



Fact Sheet: Operation Heal Our Patriots

WHAT:

Operation Heal Our Patriots is a project of Samaritan's Purse designed to strengthen the marriages of wounded and injured members of the U.S. military. The project includes a weeklong wilderness retreat at Samaritan Lodge Alaska, which provides physical and spiritual renewal to wounded veterans, active-duty service members, and their spouses.

With picturesque scenery, individual cabins for couples, and a dedicated staff, couples are allowed to escape the pressures of home and focus on renewing their marriages. During the week, they participate in Biblically based marriage enrichment classes, devotions, and recreation activities ranging from bear watching to fishing, kayaking, and hiking.

Operation Heal Our Patriots is the only program of its kind for wounded military service members and their spouses. Extending beyond couples' stay at Samaritan Lodge Alaska, the program provides ongoing aftercare to connect them with a system of support upon their return home. With a minimum of 10 touch points each year, Samaritan's Purse encourages and equips military couples by providing resources, crisis care, and prayer support.

WHY:

Coping with an injury can be incredibly difficult for military service members, and the stress of this new reality can significantly impact a marriage. Through Operation Heal Our Patriots, Samaritan's Purse is working to help strengthen and preserve the marriages of those wounded while serving our country.

WHO:

Operation Heal Our Patriots is open to current and former military service members who were wounded or injured in combat or combat-related activities after Sept. 11, 2001. Each season 160 couples are flown to Alaska. All expenses—including accommodations, airfare, and activities—are covered by Samaritan's Purse through donations.

IMPACT:

Since 2012, more than 840 couples have participated in the program, and another 160 couples are expected to attend in the summer of 2018. The program has seen 342 individuals make commitments to Jesus Christ, 428 individuals baptized, and 398 couples publicly rededicate their marriages to God.

WHEN:

Operation Heal Our Patriots opened for its first Alaskan summer season in June 2012. Samaritan Lodge Alaska is open annually from the end of May until mid-September, and guests typically arrive on Sunday and stay through Friday evening.

WHERE:

The retreat center, Samaritan Lodge Alaska, is located in the village of Port Alsworth, Alaska, approximately 150 miles southwest of Anchorage. Adjacent to Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, the lodge is surrounded by mountains, glaciers, waterfalls, and wildlife. All lodge facilities and activities are wheelchair accessible.

HOW TO APPLY:

The application process opens each year on Feb. 1. More information: SamaritansPurse.org/Patriots.

Samaritan's Purse, headed by Franklin Graham, is an international Christian relief and evangelism organization working in more than 100 countries to provide aid to victims of war, disease, disaster, poverty, famine, and persecution. For more information, visit SamaritansPurse.org.