the name "Warmth for Warriors," a phrase used by Mrs. Welcher's husband, John, that she said "just stuck." So far, the volunteers have made and mailed out 3,509 hats to members of the armed forces, most of whom are sick or hurt.

Since the group was named, Mrs. Welcher said satellite groups that send hats to her organization to package and send overseas, have begun springing up all over the place.

"A lot of people really want to do something meaningful, they just don't know how," she said. "There are a lot of women who are really glad this opportunity is here. Their hearts really go out to the soldiers."



John Schneider, a celebrity guest during the St. Ignace Car Show, signs 10 hats for the Warmth for Warriors program, which makes and sends knit hats to sick and wounded American soldiers overseas. The group has not yet decided how best to use these autographed hats, but the knitters said they were thankful for the contributions of Mr. Schneider and everyone else who stopped by their booth at the show Saturday, June 27.

The soldiers enjoy the comfort the hats provide as much as the women enjoy creating them, Mrs. Welcher said.

"We've gotten wonderful letters back," she said. "These men and women really appreciate this."

Each hat, which Mrs. Welcher estimated takes about two hours apiece to make, carries the name of the person who knitted it and a poem.

Jan Zerby, one of the group's knitters from Bay City, has sent more than 100 hats since she

joined. The VFW auxiliary in Brimley, a group of UAW retirees, a woman in Rapid River, Lenore Katz from Brooklyn, New York, and members in Rudyard and Paradise are a few of the other active knitters who volunteer their time and knitting and crocheting needles to the cause.

New groups are also just beginning in Grand Blanc and St. Ignace, Mrs. Welcher said, and much of the growth has occurred over the last year. The organization is also looking to begin shifting its



The St. Ignace Women of the Moose present a check for \$200 to Meta Welcher from the Warmth for Warriors program Saturday, June 27, at the St. Ignace Car Show. Including this amount, the group, which knits hats and sends them to sick and injured American troops, raised \$419.14 during the show. Pictured are (from left) Charlotte Everson, Donna Thompson, Sue Apple, Meta Welcher, and Norma Emery. (Photograph courtesy of Charlotte Everson)

focus from troops in Iraq to Afghanistan, partly because of a similar shift underway in the armed forces and partly because of the particular need for warm clothing in regions of that country.

Two large donations of yarn have been provided by the Brown Sheep company of Nebraska, and the women are always looking for

donations to help pay for more yarn and postage.

Mrs. Welcher said the group continues to grow and will be looking for volunteers interested in knitting as well as other aspects of the organization like planning fundraisers.

She said she never expected her idea to grow like it has today.

"It has made wonderful progress," Mrs. Welcher said. "I was just doing a quiet thing out of my home, and now it's grown."

Those who would like to donate or participate may call Mrs. Welcher at 478-6033 or visit the group's Web site at www.warmthforwarriors.com, where knitting instructions are posted.

Wyers Joins Chamber Staff for Summer; Hours Extended

Audrey Wyers of St. Ignace is home for the summer after her first year at Alma College, and is using her free time to help the St. Ignace Chamber of Commerce handle a busy summer workload.

Miss Wyers is one of many workers in the area temporarily employed through a Michigan Works! program, which funds their pay and provides them to community organizations free of charge.

Answering telephones, helping with mailings, and greeting guests who walk through the office doors are just a few of the duties Miss Wyers has taken on since starting work earlier this summer.



Audrey Wyers

"I love it," she said. "I get to talk to people and tell them how great St. Ignace is."

Thanks in part to the extra help Ms. Wyers is providing, the chamber office will extend its hours to Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Labor Day.

The daughter of Ann Wyers of St. Ignace and Dan Wyers of Sault Ste. Marie, she was graduated from LaSalle High School in 2008 as its salutatorian. She said she plans to

pursue music and possibly English education during her college career.

Wrestling Events Planned at Arena

Young wrestlers ages five and up will arrive Sunday, July 5, at Little Bear East Arena in St. Ignace for the Mack-Attack Wrestling Camp, which will culminate Saturday, July 11, with the Battle at the Bridge wrestling tournament.

Workouts and training sessions wrap up Friday, July 10. Age groups and weight classes are set up for youth ages five through 18.

Camp wrestlers are invited, although not required, to take part in the Battle at the Bridge tournament July 11 at the arena, beginning at 10 a.m. This competition, hosted by the St. Ignace Recreation Department, is also open to wrestlers who did not attend the camp.

Benefits Studied

County: From page 10

township or county should cover it. Bois Blanc Township paid last year, he noted.

Unemployment benefits are not outlined in the contract, the sheriff said, nor are other benefits, such as sick time, vacation time, and personal days.

Commissioners agreed the deputy should receive the same sick time and personal days as any county employee, but want to study vacation time further and have agreed to meet with Bois Blanc Township Treasurer Cheryl Gahn to work on the details, Mackinac County Commissioner Calvin McPhee said.

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