

Teacher Thanks Vets With Fishing Expeditions



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A West Haven teacher, who is also a charter boat captain, is doing what she can to thank veterans for their service to the country.

A few years ago, Kathy Granfield thought that getting veterans out onto Long Island Sound for a full day of fishing would be a great way of thanking them for their service, and to give them a day to get away from it all, but first she needed to become a captain.

Granfield said getting a captain's license was a long and difficult process, but when she realized she would have to do it if she wanted to realize her goal, she jumped in.

Granfield said she started contacting veteran's organizations, and there were plenty of takers when trips have been offered.

"Last year we did eight trips," Granfield said. "Six guys per trip. This year, we've only done four so far. The weather has gotten in our way."

Granfield uses her father's fishing boat, which she also charters, and her own funds cover the costs of the trips when run into the hundreds of dollars per person, but she said while the cost is probably more than she can, or should afford, the payback is invaluable.

"For these guys I really want them to have a great experience," Granfield said. "I want them to have a lot of fish in the boat. I want everybody to have a chance to get a keeper, and for guys, who really don't want to fish, they just need a break, I want them to get out on the water. Oftentimes they'll sit with me up on the bridge the whole trip. I had two guys the whole trip they just sat out on the bow and talk to each other. They had just gotten back from Fallujah and that's what they needed."

Eric Trinidad was awarded a purple heart after being injured in Iraq. He was surprised to find out that the fishing was a real deal out on the sound, not standing on a pier. He said he appreciates the opportunity. "It's pretty awesome. Most people don't do much for veterans these days. Just taking her own time and her own money for the gas and everything. I feel honored," Trinidad said.

Granfield said she would love to see the program extended to other captains in other ports, but she said the logistics are tough and the expense is substantial. With no experience in fundraising, she said she was hoping someone will step forward and give her a helping hand in setting up a nonprofit and soliciting donations.

For more information about Granfield and her organization, [click here](#).