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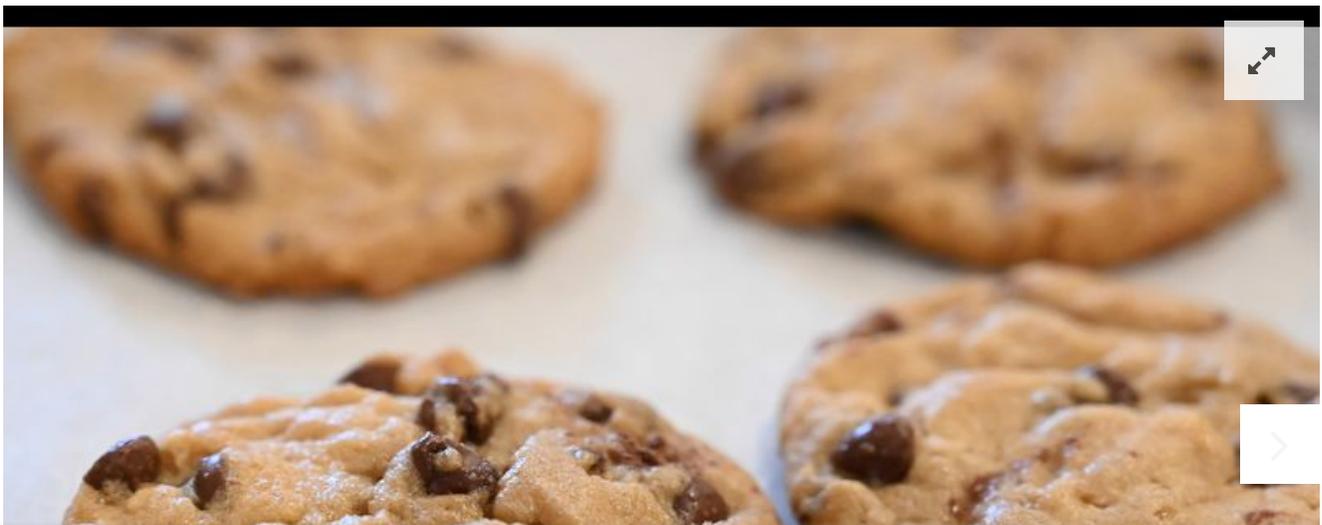
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Taneytown innkeepers giving back to military personnel as part of national initiative, 'a no-brainer'

By PAT STOETZER
CARROLL COUNTY TIMES | JUL 02, 2020



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Georges on York

Fresh baked chocolate chip cookies made by Sharon Tillman owner/innkeeper at Georges on York Bed & Breakfast in Taneytown. Tillman is an Angel Baker with Soldiers' Angels. She bakes cookies that are sent with a larger care package of toiletries, food and other items to an assigned overseas service member. (Brian Krista/Carroll County Times)

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Georges on York, a bed and breakfast establishment in downtown Taneytown, is rich with history that has ties to the Civil War.

George Motter, who worked for the Union army as an assistant surgeon during the war, is credited with building the structure on 10 York Street that houses Chris and Sharon Tillman's inn. The couple bought the home in 2017 and turned it into a full-service bed and breakfast that features five guest rooms, a kitchen, and an art gallery.

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Sharon Tillman's family has a longstanding military background, she said, and her sister is a retired Army colonel. So when opportunities arise that allow Georges on York to give back to the community, and help service members at the same time, the Tillmans don't hesitate.

That's why they're involved in an effort called Inn Support of Our Troops, which helps deliver care packages to service members overseas. More than 30 inns across the country are participating, and an assortment of goodies made it out to be delivered July 4.

"This project was a no-brainer for us. It really was a very simple decision to make," Tillman said. "When I saw the opportunity to get involved with this particular campaign, really it was just, 'Tell me what I need to do. ... Sign me up and we'll help out.'"

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Tillman baked cookies to go into Georges on York's care packages, which also included hygiene products and other sundries.

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The lodging industry, like many others, has been affected during the coronavirus pandemic. Giving back to those in need is something Tillman said she and her husband are happy to do, and she credits a fellow innkeeper for bringing the cause to her attention.

Karen Wilson, who co-owns The Lion and the Rose Bed and Breakfast out of Asheville, North Carolina, hooked up with Soldiers' Angels, a national charity that aims to provide comfort and resources to the military, veterans, and their families. Soldiers' Angels was looking for volunteers to bake and mail goods for troops overseas, and Wilson felt the pull to participate.

That's how Inn Support of our Troops was created, and Georges on York soon joined in as part of the Angel Bakers Team.

“Sharon is the one who picked up the ball and ran with this one. She's really the leader on that,” Chris Tillman said. “In the craziness of the world today, and everything seeming so upside down, trying to do the right thing for somebody who is out there doing the right thing for us somehow no longer seems to be celebrated. We want to make sure that people out there don't forget that we know

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Angel Bakers sent more than 1,500 care packages between January and May of this year, according to a Bed & Brunch Marketing & PR news release. Last year, more than 2,200 packages were shipped overseas.

Soldiers' Angels holds the highest level of recognition from the world's largest source of nonprofit information, the Platinum Seal of Transparency from GuideStar, and is also one of the highest rated nonprofit organizations on GreatNonprofits, according to the release.

Sharon Tillman said Georges on York offers discounts to active or retired military personnel, and the bed and breakfast also takes part in a program called B&Bs for Vets – a free one-night stay for any active member or veteran of the military who might be in town to enjoy local Veteran's Day celebrations. Soldiers' Angels was focused on the Fourth of July weekend, but Tillman said inns can choose to provide care packages throughout the year.

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“You adopt a service member, and every month we would bake for that person and ship out a package,” she said. “So we’ve decided that we’re going to keep going, because we think that’s important.”

Tillman said making connections with a service member overseas is close to her

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“I know what it was like to have my sister deployed overseas, in Iraq at the time,” she said. “I know how important it is for someone who’s there, who really just wants that home connection. And wants to know that people are thinking of them.”

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Georges on York’s rooms – four of them are named after past property owners, and as the Tillmans discovered, they were all named George – include en suite bathrooms, private parking, WiFi access, and a full breakfast. It’s contemporary meets historic within a remodeled post-Civil War home.

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Pat Stoetzer



Pat Stoetzer is the Carroll County Times' sports editor. He came to the Times in 1999 from Towson University as a part-time writer, then took over the high school sports beat in 2000. He took over as sports editor in March, 2015. He lives in Westminster.

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