

Grand Strand BSM Report

We had a great year raising nearly \$5,000 and sending over 200 boxes to deployed soldiers and 4 dogs (our first animal boxes). Again at Christmas the community came through with hundreds of dozens of homemade cookies which we sealed and placed in Christmas stockings for the deployed. Walgreen's continues to bless us with candy which is sent to deployed soldiers, wounded warriors in DC, and veterans at the VA Hospital in Columbia where we are represented by a certified VAVS representative. The Girl Scouts sent us 100 cases of cookies (rather than the 100 boxes we asked for) and we are in the process of finding a way to get them all delivered. Indeed this has been a challenge.

We continued to support our veterans and active duty service members children with our third annual Christmas Party for Military Children. We were again joined by the American Legion Auxiliary and the VFW Ladies Auxiliary. A great time was had by all and this year we only had one Santa (an inside joke as the prior year I accidentally booked an American Legion Santa and a VFW Santa).

With so many organizations trying to collect money, we embarked on a project to create something that the public could buy and would cost us nothing to make. We hit upon the idea (thanks to my daughter) of creating tote bags, computer bags, Ereader bags, bookmarks, purses and about anything else we could get volunteers to make from our children's old uniforms. To date this project has raised over \$1000 in donations. We continue to have members making patriotic cards and we have lost track of how many of these we have sold but it must be at least 1000.

We were pleased to be represented on the National Executive Board and SC7 truly pitched in when they could to make this job easier for the National Financial Secretary whether it was filing papers, doing computer work, folding T-shirts and just generally moral support.

We continue to partner with two local JROTC units and again presented an award and a gift card to a sophomore at each high school who according to the JROTC instructor displayed the most patriotism. These units assisted us in collecting at Walmart, making cookies for our Christmas mailing, and helping us pack boxes.