

# WISHES SPREAD WARMTH THROUGH ARCTIC AIR OF ALASKA



March 10, 2010



*Taryn and her supervisor (Staff Sergeant Andrew Cieslinski).*

Taryn Summers is an A1C (Air Traffic Controller) at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska. In early December, Taryn submitted a wish request through our website, but quickly revoked her wish request after she read about the needs of others on our site. Even though she and her husband, who is a Staff Sergeant at Eielson, needed extensive home repairs that resulted from the freezing temperatures in Alaska, she felt her needs were not as urgent as others, and decided to volunteer her spare time to assisting with the foundation.

Immediately, Taryn began contacting local businesses for donations and fundraising ideas, and reaching out to fellow Airmen to see who may be in need of assistance. She presented us three families who later became wish recipients, and now has expressed interest in running an Alaskan chapter of Wish For Our Heroes.

Although Taryn had revoked her wish, we still had intentions of assisting her, based on the ever-evolving issues with her family's home. Ironically, we received another wish submission for Taryn, from a family friend, and decided it was a perfect time to assist Taryn and her family.

We coordinated with Taryn's chain of command at Eielson and arranged a time to present Taryn with a \$1,000 gift card to Lowe's for materials and any labor needed. We wanted to thank Taryn for all of her assistance with the foundation, but more importantly, help her family repair their home. As a result of freezing, their wood floors were peeling, carpet was molded, pipes and vanities had rusted, and worse, their water was contaminated, so they could no longer drink or cook with the water at their home. That meant buying bottled water for Taryn, her husband, Jerry, as well as her son, Bradley, and two dogs, which was another added expense.

The week the wish was to be presented, Taryn contacted us and said her family had been struck by a drunk driver when Taryn and her husband stopped to assist another family, who's car had slipped off an icy Alaskan road. Jerry and their son were taken to the hospital with minor injuries, and were later released, although Jerry's back and hip are still affected. Their F-150 truck had extensive damage, as well.



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We thought – enough is enough. This family has consistently served our nation, they have always done right by others, and overall, are just good people, but they couldn't catch a break. Jerry has been in the Air Force for 10 years, with 10 deployments and more temporary duty assignments than we could count. Taryn is also now in the Air Force, and spends any free time she has promoting Wish For Our Heroes. They have sadly suffered the loss of a child (a little girl who passed away soon after her birth), and faced numerous obstacles with their home, vehicle, and other financial constraints. Taryn, especially, does this with a smile on her face, and with the hope of helping others every day.

### THE WISH

Finally, on March 10, Taryn was presented with the Lowe's card at Eielson Air Force base, in the presence of her co-workers, supervisor and commander. Taryn and Jerry are extremely excited to get started on their home repairs, and are currently actively volunteering for the foundation, promoting the March campaign to receive a \$50,000 grant from Pepsi.



*Taryn pictured above presenting the a wish to the Baker family, our 8th foundation wish.*



*Jerry & Brad*