

Capitol Hill Troops Receive Unexpected Blessing at Pete's Diner

As the occupation on Capitol Hill continues, across from the "Green Zone" fences, a bit of good is happening to light the otherwise dark and foreboding transformation of what was once a lively, bustling community.

Pete's Diner, a Capitol Hill hangout for decades, has been transformed into "support central" for the nearly 2,500 troops who have come from all across America to be part of the confusing spectacle of an armed occupation of Washington, D.C.

Owner Mrs. Gum, originally from Malaysia, was suddenly confronted in January with troops coming to her diner, looking for a hot meal and a place to take a break from the occupation. What started as a meal on the house has grown to nearly 5,000 meals provided to the troops to date.

Longtime patron and retired Navy Captain Phillip Bush says, "They are all amazing. What started out as helping a few of our troops has grown to a full-time operation, and in addition to the meals, people are sending supplies for the troops from throughout the country, from aspirin to snacks to canned food—anything to help out our troops. As a believer, I call on fellow believers to help our troops, the Capitol Police and all others laboring here on Capitol Hill under such terrible circumstances."

Gum glowingly displays cards, letters and supplies sent from throughout the country, saying, "Just today we have orders for meals from troops: 20 meals for troops from New Mexico, 53 for those from Maine, 60 for a group of troops from New York and another 15 from California, for a total of 148 that just came in."

Having come to the U.S. as a student nearly two decades ago, Gum sees what she is doing as a way to say thank you to a country that has given her so much opportunity.

Bestselling author Stephen Strang quotes David Barton, who told him, "The Bible says they are to teach the ordinary saints to do the work of the ministry." This echoes Hebrews 13:16, "But do not forget to do good and to share. For with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

Meanwhile, in the middle of the continued occupation, a little good news and cheer for the troops can make a big difference. Anyone wishing to help can send gifts for the troops care of or directly to Pete's Diner, 212 Second St. SE, Washington, D.C., 20003. {eoa}

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