

WWP News & Media: Veteran Group Outings, Charity Events, Helping Vets

Wounded Veterans Experience Alaskan Wilderness

Wounded Warrior Project Takes Veterans on Weeklong Excursion

KODIAK, Alaska (August 17, 2015) – After a week in the Alaskan wilderness, ten wounded veterans are back home. Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) took the injured service members to Kodiak, Alaska for the tenth year in a row, for fishing, sight-seeing, and camaraderie.

WWP seeks to increase the engagement of injured service members as part of its Alumni Program, designed to provide support through shared experiences. The Alumni Program is one of 20 inclusive programs designed specifically for wounded veterans, their families, and caregivers, all provided free of charge.

WWP Alumnus Nathan Dee, who is originally from Alaska, spoke highly of the Kodiak experience. “I hardly ever get to go home to Alaska and fish like that. It brought back a lot of memories from my childhood,” Dee said.

WWP National Alumni Director Ryan Kules said wounded veterans enjoyed a variety of events on the trip, from flying in seaplanes, watching Alaskan brown bears in their natural habitat, riding ATVs, and spending time together.

“We watched whales, dolphins, eagles, otters, and sea lions in the wild,” Kules said. “We also had a chance to watch bears and their cubs fishing in a river, from just 35 feet away.”

The group also made its own angler haul in the sea and rivers.

“I think as a group we caught roughly 1,500 pounds of fish: halibut, black bass, king and silver salmon. It was just the fun of being in Alaska again,” Dee said.

The Kodiak fishing trip started in 2006 when Peter Malley, a Vietnam War veteran, decided to support WWP. He owned a fishing boat and decided to provide a challenge for wounded veterans.

“I believe that the challenges of fishing on the ocean, along with the friendships and bonds made by each veteran while experiencing something new and different gives the warriors added confidence to face everyday challenges when they return home,” Malley said.

Kules said WWP also joined the community for a thank you dinner. Kodiak residents stepped up to volunteer to help make the week-long trip possible.

“150 supporters and boat captains filled the Kodiak Convention Center, we said thanks with a nice dinner. They have provided ten years of amazing assistance,” Kules said.

Kodiak volunteers provided fishing gear, bait, and tackle for the trip, while WWP covered travel, accommodations, and fishing licenses for each veteran. After the week of fishing and enjoying the Kodiak wilderness, a canning company cleaned, processed, and freeze-packed the fish. It is then equally divided and shipped to each veteran, free of charge.

* Images and GoPro video shot by veterans available, on request

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About Wounded Warrior Project

The mission of Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors. WWP's purpose is to raise awareness and to enlist the public's aid for the needs of injured service members, to help injured servicemen and women aid and assist each other, and to provide unique, direct programs and services to meet their needs. WWP is a national, nonpartisan organization headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida. To get involved and learn more, visit woundedwarriorproject.org.

<https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/2015-08-17-Wounded-Veterans-Experience-Alaskan-Wilderness>