



**For Release:** Immediately  
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### **Harleysville Insurance again sponsors Thanksgiving ‘Free Call Day’ for Middle East troops**

HARLEYSVILLE, PA—DECEMBER 7, 2009—What would you do with more than 1 million minutes of international calling time? If you were a member of the U.S. military stationed in the Middle East on Thanksgiving, you could have been one of the thousands of soldiers who took advantage of a “Free Call Day” sponsored by Harleysville Insurance and its independent agents via Operation Uplink™. The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) established Operation Uplink in 1996 to provide free telephone talk time to active-duty U.S. military personnel and hospitalized veterans.

Over the span of 24 hours on Thanksgiving Day, troops stationed in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kuwait made 94,034 telephone calls to the U.S. Considering that each caller may have spoken with more than one loved one, the total number of individuals reached by the troops probably was in the hundreds of thousands.

This marks the second consecutive Thanksgiving Free Call Day that Harleysville and its agents have sponsored, and the third year the company has lent its financial support to Operation Uplink. Harleysville’s contributions to the organization over that time have totaled more than \$150,000.

War zone soldiers have been particularly appreciative of the program. As one remarked: “I just wanted to thank you for your participation in the Free Call Day ... It gave me the opportunity to call my children in North Carolina, and my mom in Pennsylvania. It is greatly appreciated.”

“Harleysville and our agents appreciate the opportunity to exclusively sponsor this event again on such a special day for our service men and women and their families,” observed Ted Majewski, senior vice president of personal lines and president and chief operating officer of Harleysville Life Insurance Company. “And, as the father of a Marine who’s been stationed overseas, I know how important it is to be able to talk to your child at this time of the year.”

To fund the Free Call Day this Thanksgiving, Harleysville continued a special program begun in 2007 called “2 for the Troops,” in which the company donates \$2 to Operation Uplink for every personal auto and homeowners policy sold by its independent agents.

“I want to personally thank the company for the Thanksgiving Free Call Day for the troops,” commented Denise Vaughn, property and casualty specialist for Associated Agencies in New Castle, Ind. “My son is currently serving his fourth tour in Iraq, and they are so thankful that they are not forgotten. And believe me, his family certainly appreciates this effort!”

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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<sup>®</sup> company partner, Harleysville distributes its products exclusively through a network of independent agents primarily across 32 states. Harleysville was listed recently as #7 in the *InformationWeek* 500, the publication’s annual listing of the most innovative information technology organizations in the U.S., and has been ranked on the list in each of the last three years. Harleysville Mutual Insurance Company owns 53 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 Web site at [www.harleysvillegroup.com](http://www.harleysvillegroup.com).

The VFW’s Operation Uplink<sup>™</sup> 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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