



# Press Release

## Charles County Sheriff's Office

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### For Immediate Release

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### REMEMBERING OUR TROOPS DURING THE HOLIDAYS *Charles County Correctional Officers Send Care Packages Overseas*

This year, many of our military troops won't be home for the holidays because they are overseas fighting the war on terrorism, so the Charles County Correctional Officers Association, the UPS stores in Waldorf and La Plata and La Plata resident Marty Horn are bringing the holidays to the troops.

In October, the Correctional Officers placed collection boxes at all the Charles County Sheriff's Office facilities to begin collecting supplies to send in care packages to troops overseas. Soon after, all of the boxes were overflowing with gifts.

"I'm speechless. The amount of supplies we received was absolutely overwhelming," said Sgt. Tracy Williams, who coordinated the drive. "It was way more than I expected. Some of the care people put into their gifts and the unique ideas they had were amazing. I am especially grateful since my brother, U. S. Army Major Robert Neave, is one of those soldiers in Iraq."

In addition to the Sheriff's Office personnel who participated, their families, friends, neighbors and coworkers also helped. Ron Grubman and Rick Olson, contracted physicians assistants at the Charles County Detention Center, contributed by donating an entire truck load of hygiene items. Hayley Bois, 15, and her sister Cara, 12, daughters of Miriam Bois, who is contracted to provide mental health services at the Detention Center, went door-to-door in their neighborhood, Chapel Point Woods, and collected several boxes of supplies. Lorri Foster, wife of Sgt. Brandon Foster, also collected a



Amid hundreds of supplies that will be sent in care packages to military personnel overseas, Corrections Division Commander Capt. William Mancuso, far left, and Sheriff Frederick E. Davis stand with (back row) Marty Horn, who operates AnySoldier.com, Sgt. Pete Wearmouth, a trustee of the Charles County Correctional Officers Association; Lt. Morris Gant, vice president of the Correctional Officers Association and (front row) Jim and Cathy Whittar, franchise owners of the UPS stores in Waldorf and La Plata, and Sgt. Tracy Williams.

number of supplies from her coworkers at the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division.

When Sgt. Williams began the drive, her brother in Iraq referred her to Horn. Horn helped provide a list of what supplies soldiers need and offered advice on how to send the care packages. Horn, whose son Brian is in the Army and served in Iraq, helps the community send care packages to military personnel “in harm’s way” through his website [www.anysoldier.com](http://www.anysoldier.com). Originally, Horn would send packages to his son’s address in Iraq to the attention of “Any Soldier,” and his son would distribute the packages to soldiers who received little or no mail. Horn now has 751 contacts overseas he can send care packages for distribution, meaning he is able to cover about 40,000 troops.

Once the collection ended, Williams and the members of the Correctional Officers Association were faced with a dilemma: how to pay to ship the supplies overseas. They had planned to send a few care packages, but with all the supplies they received, they were able to make about 50. That’s when Jim and Cathy Whitthar, franchise owners of the UPS stores in Waldorf and La Plata, stepped in to help. They offered to send the packages overseas at no cost.

“I’m former military myself and I wanted to do something to help,” said Jim Whitthar, who, during the Gulf War, sent first class letters free of charge. He estimates the total cost for sending the Correctional Association packages could be between \$500 and \$700.

The Correctional Association also needed boxes to package all the items. Those were donated by Keefe Commissary Network, a company in Edison, NJ.

“This is the holiday spirit at its best. The Correctional Officer Association, the Sheriff’s Office and our community came together and not only provided much needed supplies to our troops, but reminded them that they are always in our hearts and that we are so grateful to them and honor them for the sacrifices they make to defend our country.”

The care packages will include supplies ranging from Chapstick to Beef Jerky. Additionally, each package will include a copy of a letter written from a woman who refers to herself only as “Your Fellow American.” She included the letter with her donation.

In the letter, the woman tells how, when she was a young child during World War II, her school had a drive to collect items to make care packages to soldiers overseas. Her family didn’t have much to donate, but she was proud to give a new wash cloth and a bar of soap. She also tells troops how, 60 years later, she’s proud to help again and offers her heartfelt gratitude to the men and women who protect our country.

“This drive was more than just a collection of supplies for our troops,” said Sheriff Davis. “It was a demonstration of our community’s patriotism and our strong support of the men and women who serve in our military. Thank you to all of you who helped make this drive such an overwhelming success and to the Correctional Officers Association, for making the holidays happier for our troops.”

Already, the Correctional Officer Association has sent several packages to troops stationed in Iraq and Kuwait who are relatives or friends of Sheriff’s Office employees, including to Sgt. Williams’ brother. Brandon Coombs, an Airman First Class in the United States Air Force and the nephew of Deborah Winkler, a secretary at the Charles County Detention Center, and Christopher Lett, a Lance Corporal in the Marines serving in Fallujah and the grandson of Eric Halvorsen, manager of Management Information Systems at the Sheriff’s Office, were also sent packages.