



70°
Clear



GREEN VALLEY NEWS AND SUN

Southern Arizona Newspapers

Advanced Search

Green Valley, Arizona

GO

HOME ▾ NEWS ▾ SPORTS ▾ BUSINESS ▾ OPINION ▾ EASY LIVING ▾ OBITUARIES ▾ FUN ▾ SAHUARITA SUN ▾ MAGAZINES CLASSIFIEDS CALENDAR

Home ▸ News ▸ Local News

Posted online: Tuesday, April 8, 2014 7:02 pm By Ellen Sussman, Freelance Reporter

National attention: Quail Creek group honored for veterans project

A three-year project by a Quail Creek group to collect donations for homeless veterans is getting national attention.

Peggy McGee, president of **The Women of Quail Creek**, organized the project in 2011 as part of **Make A Difference Day**. They collected clothing, cash, backpacks, housewares and other items for homeless veterans, and the donations have continued to flow in. They were profiled in the April 4-6 issue of USA Weekend magazine.

On Thursday, she will be among 14 people nationwide to be honored in Washington, D.C., by the magazine, *Points of Light and Newman's Own Foundation*.

McGee launched the effort on a long airplane ride to Australia and New Zealand where she knit hats for homeless veterans. That seed grew to include **The Women of Quail Creek** volunteers who helped knit more hats and then organized an annual **Make-A-Difference Day** of clothing donations for Tucson-area homeless veterans.

In November, when McGee filed a report listing how many volunteers were involved, how many veterans were served and what the long-term effect would be, she never expected what would follow.

"Although it was my idea, if **The Women of Quail Creek** didn't support it the program would never have worked," she said. "We collected 1,425 items of clothing, 2,976 miscellaneous kitchen and bathroom items, 115 pounds of toiletries and \$756 in cash."

She was stunned in February when she received an e-mail that her program

was being considered as one of the Top 10 **Make A Difference Day** programs nationally. Days later, she received a phone call confirming her program had been selected. McGee was told that about 2,300 community organizations take part in the annual October public service program. The award comes with a \$10,000 check that will further help veterans.

Jodi Frederick, homeless veteran coordinator and clinical director of rehabilitation programs at the Southern Arizona VA, said the money will help with furniture and supplies veterans need as they set up a household.

"When the veterans move into housing they have no furniture or furnishings so this will help them greatly," she said. "We rely heavily on the community for donations so we are absolutely thrilled with this donation."

McGee, who was honored last year as one of *Our Champions by the Green Valley News & Sun*, was flown to Washington by the sponsors where she will attend a luncheon Wednesday and the presentation Thursday at the Washington Marriott. NBC "Today" show hosts Matt Lauer and Savannah Guthrie will help honor those who **Make A Difference**.



National honorees
Margaret Morris, Barbara Kittle, Peggy McGee, Ann Nease and Sandi Beach pitched in on a project for homeless veterans that has gained national interest. McGee holds up a copy of USA Weekend that profiled their efforts.