

SOLDIERS' WORDS OF THANKS

Thank you so very much for the care package that you sent. The package was very well received by the soldiers and all the items were greatly appreciated. Please extend our heartfelt thank you to all those involved. Personally I always enjoy letters from children the best! One of our soldiers kept the beanie baby cat because he said it looks like the cat they adopted here. On behalf of all the soldiers here, I again thank you for your generosity and time. **SGT Brian McGory**

It is always great and special to receive packages from home. Most of the times we do not know who is sending the packages or what is in it but one thing I can assure you is that every packet put a smile not only in my face but most importantly in my Soldiers face. I cannot thank you enough for your wishes and prayers, for taking time of your busy schedule to send a little light from home and most importantly for remind us that what we do not go unnoticed. Thanks.
CPT Daniel E. Torres

I just wanted to send a quick note to thank you for the care package. My guys love getting these and it always brings a smile when they see a new box of goodies. It is also very heart warming to know that people back home think about us and believe in what we do. GO SOX. Thanks.
1SG Matt Tumilty

Hello, I received a care package from you a few days ago... myself and all of my fellow soldiers really appreciate you going out of your way and sending us a little something from the good old "USA" :).... it is very nice to receive a piece of home every so often in this foreign land. :) Thank you so much for the snacks and toiletries... we all very much appreciate your contributions!! I cannot express the amount of excitement to you in an email that goes through every one of us when a care package arrives..... receiving mail is honestly the only thing we look forward to over here in Pakistan.. other than seeing a camel spider attack a cricket or something...haha. Well as far as myself goes, I was born and raised in Houston, TX. If you are familiar with Houston, I am from the south side, Clear Lake area. I graduated high school in 1995 & joined the USAF in August of 1996... I am 33 years old, a divorced male, I have a 3 year old daughter whom I love dearly. I currently hold the pay-grade of E-6. I plan on at least staying in the military until my 20 year mark...which comes in 2016...however... I could end up staying in longer depending on what model Ferrari my girlfriend wants when that time comes... haha, only kidding. I am very grateful to have her in my life, she isn't in the military, but she really goes out of her way to be a loving, caring & supportive woman to me... I couldn't ask for more. :) Once again, your support is highly appreciated & it does make a HUGE difference!!! I'm sure I am one of the few that actually writes back... but folks like you... DO make a difference and it doesn't go unnoticed! Thanks again.. take care & God bless the USA!! -- **TSgt DesJardins & Company**

Thank you for the Package. It was given out for all the Soldiers to go through. I have been a Legion Member for 8 years and I am a life Member of the VFW. -- **SSG Pulis**

I'd like to thank you and your community for your support it is without a doubt one of the best feelings for Servicemen or Servicewomen to know that we have support from home, even better from ones that we dont know. All items sent were greatly appriciated and has put a smile on many faces. Thank you again SO much. -- **Mark Miller**

Hello. My name is Master Sergeant Angel Otero. I am currently deployed in Helmand Province, Afghanistan with 1st Battalion 8th Marine Regiment. I am the Weapons Company Operations Chief. I wanted to take a moment to thank you for the packages you've sent. It's certainly comforting to know that there are Americans back home that care enough to take so much time to express it. Our Marines here have a difficult task and sometimes they do wonder if anyone cares. What you do answers that. My company has approximately 160 Marines spread over a large area of rough terrain. Comfort items from home help lighten the burden they bear. A little about me, I'm 34 years old. I've been in the Marine Corps for 14½ years. I've been married for 12 years (wife's name Carmen), and have two beautiful children. My daughter (Kaira) is 7 years old, and my son

(Angel Jr) is 5 years old. I'm originally from Pennsylvania, born in West Chester. Currently I'm stationed out of Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville, North Carolina. I don't want to bore you with details about me. Just wanted to let you know who I am, and that we appreciate what you're doing. Sincerely --**Sgt Angel Otero**

I just wanted to take the time to say thank you very much on behalf of my company to your local community, American Legion Post 132, Women's Auxiliary American Legion Post 132 and the Son's of the American Legion Post 132! I appreciate your strong support for my unit and for the American military. Everything donated was received with gratitude and open arms and nothing went to waste. We appreciate your service and willingness to take the time to thoughtfully put together packages for deployed service men and women. THANK YOU. -- **CPT Bryson Rossol**

Lisa, Debbie, First let me start by saying, thank you very much to everyone there in the Metrowest Community. I love the leaves in the box, I'm originally from NY so I really miss the Fall season right now. I hung the leaves up on my wall as if they were falling from the trees (SMILE) and I hung up the letters and cards for everyone to read. Tell Maddie, Chloe and the Southboro Daisy Troop 72782 that I said "Hello" and thank you so much for the box of sunshine!!!! I really appreciate that all of you took time out of your busy lives to do this for us. My Soldiers and all the Soldiers in the Armed services truly appreciate the love, care and support that all of you have shown us. We do this for our country our families and all of you our extended families. "GOD BLESS"-- **SFC Cynthia Gyening**

Thanks for the great care package! We're doing ok here. It's not so bad here really. Thanks so much for your support, it really means the world to us! Some things soldiers can always use are mini note pads, snacks, 3x5 cards, and black pens. Wow, it's amazing how much people back home care and take the time to do, and spend their own money doing so! I'm only a SPC. I have a BA degree in Elementary Edu but wanted to do the enlisted route 1st before coming an officer. I'm from Michigan and the economy is just horrible there so I wasn't able to obtain a full time position. I had positions in schools, just not a full time position. So I decided to do this instead! Thanks again! – **SPC Jennifer Jenkins**

Thank you so much for the care package i just rec'd...it was very fun going thru all the items...i expecially enjoyed the leaf and cards from the kids...there were lots wonderful smell good lotions, body washes and sanitizer...i already used several of these, including the nail polish which my nails needed...also the lights i already hung in my pod and they are awesome...thanks for your continued support, it is much appreciated...i really loved all the things, what a thoughtful care package...thanks so much. much love - **SGT Debbie Matthews**

On behalf of the 1/3 SFG SigDet I would like to thank you and your coworkers for the care packages that we recently received. We want you to know that they are greatly appreciated. It is always encouraging to know that people back home are considering us even from so far away. Thank you for your prayers, your gifts, and your kindness. Sincerely, -- **SGT William Long**

My name is Julio M. Mella. I hope everything is ok over there. Here things are the way they are. I try to live one day at the time. Thank you very much for the care package. Thank you for your generosity. It is amazing how we care about people that we do not even know. You send this package to a person that you do not even know and I am here putting my life on the line, defending people that I do not know, but who share the most basic right which is freedom. Here I am thousands of miles away from my love ones. My faith is the column to which I lean when I feel discouraged, or simply depressed, and that faith is what keep me strong during these hard times, and as you may know, time and distance are the best friends, but at the same time the worst enemies of our hearts and souls. You have a nice day and god bless you. – **SSG Julio M. Mella**

Lisa and Debbie, We received a box from you a few days ago. Thanks so much. I like how a lot of the items were packaged in zip lock bags. It makes it easy to throw in a bag or hand out to one of my Soldiers. Most of what I get ends up with my "Line Medics". I have 47 Soldiers in my platoon. Most are spread throughout a large area in small Out Posts. Many times there is only one medic for an entire infantry platoon. These young Medics are called "Doc" because to the infantryman, he is a doctor, nurse, paramedic, everything. Another part of my platoon runs a "Battalion Aid Station". The BAS is like a miniature Emergency Room and outpatient clinic. We treat everything from leg amputations to the common cold. You've picked a great platoon to support. I can't tell you how proud I am of these medics out here. They go on missions all day, fire fights, treat devastating injuries and then spend all night checking feet and taking care of their platoon. If any of us are heroes to you then those guys are my heroes. There's no amount of news coverage that can fully capture how difficult and dangerous it is here. Everyone in my platoon has earned the coveted "Combat Medic Badge". The only way to earn this is by treating patients while under enemy fire. The reason I tell you all this is because, those little things (like your package) is the only thing that may bring a smile to a Soldiers face. The picture was taken right after several Medics got their Combat Medic Badges. It's as many as I could gather for one picture, there's always someone gone on a mission or busy elsewhere. I would like to end this message with a heart-felt "Thank You". It's hard to explain but we (Soldiers) share a bond not unlike any family. It makes me feel really good when I can do something to support my platoon/family. I have asked all the Soldiers donating to the Combined Federal Campaign to seriously consider donating to Anysoldier.com, they have seen firsthand the great support that organization provides. I hope this message reaches both of you in the best of health and spirits. Anyway, if there's a way to pass on our thanks to all those people who gave up their time and resources, that would be great. We all miss home so much and hearing about all those great people is a reminder of why we are here and what we're fighting for. Sincerely, **SFC William Cook, TF 1-66 Medical Platoon Sergeant**

We would like to send you a personalized thank you the care package. ^_^ The trail mix was a hit. – **SPC Tynasha Fedderman**

Thank You!!! I am Laurie Billings currently deployed in Afghanistan. I received a box from you yesterday. I usually write a letter back as we are frowned upon using this email. But since my children still have not received the letters I have wrote them 6 weeks ago, I decided I will just do the email. A little about me and my two soldiers, SPC Tomblin is a single soldier who has 2 children. He was here last time but at a separate area than I. He doesn't really receive any letters so when I get box I give to the guys to pick through first. PFC Billitz is my other soldier. He is the same as Tomblin. He doesn't receive much mail either and he is very quiet. This is his first deployment so I try to make his life as easy as possible. I don't scream and yell at them constantly as I don't agree with that leadership style. As long as they accomplish the mission and stay out of trouble I pretty much leave them alone. With just the 3 of us trying to support an entire Battalion with ammunition we don't get any down time, so I try to give them as much time to themselves as possible. I am a single mom of 3 children. My kids are almost all grown up. I have a 21 year old son, a 17 year old daughter, and a 14 year old son. My children are pretty understanding and supportive. I will miss my daughters graduation this year and that is really bothering me but other than that Afghanistan will never get my spirits down. Things here are horrible compared to a year ago. We can't get any supplies like last time. It's really sad when you have to submit your name to an organization and ask for office supplies just so that you have stuff to complete your job with, when you work for the US government. The danger level here is the highest I have seen since my first deployment back in 2005. This is my 3rd go round and it is the worst yet! We will keep defending the locals and protecting them from the bad guys as usual and just pray for everyone's safety. I can't express the gratitude we have for all the support we get from home. It is greatly appreciated. Thank you to everyone who helped my guys have a better day! – **SGT Laurie Billings**

My name is Joshua Weisman, and this morning my Soldiers and I received an Any Soldier package from your group. I just wanted to take a moment, and on behalf of all of us say thank you. Thank you. We really do appreciate the time it took to package this and send it our way, and

it means a lot to us that folks back home still care enough to go out of their way to show support. Several of my Soldiers should be sending letters back to the children that sent the pictures that were in the package, and hopefully they make it through the mail system before the kids go on their Christmas break. Again, on behalf of myself and my Soldiers, I want to tell you and the other members of your organization Thank you. – **2LT Joshua Weisman**

Dear Lisa and Debbie, with support from American Legion Post 132, Women's Auxiliary American Legion Post 132, and the Sons of the American Legion Post 132. Words cannot begin to describe our appreciation for you adopting our unit. Thank you very much for your recent thoughtful gift box. I can't tell you the impact that it has had on my entire Target Operations Cell here in Kabul, Afghanistan. Navy and Air Force personnel are having a hard time believing that someone would actually take the time to send someone a package that they have never met (and probably never will meet). If you thought the Navy and Air Force personnel were shocked, let me tell you about the British, Australian, and Canadian folks. They are flabbergasted at the outpouring of support shown by you and others like you. We cannot thank you enough for brightening our day during this grinding fight we are in here in Afghanistan. It's tough to stay motivated especially for the ones here for an entire year like myself. It seems like Groundhog Day for 365 days in a row. But then, every once in a while, a package or letter is delivered and everyone's spirits and morale seem to rise and it makes the shop a little more tolerable as the monotony is dispersed even if just for a little while. Believe me - ANYTHING from America is appreciated. Being thousands of miles off the continent of the greatest nation on Earth, we take nothing for granted. To take time to write you this letter is the least we can do. You took time out of your busy schedule to think of me and my battle buddies in this austere environment. That is more than most would do. I hug and salute you all!! I plan to keep the www.AnySoldier.com website up to date with current updates and photos of our time here in Afghanistan. Please browse on by to follow our story. I served in Afghanistan for a year in 2005-06 and was a volunteer for Any Soldier then as well. There is a link on my profile there that tells the story of my last unit with lots of photos and updates. We'll add your city to our United States map (for details about this, please see my profile on Any Soldier.com). I am a proud American Soldier serving with other young men and women from all the US military services and 43 other nations belonging to the ISAF Joint Command. We are a small Target Operations Cell but anything we cannot use, we distribute to the other 1,300 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines plus Coalition Nation Soldiers throughout this command. Thank you for your continued kindness and may you be truly blessed for your thoughtfulness and compassion for those fighting here in Afghanistan and around the world. We salute you!! Please know that you are making a difference in the lives of men and women in uniform. Never underestimate the power of your contribution to the war effort. We will never forget it!! Sincerely, - **Daniel J. Ward and the entire Target Operations Cell**

I recently received an amazing care package from your Holiday Care Package Drive. My Marines and I were overwhelmed by the effort and care that was evident in what you sent us. The thank you cards from kids, the laminated New England leaves, and the letter about how this support came together were all very uplifting. Thank you so much for everything that you do!!! The popcorn was great for the small down times we get to watch a movie on our laptops, the ramen noodles and mac and cheese were a welcome change from our normal food too. The magazines have been passed around to just about everyone in our unit with the thank you cards from the kids. The candy was almost like trick or treating for us since we get to open the package close to Halloween and get a great treat. Thank you for bringing smiles to our faces and helping us get through it all over here. Hope you all had a great Halloween and have safe and happy Holidays to come. - **Sgt Joshua D. Webb**

Hello there I am a soldier who recently got a package for you in the mail.. I am just wanting to thank you for you kindness and all the people who put in a hand.. I am really happy that you sent me something it really makes my days when I get something in the mail.. Also because my any soldier account hasn't been updated. Because I cannot find a way to update them or even get a response back, so people are not sending me anything

anymore so I just want you to know you made me and my friends out here happy. Please pass that on to the people who helped out.. and once again thank you.... may god bless all of you...- **PFC Gutierrez**

Hello, Thank You for the box of goodies you sent. It was perfect. I shared them with everybody. Please tell the people in the local community and the American Legion Post 132, and Women's Auxiliary American Legion Post 132 and the Son's of the American Legion Post 132 Thank You for having the drive that made the care package possible. We appreciate it very much, PFC Rodriguez loved the beef sticks, PVT Parchman enjoyed the Life Saver gummie bears, SPC Ladd enjoyed the Oreos, SSG Coleman, PFC Perez, SPC Underwood and myself and everybody else enjoyed everything else. I put the laminate pictures up in or tent. The stuffed kitten is above my bunk. Thanks again for your letter of support and the care package. – **SGT Mark Villanueva**

I want to start off with thanking you for sending a package to our Soldiers here in north east Afghanistan. The Soldiers of ATTACK! Troop, 7th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment "Buffalo Soldiers", thank you for your unwavering support and gratitude for what we do. Thank you so much for the goodies for they are greatly appreciated by all of my troopers and they will enjoy them very much. They will enjoy it very much for most of us do not have a post exchange or store nearby to purchase these. Unless our families or someone else sends them to us, we would not be able to get our hands on items like these so we truly thank you for such a great gesture and our Soldiers extend their gratitude. We appreciate you kind words of support and it motivates us to keep doing our jobs but honestly, you do not have to tell us in words how much you appreciate what you do for actions speak louder than words and so far, you have done more than most people. We so appreciate what you do for us, your immediate response and your big heart. Just a little about myself, I am the First Sergeant & Senior Non-commissioned officer for the best Cavalry Troop in the United States Army. Our Squadron is assigned to the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division. I have been serving our great Nation and the United States Army for 21 years now and I am very proud of our Soldiers. I am married to a gorgeous wife and the father of five beautiful children. They are all very supportive of my profession and they have donated many items to our Soldiers too. I love my job and taking care of Soldiers. They have always been my extended family. I am originally from Puerto Rico but have lived just over half of my life in the United States and have traveled to many places around the world. Our unit is originally stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado. We enjoy the weather there very much, definitely more than we do here in Afghanistan, ha ha ha. The conditions that our patrol bases are in are austere but we are working hard to get them better life support to them. We have brought wood to build, tools, tents, shower systems, generators, pots and pans, well, everything we can get our hands on or order for them so life won't seem so harsh. The morale is high because they know that they have leaders that care about getting them the support they need and they have great American patriots like yourself that supports them too. If you are reading this then you should know that we did receive the package and that we are doing well. ATTACK! Troop consists of two scout platoons (25 men each), a mortar fire support section (8 men), a mechanic section (8 men), a medic section (8 men) and a headquarters section (13 men). We receive the packages at our command post just south of our two platoons and we distribute the goods evenly to them. Most of the time, we (our headquarters section) deliver the goods ourselves when conducting combat logistical patrols, or we send them via air, either way, we make sure they always get them. They are constantly doing patrols to secure the local populace and be able to gather intelligence on the enemy. The tempo can be very high but we do have a rest cycle included in all our operations. We would not be able to sustain a 12 month rotation without it. We thank you very much for sending us this token of your appreciation to us, the time you all have taken to make this happen, and your enduring support to our Soldiers! Yes, I have capitalized the word Soldier because we are taught in effective military writing that "Soldiers" are what make this Army what it is and it should be capitalized all the time and is the reason why I work so hard. They are really the ones I work for. I do not work for my superiors but for those young leaders and troopers who make it happen on a daily basis. God Bless you every single one of you for all you do and we look forward to hearing from you again. Sincerely, - **1SG Rodriguez, Jorge**

I wanted to take the time to personally to thank you all. Also the American Legion Post #132, the Women's Auxiliary American Legion #132, the Sons of the American Legion Post #132, the people of the metrowest community, Marlboro, MA, and the ladies of Wellesley College. Thank you all so much . The guys of the 3-20th Special Forces Group out of Starke, FL, greatly appreciate all your support. Everything in the care package went to good use. I personally really liked the Fall leaves. I miss them. Once again thank you all so much. It means a lot. Sincerely,
Pat Vernlund and the guys of the 3-20th

Thank you for all that you have done for the Marines here in the Operations Center at Forward Operating Base Marjah in Marjah, Afghanistan. The packages such as the ones you've sent to us are an awesome motivational tool that we thoroughly enjoy and appreciate. The box was labeled snacks, but upon opening it there was so much more than the label led us to believe. I kept the oatmeal for myself and put the magazines and books into circulation here within our offices. We are constantly reading books and magazines, as we have some down time every now and then. The care and time you ladies and your community put into the packages is a testament to the support and gratitude for us from home and it definitely makes what we do that much easier to deal with. Thank you all again for your efforts in supporting us. - **SSgt Micheal Miller**

Thank you for the package I received last week. I have been carrying your note around in my pocket for a while. I am sorry for the delay in writing back to you, this is my first chance to do so. I am at a small outpost in Western Afghanistan. I work in the Orderly Room of a maintenance company - I am like Radar in MASH. There are nine Soldiers in the Command Tent and about 212 in the whole company. We have been here for three months now and getting into a routine, every day is much the same as the others. I shared all the snacks with the guys in my office, the snacks are really appreciated. We have one hot meal a day and an MRE for lunch every day. Showers are rationed, we get one every three days. The weather is starting to cool down which is nice. The weathers not too bad now. We get mail when a plane comes in, so no plane means no mail. Mail call is a big morale booster here with pictures, newspapers and food passed around and shared with all. We have created a free PX, there is no store out here, Soldiers who have extra stuff such as toothpaste, cookies and Kleenex share with others that need that stuff. It is very humbling to be remembered by complete strangers at home. We do appreciate all that you do for us. Sincerely, - **SGT Mechau**

Just wanted to take the time to Thank You for the wonderful care package you sent. Your efforts did not go unrecognized and we appreciate all of you. You are truly special people who go the extra mile to make sure that our Military members are not forgotten. I felt the need to offer you a sincere Thank You as it means so much to us here. Take care. - **Lonnie Jabour**

I just wanted to write to thank you guys for the wonderful package you sent our way. We were full of joy when we received these. It was kind of exciting to tell you the truth. ;)) But from the bottom of our hearts, we really want to thank you for everything, and especially all the support you guys have provided thru the years. We really appreciate people like you, wish we had more like you guys. Thank you again... God Bless you guys.. – **Vic Perez**

I just wanted to send my greetings to you from Ramadi, Iraq and say thank you for taking the time to send several holiday care packages to me, and subsequently, my unit. I have distributed the various items and goodies you included amongst my fellow soldiers here and they have all been very appreciative of your thoughtfulness. Thank you for your support - it means a tremendous amount to us. Thank you for the energy it took to organize the care package drive - the items we received were a definite bright spot in our day. And we thank you for your continued thoughts and prayers as we continue our tour here in Iraq. We look forward with each passing day to being reunited with you and all the rest of our families and friends back in the States hopefully sometime mid-next year. Thanks again for everything! - **CPT John Pillen**

We would like to say thank you for the letters and boxes you all sent. It's wonderful to see my fellow Massachusetts residents (I'm from Ludlow, Mass.) take the time to put together some care packages for us Soldiers out here. We are located out at COP Zerok in eastern Afghanistan, where life is a bit rough and luxury is sparse. Getting care packages from stateside does wonders for morale and lets us know that we are not forgotten. Again, on behalf of the boys and I, thank you for caring. Sincerely -**SFC Joao M. Vaz**

We just received your generous gifts/donations and I want to personally thank you and those who helped you. Every time a box like yours arrives in the mail, it is like Christmas morning. We don't have a PX here and getting to one is a combat convoy. Everything sent will be used. It is a great morale booster and reminds us all of home and better times. Many thanks for your support!
CSM Joe Conlon

Dear Supporters, My name is Jackson Walters & I received a package from you not long ago while stationed in Afghanistan. I just wanted to send my sincere thanks. It is always one of the best days I have when I get a package. Knowing people such as yourself care about what we do makes me even prouder to do what I do today. Just so you know, we are doing fine here on FOB Shindand, I am part of the Task Force Comanche Combat Aviation Brigade. I am a Blackhawk crew chief so I see my share of action. Things are looking better here, we moved to a newer location. Have warm meals now everyday, and hot showers every once in awhile. There's even talk of a PX sooner or later! So again, thank you very much from me and all my guys & gals for your kind words and the things you sent. God Bless! - **SPC Jackson Walters**

Hi, My name is MSG Tami Hillis and I'm currently in Kandahar, Afghanistan. We received goodies from you and would like to thank you for your thoughtfulness. The boxes are addressed to a Richard McNorton, who is part of our office and he always shares the care packages he receives. My job here in Kandahar is Public Affairs, which means I support the international and local media, and we also put together our own magazine and video broadcast. My Soldiers and I have been here just over a month and will be here for a year-long tour. We really appreciate when folks back home recognize the work that we are doing over here. Thank you for your support and kindness. – **MSG Tami Hillis**

MetroWest Community, Thank you for your support, taking the time and consideration to put the packages together. One of your packages made its way to COP Monti in Kunar province, Afghanistan. We are an outpost and have only periodic resupplies, incoming mail. Although conditions are good they are lacking when compared to the larger post and bases. Our outpost is close to the Pakistan border and is the only deterrent to the Taliban forces, which infiltrate from Pakistan. We are attacked regularly and have lost more than 7 brothers-in-arms in this area of Operation Azone. I write this not to make you feel bad but to say that in spite of all that is going on in the USA, good, bad or indifferent, we still live in the greatest nation on earth! I would like to encourage each of you to continue your support for our country, simply by looking beyond the hype of those running for offices of public service and find the true character, the real agendas and vote support for those who believe in our "constitution" as it stands, who believe in what our fore-fathers started. This is the greatest thanks any citizen can give, the greatest support any Soldier who has fought, is fighting, was wounded or was killed giving their life, time and sacrifice for our country. Thank you again. P.S. Thank you for the touch of Fall. We miss the changing seasons. It's not the same here. - **SPC David Binford**

I'd like to thank you for your support and care package. It's especially nice to receive personal notes and holiday wishes during this time of year when we are away from our families. I'm a mother of three and my youngest child just turned two, so I'm especially missing his developments right now. Usually my husband is deployed, however this is my first deployment in ten years in the military. I have to say that sometimes our families are so preoccupied with taking care of the children and the household responsibilities, not to mention their jobs....that sending letters and care packages can be a bit of a task, so I thank you for your continued support. Happy Holidays. - **Lacey Hamilton**