

## July 3, 2008 - Reaching out to Recovering GIs

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Reaching  
out to recovering GIs

By RANDY GRIFFITH

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Army Spc. Dan Maguire Jr., 22, says a quiet city neighborhood and a team of committed professionals in Johnstown made for smooth pavement on his road to recovery.

He has been undergoing treatment in Laurel Highlands Neuro-Rehabilitation's community re-entry program after Iraqi insurgents' roadside bomb left him with a shattered leg and a traumatic brain injury. made for smooth pavement on his road to recovery.

Laurel Highlands' treatment center at 111 Roosevelt Boulevard and community living home in Moxham are associated with the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center. They represent a new focus on community-based treatment for wounded warriors, said Colleen Sherman, executive director of the Keystone Chapter, American Red Cross.

The Red Cross launched a new project Wednesday to support troops being treated at the Johnstown Hiram G. Andrews Center in Upper Yoder Township.

"The needs of the military are changing," Sherman said. "The Red Cross is trying to change with it."

Red Cross representatives delivered a truckload of personal care supplies such as shaving cream, televisions and stereos to the Moxham home to kick off a new local program.

Military support always has been part of the Red Cross' core mission, Sherman said. Families visiting wounded warriors at Walter Reed Army

Medical Center,  
for instance, could turn to the Red Cross to arrange housing.

Now, programs like that are coming to Johnstown and other small communities thanks to a grant from the national organization, Sherman said at a media event in the Moxham group home.

The public can help the Red Cross support the local wounded warrior center by donating personal care items such as shampoo, soap, toothpaste, sheets and towels. Group homes are required to supply all those items.

“We are reaching out to communities throughout the country, and taking care of people near their home,” U.S. Rep. John Murtha, D-Johnstown, said during the event.

“Family is the key to survival.”

Maguire said the focus on community and family is what worked for him.

His father, Dan Maguire Sr., is a Richland High School graduate. The soldier grew up in Butler and has family in the Johnstown area. He counted on them for support throughout his recovery.

“I’m getting back to being me — the person I was before I got hurt,” he said.

Funding for the program is part of \$900 million Murtha said he added to the budget after hearing that soldiers with brain injuries were regressing after they returned home.

The national brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder programs are set up to cover diagnosis, treatment, counseling and follow-up.

“I want this money spent right,” Murtha said. “We should reach out and follow them the whole way through. After they are discharged, it still follows them.”