

# HELP HEAL VETERANS HOSTS 'CRAFTATHON' TO HELP VETERANS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL COPE WITH SOCIAL ISOLATION DURING COVID-19

*Veterans, Active Duty Military, Crafting Enthusiasts Gather to Make Custom Face Masks during Virtual Event*

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, May 23, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Help Heal Veterans](#) (Heal Vets), a nonprofit that provides free therapeutic arts and crafts kits to hospitalized and homebound veterans and active duty military, today held an innovative virtual event called [Operation Craftathon](#) to help combat the depression, anxiety and loneliness millions may be facing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The free, interactive Zoom event gathered hundreds of veterans, active duty military and crafting enthusiasts.

The Craftathon was hosted by Jon Nagel, Army Vet and Champion of the History Channel's blacksmithing competition "Forged in Fire"; Jonah Larson, 12-year old crochet prodigy, author and philanthropist; and Beth Kingston, HSN Craft Expert and military wife along with Joe McClain, retired Navy captain and Help Heal Veterans CEO. The hosts guided participants on how to make masks using kits provided by Heal Vets as well as on how to make their own masks with materials from home.

"Operation Craftathon provided a unique opportunity for veterans and crafters from across the country to interact with one another while making face masks to help protect themselves during Covid-19," said McClain.

Heal Vets has shipped more than 90,000 free craft kits since the beginning of the pandemic and created a newly designed kit to help veterans make the masks they need to stay healthy and safe.

Crafting can provide therapeutic and rehabilitative benefits, including improving fine motor skills, cognitive functioning, memory and dexterity, and can help alleviate feelings of anger and the severity of negative behaviors triggered by PTSD and TBIs.

To learn more about Heal Vets and the organization's COVID-19 efforts, as well as find out how you can help, visit [HealVets.org](#).

Quotes from hosts:

Beth Kingston, HSN Craft Expert and military wife: "I take a lot of joy and crafting, it has kept me company through nine combat deployments, while my husband has been gone. The community of crafters, much like the military family is amazing and the two intertwine quite a bit. So I'm very excited to be here with everybody."

Jonah Larson, 12-year old crochet prodigy, author and philanthropist: "I've always loved crochet; I discovered it when I was five years old when I made a dish cloth, and I fell in love with the therapeutic and calming motion. I've just always had a personal connection to supporting America's veterans because my pop was in the Navy. So that's always been really close to my heart."

Jon Nagel, Army Vet and Champion of the History Channel's blacksmithing competition "Forged in Fire": "There's just something magical about taking a raw piece of material, maybe even a piece of junk, and turning it into something beautiful and functional. I've had several failures along the way, but the important thing is to just keep going, keep practicing, keep trying again and again and again. Eventually, you'll get it right."

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About Help Heal Veterans

First established in 1971, Help Heal Veterans has provided free therapeutic arts and crafts kits to hospitalized and homebound veterans for generations. These craft kits help injured and recuperating veterans improve fine motor skills, cognitive functioning, manage stress and substance abuse, cope with symptoms of PTSD and TBI, while also improving their sense of self-esteem and overall physical and mental health. Most of these kits are developed, manufactured and packaged for delivery at our production center headquartered in Winchester, California. Since inception, Help Heal Veterans has delivered nearly 31 million of these arts and crafts kits to veterans and veteran facilities nationwide, along with active duty military overseas.

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