



# Foundations



[www.homesforourtroops.org](http://www.homesforourtroops.org)

| A Newsletter from Homes for Our Troops

| **SUMMER 2009**

## In Memory of SGT Mark Ecker II



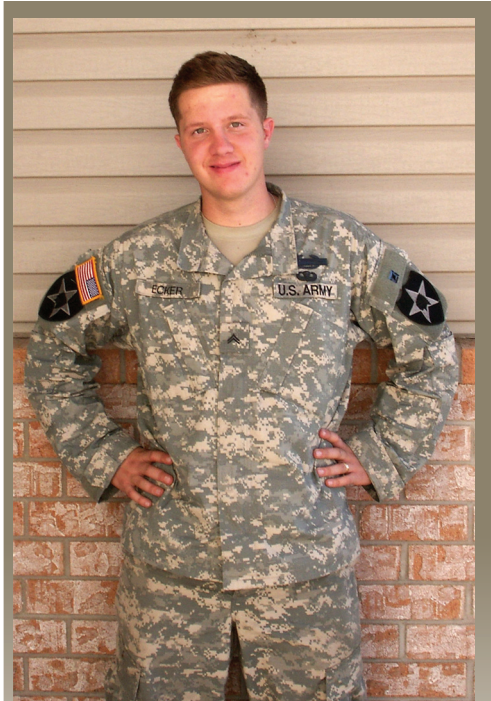
*We will never forget you.*

SGT Mark R. Ecker II, November 7, 1985 - July 10, 2009

The Homes for Our Troops Family is still in shock after learning of the death of US Army Sergeant Mark R. Ecker II who was killed in a car accident in Andover, Massachusetts on Friday, July 10, 2009. We grieve with the Ecker Family and the countless members of the community of East Longmeadow and the Homes for Our Troops donors and supporters who were looking forward to building a home for our local hero.

Mark was liked by all who had the pleasure of meeting him. He was quiet and reserved but full of fun and laughter. By his positive nature, you wouldn't know all that he had been through in his young life. Mark had been critically injured while serving in Iraq in February 2007. An IED explosion caused the loss of both of his legs while he was leading his squad on a nighttime mission in a neighborhood known to house insurgents. Mark received care at Walter Reed Army Medical Center for 9 months, his family by his side. To think that Mark so courageously endured his injuries, overcame the challenges of his rehabilitation and ongoing recovery to then be taken so unexpectedly in a tragic accident is difficult to comprehend.

Mark touched all of our lives in a positive way, he was the type of person that made all of us work harder to fulfill our mission to support our injured heroes and we consider him our friend. We are better people for having known this true American hero who not only sacrificed so much while in service to our country, but brought friendship and a spirit of service to others into our lives. We will never forget him.



**Always a SOLDIER  
Forever our HERO  
Always our FRIEND**

*WE RIDE in memory of SGT Mark Ecker II  
for our 6th Annual Motorcycle Ride.*

## 6th Annual Motorcycle Ride & Raffle, 8.23.09

**BUY A RAFFLE TODAY! Sign Up to Ride with Us!**  
[www.homesforourtroops.org/2009bikerun](http://www.homesforourtroops.org/2009bikerun)

START LOCATION: TEXAS ROADHOUSE  
NASHUA, 580 AMHERST STREET

END LOCATION: MANCHESTER  
HARLEY-DAVIDSON, 115 JOHN E.  
DEVINE DRIVE, MANCHESTER, NH

REGISTRATION: ON-SITE - TEXAS ROAD-  
HOUSE NASHUA OR ONLINE NOW.

WIN A 2009 PRO STREET BY DIRICO  
MOTORCYCLES, USA OR \$20,000 IN  
CASH! / \$100 PER  
CHANCE



*Thank you to all of our generous sponsors!*



## Rating News



Charity Navigator, one of the premiere charity rating agencies in the country, has reviewed Homes for Our Troops finances and awarded us with its highest rating of 4 stars!

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# OUR 3RD ANNUAL GALA

*A Good Time Was Had By All!*



National Guard Presentation



SSG Matthew and Tracy Keil with some of our Title Sponsors



Great News for The Hunts!



Honor Guard Presentation



Our Young Marine Escorts



Victoria L. Mosier Patriot Awards



Our Taunton DAV Volunteers with SSG Michael Downing



Roomful of Blues!

Our 3rd annual Gala at the Boston Marriott Copley Place was a night we will not soon forget. Memorable presentations, auctions, and dancing to music from Roomful of Blues ensured that a good time was had by all!

It was heartwarming to witness the joy and relief of Army SGT Nathan Hunt and his family, from Texas, when they learned that they had been taken off of the Homes for Our Troops waiting list and added to our build schedule for 2010. The announcement that Army SSG Michael Downing's project in the Middleboro, MA area will be sponsored by our Gala Title Sponsors was met with a standing ovation!

Thank you for joining us and allowing us to take another deserving veteran off of our list. Thank you to all of our sponsors for making this night happen, and to all of you who gave so generously! The event and auctions cleared more than \$103,000!



**Thank you to our Title Sponsors:**



Mark your calendars for next year! The 2010 Gala will be held on March 6th at the Boston Marriott Copley Place!

## IT'S GOOD TO BE GREEN! HOMES FOR OUR TROOPS GREEN BUILDING UPDATE

### ENERGY STAR AND LEED ARE BECOMING COMMON TERMS AT HOMES FOR OUR TROOPS.

In June, HFOT turned over another Energy Star Certified Home to SSgt Jones in Fort Collins, Colorado. Our standard build specifications are filled with green building methodology to ensure compliance with Energy Star.

*Speaking of building specifications...How important are the windows and insulation in your home?*

Homes for Our Troops recently received feedback from the Green rating company, Magrann Associates, for the Marine Cpl Visnu Gonzalez home that certainly opened our eyes. The home was originally designed to be 50% more efficient than a home built using standard building codes. With a few upgrades from Mastic Siding and Harvey Windows, we were able to achieve a **preliminary Home Energy Rating System (HERS) index rating of 30** for this home. For this rating system, a lower number indicates a more energy efficient home; keep in mind, the average home, built to code, receives a rating of 100. Each point reduction represents an increase in efficiency of 1%. Mastic provided Structure brand insulated siding while Harvey Windows raised the bar with triple glazed Tribute brand windows built to their high performance siding package standards. When the rating was calculated with these upgrades, the rating system indicated that this home will be built 70% more efficiently than a home built using standard building codes.

**Homes for Our Troops is proud to announce that we now have a LEED certified staff member!**

**Rick Goyette, a HFOT Project Manager, has taken the Green initiative and acquired his LEED Accredited Professional certification or LEED AP. Congratulations Rick! Thank you for leading the way in Homes for Our Troops going Green.**



# BUILDING HOME, REBUILDING LIVES: COMPLETED BUILD BRIGADES

**SPC REAS AXTELL**



IDALOU, TEXAS  
Completed May 14, 15, & 16, 2009

**SPC BRYANT JACOBS**



HERRIMAN, UTAH  
Completed May 5, 6, & 7, 2009

**SGT TRAVIS WOOD**



CEDAR CITY, UTAH  
Completed June 22, 23, & 24, 2009

*Thank You to the many volunteers and our builders on each of these projects!*



## UPCOMING BUILD BRIGADES

**SGT CAMERON CROUCH**  
MAHOMET, IL

**SPC JASON SCHULZ**  
EAGLE, WI

**SFC ROY MITCHELL**  
CARTHAGE, NY

*Watch our website and sign up for updates on these projects so you can share in the success of these builds.*

## Upcoming Key Presentations

**SPC REAS AXTELL**  
IDALOU, TEXAS

**SPC BRYANT JACOBS**  
HERRIMAN, UTAH

**SGT DARRYL WALLACE**  
HARLEM, GA

## SSgt John Jones' Key Presentation



More than 150 people were on hand to witness the Key Presentation at the new home of SSgt John Jones in Fort Collins, CO in July. State Representative John Kefalas, and Archer Homes' Larry Archer (project General Contractor) joined Homes for Our Troops Board Member, Brian Joyce to officially complete the project and hand over the keys. SSgt Jones and his wife Amber spoke and read a heartfelt letter of thanks to the nearly 300 volunteers who gave of their talents and time to complete the Energy Star rated, fully-accessible home.

SSgt Jones was injured in 2005 while serving with the 1st Battalion 7th Marines in Iraq when an anti-tank mine exploded beneath the vehicle in which he was riding. As a result of his injuries, both of his lower legs required amputation. After more than four years



of surgeries and rehabilitation, the Joneses are finally "home" with their three children and looking forward to the future. Amber Jones addressed the crowd with these words, "We are utterly moved and overwhelmed by this experience. You may never know the true depth of what you have done for us."

The Jones home is the 4th Colorado home built by Homes for Our Troops.



# OUR 1ST ANNUAL VICTORIA L. MOSIER MEMORIAL RUN

11.08.09  
WE RUN...



*Because her legacy is in the shelter and love she gave to the sons and daughters of our military.*

American Legion Hall, Raynham, Massachusetts

5 mile run || Sunday, November 8, 2009 || Start Time: 11 a.m.

In honor of Victoria L. Mosier, a founding member of Homes for Our Troops who passed away much too soon. Victoria was "the kind of person you meet once in a lifetime". Her affinity for the military and her dedication to the Homes for Our Troops mission was a testament to the type of loving, giving person she was. Vicki gave her heart and soul to this mission and we are proud to have continued on in her memory to build Homes for Our Troops to be the nationwide organization we are today.

Join us as we run for Vicki, we run for our troops and we run to support the mission to assist our severely injured Servicemen and Servicewomen.

Sign up today at [www.homesforourtroops.org/vlm](http://www.homesforourtroops.org/vlm)



## Upcoming Fundraisers & Events to Benefit Homes for Our Troops

### FLORIDA

Freedom Walk at Cranes Roost Park  
(freedomwalk)  
Altamonte Springs, FL  
Friday, SEPTEMBER 11, 2009

### GEORGIA

Atlanta Motor Speedway Drag Racing  
(cosper)  
Friday Nights until SEPTEMBER 25th

### KENTUCKY

Silent/Live Auction Fundraiser (hebron)  
Hebron, KY  
Friday, NOVEMBER 6, 2009

### MAINE

Seagars by the Sea (seagarsbythesea)  
Portland, ME  
Sunday, SEPTEMBER 27, 2009

### MASSACHUSETTS

Jennifer Kane Memorial Golf Tournament  
(jenniferkane)  
Kingston, MA  
Monday, AUGUST 24, 2009  
  
10AM Shotgun/Scramble, Poquoy Brook  
Country Club  
(oakpointgolf) Lakeville, MA  
Thursday, SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

### Run for Heroes 5K (dightonrun)

Dighton, MA  
Saturday, SEPTEMBER 26, 2009

### HFOT 1st Annual Victoria L. Mosier Memorial 5 Mile Run (vlm)

Raynham, MA  
Sunday, NOVEMBER 8, 2009

### Grand Prize Raffle (maceyraffle)

E. Longmeadow, MA  
Wednesday, NOVEMBER 11, 2009

### NEW JERSEY

5K Walk/Run and a 'Kids for the Troops Dash'  
(runforthetroops)

Pennsauken, NJ  
Saturday, SEPTEMBER 12, 2009 at 8 a.m.

### American Legion Post 170 Ride In Bike Show (rochellepark)

Rochelle Park, NJ  
Sunday, OCTOBER 4, 2009

### OHIO

Volleyball & Softball Tournament  
(bechtoldpark)

Cincinnati, OH  
Saturday, SEPTEMBER 19, 2009

### RHODE ISLAND

Golf Tournament  
(teeitupforthetroops)  
Warwick, RI  
Saturday, OCTOBER 3, 2009

### TEXAS

Rock Creek Sporting Clays at Beaumont Ranch  
(DFW)  
Grandview, TX  
Saturday, SEPTEMBER 12, 2009

Grand Prairie, TX, Golf Tournament  
(healthsouth)  
Wednesday, SEPTEMBER 23, 2009

Healthsouth Charity Golf Tournament  
(healthsouth)  
Grand Prairie, TX  
Friday, OCTOBER 23, 2009

3rd Annual Sporting Clays Event (hou)  
Houston, TX  
Friday and Saturday, JANUARY 29 & 30, 2010

### WASHINGTON, DC

Marine Corps Marathon (mcm09)  
Sunday, OCTOBER 25, 2009

Be a part of TEAM HFOT – Deadline is Sept. 1st!

Check out our website for all these events! Search on the event name and you will find all the info you need! You can also type in the URL starting with [www.homesforourtroops.org/](http://www.homesforourtroops.org/) and add in the words in parenthesis above. This listing is not complete so check our website often for all the news.

**DONATE NOW** USING THE ENCLOSED SLIP AND ENVELOPE OR  
**DONATE ONLINE** at: [www.homesforourtroops.org/donate](http://www.homesforourtroops.org/donate)  
*Donations are tax-deductible and with our low 7 percent overhead, you know money is going a long way and making a big difference.*



Charity Navigator, one of the premiere charity rating agencies in the country, has awarded Homes for Our Troops with its highest rating of 4 stars.



Homes for Our Troops is a Top-Rated Military & Veteran Charity by the American Institute of Philanthropy.