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TRINIDAD RENTAL

Last day for soldiers' holiday packages approaching

By The Times-Standard

EUREKA -- To get packages to soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan by Christmas, they need to be postmarked by Dec. 6.

Such is the word from www.anysoldier.us, a website designed to help people get their gifts and support to soldiers overseas.

The entire process is outlined on the site, from whether a given package will need a customs form, how a care package must be addressed and what kind of boxes to use to even who some soldiers are who might need such a gift.

The site also helps with tips that could help you save money and peace of mind.

"We suggest you do NOT use United States Postal Service Express or any overnight service -- it will only get to New York or California faster, it will not get to Iraq, Afghanistan or anywhere overseas any faster and costs way too much," the website reads. "We suggest regular or priority mail."

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The site also provides a list of things you cannot send. Some items on that list are included for reasons of cultural sensitivity, while others seem like no-brainers:

- * obscene articles (prints, paintings, cards, films and videotapes, among others);
- * firearms;



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* any matter depicting nude or semi-nude people, pornographic or sexual items;

* bulk quantities of religious materials contrary to the Islamic faith (items for the personal use of the addressee are permissible);

* pork or pork by-products.

Items that are suggested as gifts include sunscreen, baby wipes, portable food items, eyedrops, paper, pens, socks and toothbrushes, among other things.

Those who want to give but don't want the hassle of doing the work themselves can simply donate to the effort of Socks for Soldiers who will be sending packages out of Eureka Saturday. Donations can be made to Socks for Soldiers at 1672 Nedra Ave., 95501.

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