



Media Release

**ONTARIO COUNTY WOMEN'S
REPUBLICAN CLUB
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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ONTARIO WOMEN'S REPUBLICAN CLUB MAKES SPIRITS BRIGHT FOR THREE VETERAN FAMILIES

CANANDAIGUA – Operation: Making Spirits Bright again brightened the lives of veterans and their families this holiday season thanks to the Ontario County Women's Republican Club.

Partnering with the VA for this initiative for the first time in 2021, the Club's Making Spirits Bright project was even more successful this year, donating presents, groceries and gift cards to three veteran families ... Last year two families were helped. One of multiple holiday programs coordinated by VA Finger Lakes Healthcare System's Center for Development & Civic Engagement, this program depends on community contributions.

The Club had another successful fund-raising year. "It is difficult to find the words to thank you for your contribution to our veteran families this year," said Club President Trisha Turner. "The joy of brightening the lives of others and easing their burdens is truly the magic of Christmas!"

Turner thanked Club members Annie Chwiecko and Bonnie Ross for their help in organizing Making Spirits Bright and coordinating their partnership with Canandaigua VA's CDCE staff.

Talking about the veterans and their families who were helped, she said that "all were in great need from illness, the risk of homelessness and unexpected financial hardships. We had the chance to meet one family who has never had to ask for help before. The gift cards and presents brought tears to their eyes."

And more veterans will be assisted throughout the year. “We are fortunate to have additional funds enabling us to provide the Department of Veterans Affairs at the Canandaigua VAMC with gift cards that will bless our veterans throughout the year,” Turner explained. “They will use these to purchase items for veterans, referred by their case managers, who come to them for help, whether it be a coat, gloves, hats, and the like.”

For more information on donating to local Veterans, please visit: www.fingerlakes.va.gov and click on “Volunteer or Donate.”



PHOTO CAPTIONS: Members of the Ontario County Women’s Republican Club once again brightened the Christmas spirits of three veteran families by donating groceries, presents and gift cards.



Delivering Christmas presents and groceries to veteran families are (left to right) Gina Deck, Veterans Administration CDCE Program Specialist; Tammie Delforte, VA Behavioral Health Social Worker; Annie Chwiecko and Bonnie Ross, Ontario County Women's Republican Club; and Jeremy Macaluso, VA Behavioral Health Clinic Manager.

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