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Republican National Convention & supporting groups break ground for wounded Iraq veteran's home

*Credit Unions, National Journal, Convention officials & Homes for Our Troops
hold ceremony launching project supporting wounded veteran*

WOODBURY, Minn. – Homes for Our Troops broke ground today on a Minneapolis-St. Paul area home for wounded Iraq war veteran Sgt. Marcus Kuboy. Homes for Our Troops is a non-profit organization committed to building specially adapted homes for severely wounded American soldiers. The home in Woodbury is a joint project of the 2008 Republican National Convention (RNC), the credit union movement, and National Journal Group. It will be presented to Sgt. Kuboy around this summer's Republican National Convention.

“We are honored to be joined by the Republican National Convention, its staff and volunteers, the people of the credit union movement and National Journal to build this home for this true American hero,” said John Gonsalves, President and Founder of Homes for Our Troops. “We are also off to a great start with the project in Colorado, supported by our team and the DNCC, and it is very heartwarming to see both parties come together in support of our mission.”

The groundbreaking on the home site in Woodbury, Minn. starts a construction process that will culminate with the presentation of the home to Sgt. Kuboy at an event around the Republican National Convention in September. Sgt. Kuboy, 30, a member of the Minnesota National Guard, was severely injured in March 2007 when an IED exploded under the vehicle in which he was riding. The home will be specially adapted for Sgt. Kuboy. The house is being built at no cost to the Kuboy family.



**Homes for Our Troops, the
Republican National Convention,
the Credit Union National
Associate, the Minnesota Credit
Union Network, and the National
Journal broke ground today on a
specially adapted home for Sgt.
Kuboy who was injured while
serving in Iraq.**

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(more)



“Taking care of our men and women in uniform is not a Republican issue. It is not a Democrat issue. It is an American issue. As Sen. McCain often says, every American has a duty to serve a cause greater than one’s self-interest,” said Maria Cino, convention president and CEO. “Sgt. Kuboy epitomizes selflessness – and we are honored to participate in this project as a small gesture of our appreciation for his honorable service and great sacrifices. We look forward to working on the construction of Sgt. Kuboy’s home and to the day we can present the keys.”

“As a state, we need to say ‘thank you’ in both words and deeds to our brave military men and women,” Governor Tim Pawlenty said. “I am proud of the many organizations and individual Minnesotans who are pitching in to build a new home for Sergeant Kuboy. Their spirit of generosity is infectious and an important reminder of all we can do to welcome home our returning veterans.”

“People helping people is a fundamental credit union philosophy and this project is a great way for us to put our philosophy into action,” said Kris Mecham, CEO of Deseret First Credit Union & Vice-Chairman of the Credit Union National Association (CUNA), the nation’s largest advocacy group for the not-for-profit, cooperatively owned financial institutions. “We are honored to participate in this special effort on behalf of a very deserving soldier.”

“This project allows credit unions to express their support of the sacrifices made by our military. Owning your own home is the American dream and we are proud to be able to help make this dream a reality for Sergeant Kuboy,” added Mark Cummins, President and CEO of the Minnesota Credit Union Network. “We look forward to working closely with Homes for Our Troops and the Convention staff in the coming months.”

“By breaking ground here in Woodbury, we not only get to witness the progress of this project, more importantly, we also get to experience a new beginning for another deserving veteran,” said Suzanne Clark, President of the National Journal Group. “We feel privileged to continue this program that bridges political, ideological and geographic divides in order to honor our courageous soldiers.”

The undertaking marks the latest effort in the Republican National Convention’s *American Neighbor* volunteer program. This service initiative is aimed at giving back to the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, the host cities for the 2008 Republican National Convention. Convention staff volunteers have already participated in many worthwhile projects by working with various service organizations in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. The *American Neighbor* program inspires Republicans across the country to give back to their communities.

The Credit Union National Association (CUNA) and its affiliated Minnesota Credit Union Network will work to raise funds, provide donated materials and volunteer labor, and coordinate activities closely with Homes for Our Troops. CUNA, the Credit Union Associations of Colorado & Wyoming, and National Journal are also working with Homes for Our Troops and the Democratic National Convention Committee on a companion project for a veteran’s home in conjunction with the Democratic National Convention. Groundbreaking for that project took place on April 10, 2008 in Golden, Colo.

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The Minnesota Credit Union Network is an organization representing the state’s 162 not-for-profit cooperative credit unions serving more than 1.5 million member-owners in the state. For more information, visit www.mncun.org.