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Care Packages For Troops

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A group of Santa's helpers at Mission Paving Co, Inc. are making sure our servicemen and women get a gift from home this holiday season.

They are collecting addresses from local military families and shipping care packages to Iraq and Afghanistan, from the business or from the families.

"They give us addresses, sometimes we pay for postage, sometimes we send goodie boxes, we're real proud to do it," said Mindy Schroeder-Levermann, a company representative.

Levermann said they've been doing this for four years, at Christmas and yearround.

"We had seen a story on the news about AnySoldier.com and we thought what a great way to give back to the soldiers who have given so much to us," said Levermann, when asked what inspired the idea.

Owner Jim Schroeder said it's a way to let them know people here appreciate it.

"These guys, men and women, are sacrificing alot over there and so this is the least we can do."

The packages contain their favorite snacks like beef jerky, Easy Mac and Ramen noodles.

And then families bring their own items, and sometimes they get pretty creative.

"Basically, they brought us all the ingredients to make tamales, which is from the flour, the chile powder, all that to make tamales so that we could send that out... the tortillas," recalled Erica Vela.

"And she (the soldier's mom) tells us that her son cooks alot so she sends him rice, fideo and beans."

Leverman said they often get reply letters of thanks, sometimes from servicemen who never get any mail.

"I know there's been several that we get and all the girls just cry and it's a feeling you can't describe."

Reading from one of several posted on a cork board, Levermann said, "This one is very special from Staff Sgt. Perez here... he said 'your effort back home doesn't go unnoticed. I appreciate all you do and all your hard work. I would rather fight here than have a war like this reach our cities and towns'."

Mission Paving said it plans to continue sending care packages until our heroes come home.

The deadline to send Christmas care packages from Mission Paving is December 12, at noon.

Items must fit inside of a priority mail box (12X14X3 dimension), and must be inspected before shipping.

The postal service does not allow liquor, pork, aerosals, or anything perishable to be sent.

If you'd like more information, you can visit Mission Paving at 602 Los Ebanos Road or send an e-mail to Missionpaving@sbcglobal.net.



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