



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BERKSHIRE BANK EMPLOYEES COLLECT ITEMS TO SUPPORT SOLDIERS

PITTSFIELD, Mass. February 10, 2011 – Berkshire Bank is conducting a company-wide care package drive through its Employee Volunteer Program to raise awareness of soldiers' needs and show our local troops the support they have throughout Berkshire County, the Pioneer Valley, Eastern New York, and Southern Vermont.

The drive will run from February 14 through February 25, and donated items will be collected in all Berkshire Bank locations. The Bank is partnering with local, service-connected organizations to distribute the care packages to soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Collection boxes are set up at all bank offices throughout the Berkshire Bank system in Massachusetts, New York and Vermont. Customers and the public are invited and encouraged to participate in the care package drive by donating non-perishable foods, travel sized toiletries, games, and certain clothing items. Recommended items include granola bars, microwave foods, coffee, hearty soups, cereals, socks, sunscreen, and body wash. A complete list of items can be found at any Berkshire Bank or by visiting www.berkshirebank.com

“Berkshire Bank is very proud to once again sponsor this Care Package Drive to benefit soldiers from our region,” said “Peter J. Lafayette, Berkshire Bank Foundation Executive Director. “We are committed to giving back to the communities we serve and there’s no better way of doing that than by giving back to the young men and women from our area who are serving our country.”

Organizations partnering on the project with the Bank are: the USO of the Pioneer Valley and Blue Star Mothers of the Capital District. Representatives from these organizations and Bank employees will package and ship the care packages overseas at the conclusion of the drive. For a list of Berkshire Bank offices near you visit www.berkshirebank.com .

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BACKGROUND

Berkshire Bank Foundation, the charitable arm of Berkshire Bank, [America's Most Exciting BankSM](http://www.berkshirebank.com), is a leader in philanthropy and community involvement. The Foundation's mission is to enhance the quality of life in Berkshire Bank's service areas by providing priority funding to education and community development projects. It also funds programs dedicated to the arts, education, and human services. Since

it was formed it has awarded more than \$15 million to non-profit organizations in its service area. For more information, visit www.berkshirebank.com/foundation, “Like” them on www.facebook.com/BerkshireBank or call Peter J. Lafayette, Executive Director at 413-447-1722.

Berkshire Hills Bancorp is the parent of Berkshire Bank - [America's Most Exciting Bank\(SM\)](#). The Company has \$2.9 billion in assets and 42 full service branch offices in Massachusetts, New York, and Vermont. The Company provides personal and business banking, insurance, wealth management, investment, private banking, and asset based lending services. Berkshire Bank provides 100% deposit insurance protection for all deposit accounts, regardless of amount, based on a combination of FDIC insurance and the [Depositors Insurance Fund](#) (DIF). The Company currently has pending agreements to acquire Rome Bancorp, Inc. and Legacy Bancorp, Inc. For more information, visit www.berkshirebank.com or call 800-773-5601.

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