

Friday Morning Message

Peggy McGee

April 18, 2014

TWOQC's CONTINUED NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR ITS SUPPORT OF TUCSON'S HOMELESS VETERANS

The awards ceremony in Washington, DC on April 9 was nothing short of phenomenal—and humbling. I do not watch the *Today Show* so I had no clue who they were but I think I had a lot of jealous honorees when Matt Lauer and Savannah Guthrie were assigned to my table. I did not know she was from Tucson either. Both of them were so gracious and willing to be photographed with each of the honorees. Jon Bon Jovi was also there and he gave a nice congratulatory talk but he disappeared right after the meal so no photos of him.

The ceremony was held at the National Museum for Women in the Arts. We were seated in a more or less private dining room where our water and drink glasses were rimmed in gold. *Newman's Own* funded the awards so on each table were 3 varieties of *Newman's Own* salad dressings and we had our beverage choice of *Newman's Own* Pomegranate Lemonade or Iced Tea. No celebratory champagne or wine even though *Newman's Own* produces wine.

As many of you probably know, the Homeless Veterans project began when I knitted some hats on a loom during a flight to Australia and New Zealand—really long flights. When I went to be photographed with the oversized check, Tom Indoe, President/COO of *Newman's Own*, really impressed me when he asked if I knew that Joann Woodward was a knitter. He said he sat next to her on a flight to London and she knitted the entire time. Bet she wasn't knitting for homeless veterans though!

There was a 4x6 foot poster for each awardee giving a description of the program and some quotes. They did not use any of the photos from the clothing drive but rather had one from the 2013 baby shower with the soldier moms holding up their hand-made quilts. My photo showed me at the 4th of July parade when I was Grand Marshal. During the announcement of the awards read by Jenna Bush Hager, who was representing Points of Light, they did a slide presentation showing the clothing drive with all the bags and boxes. At the conclusion of each award Jenna ended by saying “and a big thanks to Name of Honoree” and that was the cue for the audience to clap. How proud I was when she said, “**and a big thanks to Peggy McGee and the Women of Quail Creek.**” We are now nationally known!

On April 17, the entire board plus our faithful photographer, Eileen Sykora, went to the VA where we presented the check for \$10K to the hospital associate director and the head of the homeless veterans program. We will have the photos of that on the website within the next week. By their reaction, it seemed like \$10K was a really large donation to a single program. I requested that all the money be used to furnish housing units for homeless veterans. They promised it would be.

Probably not this weekend but maybe next, *USA Weekend* will be running some follow-up stories on last year's Make A Difference Day events. Knowing there were at least 2300 events last year, it was wonderful to make the top 10. It certainly would not have happened without your stupendous support. I am so proud to be the leader of such a caring organization.