

# Veteran Love and Appreciation 2nd Quarter Newsletter



VETERAN LOVE AND APPRECIATION

## Operation Veteran Support

To our valued supporters, veterans and future donors:

Veteran Love had a busy start in the new year assisting many veterans as well as participating in numerous events.

In this newsletter you will learn of the many families in need that we have helped. You will also learn of a brave airman who came to us in January with his dying wish, which Veteran Love was proud to grant.

This airman, John Heath, was stricken with ALS while on active duty and deployed in the Middle East. John was a very brave and giving young man who's dying wish was to "Go Really Fast" before dying of this terminal disease. John's wish was granted during "Speed Week" in Daytona Beach at the Daytona International Speedway. John got his wish to "go really fast" and at the same time had the privilege of meeting Richard Petty himself. Ultimately, John lost his battle with ALS in April 2007 and will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in June 2007 with full honors.



John Heath with Richard Petty & SFC Craig McMahon of Veteran Love

To learn more of the veterans we are proudly supporting please visit our website and read on as we "Spotlight" some of the various families we are assisting with their most difficult transition to civilian life.

Thank you for your generous and continued support!

*Toni Garner*

Executive Director

### In the Spotlight



Tony Larson, veteran of the "War on Terror" as well as a Purple Heart recipient, became the May recipient of our "Monthly Grant"

program. Tony and his fiancé were living at the Mologne House across from Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, DC for many months during his recuperation from the severe injuries he sustained while on deployment in Iraq. Tony lost his right leg below the knee, suffers from migraines and

memory loss due to traumatic brain injury. Tony has been released from Walter Reed and officially retired from the Army and has returned home to begin his new life, as an amputee.

Tony is equipped with a service dog and wheelchair, but living on the 3rd floor of an apartment building was beyond difficult. He found a small house to buy and Veteran Love is assisting Tony with providing him specialized furniture and his 1st month's mortgage payment while he awaits his disability checks to begin. He began the process of paperwork involved to get his disability checks started and two months later is still waiting for them to begin. We have learned over the past few months that our wounded and disabled veterans wait for months before their disability checks begin. These are the disabled veterans that we step in to assist, the ones who continue to be without the means to live on, the ones who have given the ultimate sacrifices for our freedom.

Veteran Love will also be assisting Tony with any retrofits that might be needed in his new home to enable him to live on his own with as little assistance and normalcy as possible.

This retrofit will come at a high price and we hope that you can find it in your heart to make an extra donation to help towards the cost of this effort.

[www.veteranlove.com](http://www.veteranlove.com)

### Donations at Work

✦ Veteran Love co-sponsored a Job Fair on May 15, 2007 for over 600 veterans and their families with more than 70 businesses represented. This was a very successful event for those unemployed veterans seeking jobs.

✦ We began our monthly grant program in March and the 1st recipient was SPC Allen. Due to his injuries and being unable to work VL granted "emergency financial assistance to this family of five.

✦ Veteran Love took 40 combat and disabled veterans on a Deep Sea Fishing trip March 16, 2007 for some R & R aboard the "Reward" charter boat.

✦ We assisted veteran J. Briseno, who is ventilator dependent with a spinal cord injury and needed our assistance to fly his Mother home to prepare equipment to enable him to leave Tampa VA and return home where he will continue his recovery.

✦ SSG J. Borders is a 15 year veteran of the Army and is currently living in DC so that he can be treated for several severe injuries he received while in IRAQ. SSG Borders has a family of four and they are living in DC also (not their home) to be close to him for care and support. SSG Borders just received his 50th surgery and is expected to remain at Walter Reed until at least January 2008. He has lost one leg and is in danger of losing the other, but maintains a great outlook and wants to remain an active duty soldier. VL is currently assisting this family with their situation.

Veteran Love also would like to remind you that we have a chat/bulletin board site open 24/7 for those needing peer to peer support. Our resident moderator, Dr. Robert Roerich frequents the board with advice and resources you may find a need for in a time of crisis. We encourage you to pass along our site to all veterans you may come in contact with. You can reach the site directly at:

<http://chat.veteranlove.com>

### Upcoming Events:

- Family Support Day at Navy Operational Support Center, June 3rd, 2007
- Veteran to Veteran Assistance Program July 2007
- Yoga for Wheelchair Bound Veterans Ongoing Program Support
- 2nd Annual Fundraiser - Miami, FL Fall 2007