

Turn for Troops Volunteers Create Enough Wood Pens to Pass 200,000 Mark



PARKERSBURG, W. VA. – (January 2021) Despite the limitations of sponsoring a nationwide event during the coronavirus pandemic, [Turn for Troops](#) volunteers and Woodcraft store personnel rallied in 2020 to turn enough wooden pens for military personnel to comfortably pass the 200,000 overall mark.

The 14,006 unique pens turned in 2020 put the 17-year total at 204,615 and only fell 1,379 short of the 15,385 total for 2019. Pens are given to those on active military duty or recovering from injuries.

While some Woodcraft retail stores hosted limited in-store Turn for Troops Turn-a-Thons on Veterans Day weekend (masks and social distancing required), many stores asked volunteers to turn pens at home or in small groups and then submit them to a store. Still other volunteers continued to turn pens at home or in groups all during the year.

“Hats off to all the volunteers and Woodcraft store personnel who made the 2020 Turn for Troops event successful, despite COVID-19 safety mandates. You are the best,” President and CEO Jack Bigger said. “Because of your willingness to adapt to difficult circumstances, Woodcraft will again be able to express thanks through these unique pens to military personnel for their service and sacrifice to protect the USA.”

Top Stores

Six Woodcraft stores submitted over 1,000 pens:

#1 Tucson, Arizona: 2,782 – highest total in 5 years; moved from #2 in 2019.

#2 Milwaukee, Wisconsin: 1,555 – first year in the top 4; moved from #6 in 2019. Milwaukee Area Woodturners turned most of the pens submitted by the Milwaukee store.

#3 Grand Rapids, Michigan: 1,317 – moved from #1 in 2018 and 2019.

#4 Boise, Idaho: 1,235 – top #4 store for all 17 years.

#5 Knoxville, Tennessee: 1,183 – record year for them; moved from #7 (793) in 2019.

#6 Nashville, Tennessee: 1,020 – moved from #5 in 2019.

Other stores that showed improvement:

Richmond, Virginia – 230 (none last year).

Roanoke, Virginia – 101 (20 last year).

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania – 135 (0 last year).

Madison, Wisconsin – 833 (318 last year).

Other Contributors

Due to COVID concerns, Woodcraft had three new groups/individuals submit a total of 86 pens directly, for a total of 1,036 “outside” pens. The Villages Woodworkers Club in Florida sent 800 of that total, and Nial J. Hadden of Fredonia, New York, sent 150. The Villages and Hadden are regular contributors.

After pens begin arriving from the stores, Woodcraft personnel at the corporate office check with their military contacts about where to send the new batch of pens. Sometimes stores will suggest where to send some pens, and sometimes military personnel will reach out to Woodcraft after reading publicity about the annual event.

Although Woodcraft sponsors the Turn for Troops Turn-a-Thon around Veterans Day, pens are distributed year-round. Pens have been shipped to Afghanistan, South Korea, Kuwait, Germany, Nigeria, Romania and Niger, covering all military branches and the National Guard. Woodcraft also sent pens to several US military ships: USS Lassen, USS Bataan and USS Tripoli.

For more information about Woodcraft, please contact the [Woodcraft store](#) nearest you, visit [Woodcraft](#) or call (800) 535-4482. Click here to learn more about [Woodcraft franchise opportunities](#) or email woodcraftfranchise@woodcraft.com.

Caption: A young volunteer watches the pen turning process at the Woodcraft of Nashville, Tennessee, store during the Turn for Troops Turn-a-Thon.