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Web site brings cheer to troops

12/06/2006

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Having read recent headlines about units returning to Iraq for their third one-year tour, I feel compelled to shout from the rooftops about an important opportunity to bring cheer, goodwill and much-needed support to our heroic troops. There is an extraordinary Web site, www.anysoldier.com, started in August 2003 by Sgt. Brian Horn of LaPlata, Md., which links all of us to thousands of servicemen and women serving in harm's way. Over the past two years, our family has utilized www.anysoldier.com to ship care packages to troops in every branch of the military. Likewise, our school, Evergreen Mill Elementary, has tapped www.anysoldier.com to send many lovingly stuffed boxes.

So many of us drive around town with our "Support the Troops" magnets, yet are unsure how to extend support beyond our bumpers. Imagine the impact our great community could have on the spirits of our troops this holiday season. When you sit down to write your holiday cards, why not first go to www.anysoldier.com and make a list of five soldiers to whom you'll send cards as well. Choose one or two marines or airmen and ship them a care package. Don't know what to send? This comprehensive, easy-to-navigate Web site gives you plenty of ideas and even offers ready-made packages to purchase online. Recent additions to our family's care packages include holiday decorations and CDs, snacks like beef jerky and granola bars, M&Ms, candy canes, batteries, phone cards, magazines, DVDs and children's homemade cards and drawings.

When you log onto www.anysoldier.com, click on Where to Send and you'll get a lengthy list of servicemen and women's names -- all of whom have volunteered to receive packages for those in their units who don't regularly receive mail. When you click on a name, journal updates, photos and

brief wish lists pop up.

Needless to say, every Loudoun County resident is exceedingly busy with their holiday season to-do lists. This year, please make supporting our military through letters, cards and care packages a family must-do. These men and women are making tremendous sacrifices on our behalf; a simple, yet genuine, thank-you from each of us is much deserved. Show support in a way that truly makes a difference to our nation's courageous armed forces. It'll be the best gift you've ever given.

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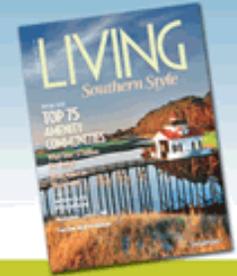
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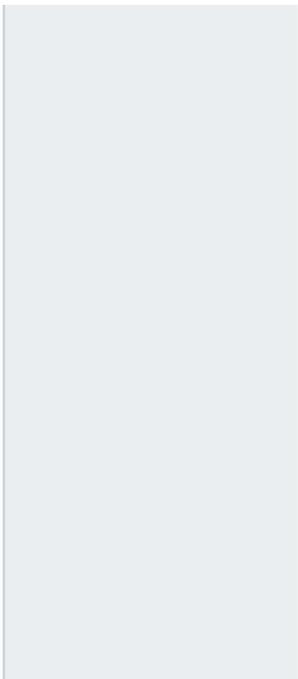
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