

# American Legion Auxiliary San Anselmo Unit 179

*Proudly Supporting Those Who Serve*

NEWSLETTER

January 2011

Volume 1



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[www.ALAunit179.org](http://www.ALAunit179.org)

## New Auxiliary Unit

There's a new group in Marin County dedicated to the support of our troops, our veterans, their families, and our communities. Formed in October of 2010, San Anselmo Unit 179 is pleased to be affiliated with the American Legion Post located at the historic Log Cabin in San Anselmo.

Unit 179 was chartered by 10 women who have a common bond; all are either the mother or wife (or both) of a member of the military. One member is also a retired Army veteran herself. Together, these women have great plans for the future of ALA Unit 179!

## BBCA Fundraiser

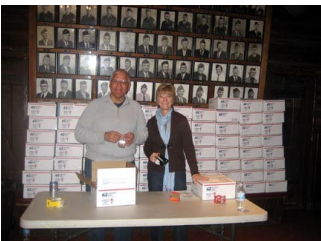
Building Better Citizens for America is a Marin County non-profit organization which was created for the specific purpose of providing support for the Air Force Junior ROTC program at Novato High School. Due to State budget cuts, the program has been in danger of being discontinued. On November 10, 2010, BBCA held a fundraiser dinner at the Marin Catholic High School Student Center. Several members of ALA Unit 179 volunteered as helpers for the evening. The event was a great success, and raised over \$20,000 to help fund the Jr ROTC program for 2011.

## Veterans Day

The eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month is a very special anniversary. It was on that day and at that hour in 1918 that an armistice between the Allied nations and Germany brought an end to the fighting of World War I. It is for that reason Congress declared November 11<sup>th</sup> as Veterans Day.

As always, Veterans Day services were held at the Marin Civic Center. Several members of the newly formed ALA Unit 179 were in attendance.

Following the services, American Legion Post 179, with assistance from the ladies of the Unit, hosted a free BBQ at the Log Cabin. This was an excellent opportunity for the Unit to introduce themselves to members of the public.



## Collection Day

The first order of business for the new ALA unit was to gather items to fill care packages for the troops. A collection day was held in front of the Safeway store in Redhill Shopping Center on November 13, 2010. Shoppers were given a short list of suggested food or toiletry items and were asked to purchase one or two items to donate as they left the store. Members of the Unit staffed two tables outside and one inside, giving out shopping lists and information about the American Legion Auxiliary. Shoppers were very generous, and by the end of the day more than \$1,200 in cash had been donated, along with enough items to fill approximately 70 care packages.

## Operation Santa Claus

In addition to the day-to-day necessities that care packages contain, the Unit also wanted to send Holiday stockings as a special treat for the troops. That led to Operation Santa Claus, which sold filled stockings for \$20 each. Donors were encouraged to write a personal holiday greeting on a gift tag, which was then attached to the stocking. The original goal was to sell 100 stockings. Thanks to the generosity of the community, a total of 130 stockings were sold, and extra money was donated to help with the postage. Each stocking was packed with a selection of goodies, including candy, toys and games. We hope that the recipients enjoyed getting them as much as we enjoyed sending them!

## Shipping to the Troops

After collecting food and toiletry items, the next step was packing everything up and sending it off to the troops. The Unit held a Packing Party at the Log Cabin on Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>. It was a cold, damp day, but a roaring fire in the huge fireplace made the atmosphere quite cozy. Many members turned out to help, along with their friends, spouses, and other family members. Using APO/FPO flat rate boxes supplied by the Post Office, we filled 80 care packages with food, and another 10 with toiletry items. Also included were 80 of the Holiday stockings sold through Operation Santa Claus. Recipients for these packages were chosen from the web site AnySoldier.com, where we focused on troops at forward operating bases and those who indicated that they were not receiving much support from other sources. All 90 boxes were hauled to the post office in Corte Madera and mailed on the following Tuesday.

As donations of both goods and stockings continued to come in, an additional 35 care packages and 50 Holiday stockings were packed and mailed in early December, bringing the totals for our first care package shipment to 125 care packages and 130 Holiday stockings. Not bad for a brand new group with only 11 members!

## ALA Unit Meetings

ALA Unit 179 meets on the first Wednesday of every month from 6:30 to 8:00pm at The Log Cabin in San Anselmo. Anyone interested is cordially invited to attend.

The Log Cabin  
120 Veterans Place  
San Anselmo, CA

## Holiday Party

On Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, Unit member Chris Hughes hosted our first Holiday Party at her home. Many members attended, along with several spouses or significant others. The main course was obtained from Boca Pizzeria in Novato, with appetizers and desserts provided by members. It was a wonderful opportunity to relax, socialize, and enjoy each others company. The highlight of the evening was the appearance of "Cardboard Ryan", a life-sized replica of Chris's son, who is currently serving with the U.S. Army in Iraq. It was a bittersweet reminder that many households are missing a loved one during the holidays. We all look forward to the day when Ryan and all of his brothers and sisters in arms can return home.



Left to Right: Betty, Sophie, Jan, Cardboard Ryan, Rosmarie, Chris, Sue, Ellen

## Thank You from the Troops

"Thanks for the boxes, they cheered up a rather dismal day. The packages were ransacked rather quickly so never fear; nothing went to waste. Thank you all as well for understanding what we are going through and why."

SFC Doug McNeil, FOB Ghazni

"I wanted to take the time to write and thank you and your organization for sending the wonderful care packages. Please know that the time that was taken to purchase, pack and send these items to us is greatly appreciated. As deployed soldiers any support from the States makes the days here a little easier. Well, I just wanted to send you a reply and let you know how grateful we all are for your support. Without that support it would truly make these long tours even harder. God Bless America!" SPC Elizabeth Villa, Bagram

"I want to thank you very much for the care packages. It's people like yourselves that make a difference in the lives of Americans. Thanks again for your thoughtfulness and caring." 433 AEW/SE, Bagram

## Contact Us

If you would like more information about the American Legion Auxiliary and Unit 179, please visit our web site at [www.ALAunit179.org](http://www.ALAunit179.org).

You can also email us at [info@ALAunit179.org](mailto:info@ALAunit179.org) or call Jan Darmody at (415) 482-8241