



December, 2008

THE REASON WE SERVE

feedback from the battlefield

I would like to thank everyone that has taken time from their busy schedule to make up gifts to send out to all the soldiers that are overseas. It really means a lot to us over here that do not get to be with family and friends for the holidays. I would love to be able to tell you all about what my team is doing over in Afghanistan but I can't say much, I can tell you we are a small specialized group that is trying to make this a better place, and it makes it easier knowing that there are people like you and your group that are thinking of us.

I put the Christmas Tree up and share all the treats with everyone, and they thank you also. I cannot thank you enough for everything.

SSG. Young, M

I don't know how to thank u guys for my package; words cannot even explain the happiness I got from your package. I love the tree, thank you so, so much. I wouldn't have one if it wasn't for you guys. Thank you for all the little treats and the card and letter, it was very nice. It is people like you that make me want to keep fighting for this country. It's nice to know people appreciate what we do. My whole team thanks you guys also because we are going to use the tree for our team Christmas tree.

Thank you guys so, so much!

PV2 Riley

The last month of 2008 brings closure to a year of success for Cypress Cares. We've seen community and business support grow for our mission as the months and events continue.

This year was one of many 'firsts' for the Cypress Cares organization. We held our first packing days in May, and continued through July and October. We held our first fundraiser in October to raise funds for the organization. We joined the Cypress Chamber of Commerce and continue to see increased support from chamber members for our organization. We also saw support grow as we started mailing the first of our themed care packages to the troops for Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

To date, we have mailed more than 550 packages to troops and units deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. The feedback from the soldiers and families of soldiers is tremendously encouraging, because we know that our organization continues to make a difference in their lives and in the United States' missions to support Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

We thank you for your support thus far, and we welcome your continued support into 2009. The new year will bring new opportunities for involvement, and new areas of growth for Cypress Cares. Stay tuned for more!

SAVE THE DATE

 upcoming events

31 January: Boxing Day

Cole's Crossing Community Center 13050 Barker Cypress Road
10:00 a.m.

More to come...

Check back at www.cypress-cares.org for more updates.



December, 2008

REMEMBER THEIR SACRIFICE

While the holidays are upon us, take some time this season to remember the sacrifice of our soldiers for your freedom. The following poem communicates a special message.

The embers glowed softly, and in their dim light,
I gazed round the room and I cherished the sight.
My wife was asleep, her head on my chest,
My daughter beside me, angelic in rest.

Outside the snow fell, a blanket of white,
Transforming the yard to a winter delight.
The sparkling lights in the tree I believe,
Completed the magic that was Christmas Eve.

My eyelids were heavy, my breathing was deep,
Secure and surrounded by love I would sleep.
In perfect contentment, or so it would seem,
So I slumbered, perhaps I started to dream.

The sound wasn't loud, and it wasn't too near,
But I opened my eyes when it tickled my ear.
Perhaps just a cough, I didn't quite know,
Then the sure sound of footsteps outside in the snow.

My soul gave a tremble, I struggled to hear,
And I crept to the door just to see who was near.
Standing out in the cold and the dark of the night,
A lone figure stood, his face weary and tight.

A soldier, I puzzled, some twenty years old,
Perhaps a Marine, huddled here in the cold.
Alone in the dark, he looked up and smiled,
Standing watch over me, and my wife and my child.

"What are you doing?" I asked without fear,
"Come in this moment, it's freezing out here!
Put down your pack, brush the snow from your sleeve,
You should be at home on a cold Christmas Eve!"

For barely a moment I saw his eyes shift,
Away from the cold and the snow blown in drifts..
To the window that danced with a warm fire's light
Then he sighed and he said "It's really all right,
I'm out here by choice. I'm here every night."

"It's my duty to stand at the front of the line,
That separates you from the darkest of times.
No one had to ask or beg or implore me,
I'm proud to stand here like my father's before me.

My Gramps died at 'Pearl on a day in December,"
Then he sighed, "That's a Christmas 'Gram always remembers."
My dad stood his watch in the jungles of 'Nam ',
And now it is my turn and so, here I am.

I've not seen my own son in more than a while,
But my wife sends me pictures, he's sure got her smile.
Then he bent and he carefully pulled from his bag,
The red, white, and blue... an American flag.
I can live through the cold and the being alone,
Away from my family, my house and my home.

I can stand at my post through the rain and the sleet,
I can sleep in a foxhole with little to eat.
I can carry the weight of killing another,
Or lay down my life with my sister and brother..
Who stand at the front against any and all,
To ensure for all time that this flag will not fall."

"So go back inside," he said, "harbor no fright,
Your family is waiting and I'll be all right."
"But isn't there something I can do, at the least,
"Give you money," I asked, "or prepare you a feast?
It seems all too little for all that you've done,
For being away from your wife and your son."

Then his eye welled a tear that held no regret,
"Just tell us you love us, and never forget.
To fight for our rights back at home while we're gone,
To stand your own watch, no matter how long.
For when we come home, either standing or dead,
To know you remember we fought and we bled.
Is payment enough, and with that we will trust,

THAT WE MATTERED TO YOU AS YOU MATTERED TO US".