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Harleysville Insurance helps U.S. troops call home—for free—on Thanksgiving Day

HARLEYSVILLE, PA—DECEMBER 7, 2011—Thanksgiving Day marked the fifth consecutive year that Harleysville Insurance and its independent agents teamed up in the “2 for the Troops” program to provide U.S. service members in the Middle East with free phone calls through *Operation Uplink*[™]. It was also the fourth year in a row the company sponsored a Thanksgiving Free Call Day.

Established by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) in 1996, *Operation Uplink* provides free telephone talk time to active-duty U.S. military personnel and hospitalized veterans. Through the “2 for the Troops” program, Harleysville donates \$2 to *Operation Uplink* for every personal auto and homeowners policy sold by the company’s agents. Since 2007, Harleysville’s contributions toward this special communications effort have totaled nearly \$225,000.

During this year’s 24-hour Thanksgiving holiday, members of our Armed Forces stationed in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kuwait made nearly 70,000 telephone calls back home (totaling more than 800,000 minutes of free talk time) from 750 military Internet cafés located throughout the Middle East.

“The importance of continuing support for *Operation Uplink* cannot be overestimated,” noted Mike Penney, VFW National Military Service director and overseer of the program. “Companies like Harleysville Insurance recognize the sacrifices our servicemen and women make to preserve our freedoms, and our Thanksgiving Free Call Day helps to provide peace and comfort to military families a world apart.”

As in past years, troops were greeted by the voice of Ted Majewski, senior vice president of personal lines and president and chief operating officer of Harleysville Life, as they began their calls. “Harleysville and our agents are pleased to partner again this year with the VFW to provide you with free calls to the U.S. and to land lines in other U.S. home-based locations,” Majewski told them. “We appreciate your service to America and our thoughts and prayers are always with you.”

One member of a U.S. Army infantry battalion based in a remote location in eastern Afghanistan expressed his appreciation for the *Operation Uplink* program: “I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for sponsoring the ‘Free Call Day’ on Thanksgiving. I really appreciate when civilian/commercial companies support the troops deployed to war zones, or areas of conflict throughout the world.”

(more)

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Harleysville Insurance is a leading super-regional provider of insurance products and services for small and mid-sized businesses, as well as for individuals, and ranks among the top 60 U.S. property/casualty insurance groups based on net written premiums. As a Trusted Choice® company partner, Harleysville distributes its products exclusively through a network of independent agents primarily across 32 states. Harleysville is ranked in the most recent *InformationWeek 500*, the publication's annual listing of the most innovative information technology organizations in the U.S., and has been included on the list in each of the last six years. Harleysville Mutual Insurance Company owns approximately 54 percent of Harleysville Group Inc. (NASDAQ: HGIC), a publicly traded holding company for eight regional property/casualty insurance companies collectively rated A (Excellent) by A.M. Best Company. Harleysville Group is listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market, which is comprised of the top third of all NASDAQ member companies and has the highest initial listing standards of any exchange in the world based on financial and liquidity requirements. Further information can be found on the company's website at www.harleysvillegroup.com.

The VFW's *Operation Uplink*™ was launched in 1996 to connect active-duty troops and hospitalized veterans with their loved ones. The program uses contributions from supporters to purchase phone time for the men and women who are serving—or have served—in the U.S. military, as well as hospitalized veterans.

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