

Soldiers Respond

Canton Middle School students have received several grateful and heartwarming responses for American soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan in appreciation for the care packages sent as part of our school's Veterans' Day commemoration. Incredibly a couple of the packages, which were mailed from the Collinsville Post Office on Thursday afternoon, November 12, arrived in Iraq on Monday morning, November 16!



(You should know, if you don't already, that Barbara, the Postmaster in the Collinsville office is amazing. She works during her lunch hour each year to move these care packages out.) The rest of the 70 packages seem to have arrived over the next several days.



On Wednesday, December 2, 2009, we were surprised to receive a phone call from Major Anthony Beatman who is stationed outside Baghdad. He called the school by satellite phone to say a personal thank you to all the students and especially to Mrs. Sue Paul's and Mrs. Kelly Casorio's advisory students who coincidentally selected him (from several thousand entries on www.anysoldier.com) to send cards, letters and packages to.



He had shared the goodies and the letters with many of the men and women in his command and they were grateful that somebody back home cared enough to think of them. He also had previously sent pictures of himself, several soldiers and Iraqis to Mrs. Paul. One of the Iraqis was a young girl who was sporting the backpack that Mrs. Casorio's students had included in one of her advisory's packages.



He remarked that many children in Iraq, especially the girls, have little or no school supplies. This particular girl was still smiling two weeks later with her new backpack.

The Major had a chance to speak directly with several students as well as the two advisors. The students plan to write back. Major Beatman would welcome additional school supplies for the local children as well as any cards and letter from home. (He's a Connecticut native.) His e-mail address is anthony.beatman@iraqcentcom.mil.

Almost every advisory has heard from a soldier by e-mail, letter, card and phone. The message is always the same. Thanks for the letters and thanks for the goodies. It's great to know that somebody back home cares. It's been a wonderful learning experience and service project for Canton Middle School's students:



Here's a small sample of what the students have heard from soldiers:

Thanks for the care packages you sent; I enjoyed it a lot. Thanks for the letters and support. A special thanks to the students who wrote me letters.

Sgt. Larry Kimmons (He then went on to respond individually to each student.)

Our gratitude goes out to all of you...we want you to know that nothing goes unappreciated. Thank you so much and may God bless everyone of you in the coming months,
SSG. Eduardo Peraza

It means a lot to me to know that someone who never met me cares that I am over here fighting to keep you safe... I am married and my husband is over here serving too... Good luck on your tests and get good grades... Thank you.
SSG. Jessica Mason