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United States Marine Capt. John F. Reynolds Jr., of the MALS-29 avionics group, corresponds with Blue Tent area resident Deni Dax about his 185 Marines stationed in Al Asad, Iraq. Reprinted with permission of AnySoldier, Inc.

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Letters from home help soldiers

Captain in Iraq responds to 'AnySoldier' packages

By Deni Dax

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12:01 a.m. PT Jul 27, 2007

Deni Dax, a resident of the Blue Tent area, began a project this spring to send packages of mail and goodies to the United States Marines of the MALS-29 avionics group, stationed in Al Asad, Iraq. She found the unit through the Web site AnySoldier.com, a clearinghouse for connecting stateside letter-writers with troops overseas.

I thought this would be a good time to update you on the results from the May 1 article The Union published about my adopted Marines.

Stephanie Facchini, Steve Belch and Ken Davenport's sixth-grade classes sent cards the children wrote. Jan Kropp, from Nevada Union High School, also allowed me to bring in my poster board of information for her students to get ideas for writing cards and letters.

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Earlier this month, I received a packet from a retiring teacher from Williams Ranch School in Penn Valley with some more cards and letters from sixth-graders. I have three to four adults writing letters that I include in the packages that I send.

I feel very blessed to have been able to send this many to my group of 185 Marines. This is Capt. John F. Reynolds Jr.'s response to the kids' letters:

"I have just spent the last half hour or so reading some of the very nice letters you boxed up for us from the kids. I have written the teachers back with a little thanks and some guidance for the young ones. I hope the guidance isn't too intrusive, but it's the same guidance I provide to both my Marines as well as my own kids.

"Thank you so much for putting that together for us. It means a lot. I cannot express my gratitude enough. I only hope that at least some of my Marines take the time to write them back.

"I have a soft spot for kids. Sometimes I feel I get too mushy, so I'll stop (it's not very Marine-like).

"The weather is getting hot. Sucks the will to live right out of you, sometimes. Your funnies brought me back today from the edge. Thank you so much. I have attached a photo from yesterday in which I begged God to stop the sandstorm which has plagued this place for two days ... It worked. Kinda freaked a couple folks out, but they are thankful to be breathing clean air today. From time to time I call in a favor. :-)

"Semper Fidelis,

"John"

I would like to collect more sport drink mixes, powdered Gatorade, beef jerky, snacks or anything else on his list to send in the upcoming months.

I have adopted another Marine group to whom I have begun mailing the paperback books and magazines that you all have been supplying to me.

Letters of support are always a requested item, showing those folks in the military that people are thinking of them.

Items can be dropped off at the office of my husband, Tom, at Interstate Benefits and Casualty, 175-A Joerschke Drive, Grass Valley.

Thank you everyone for helping this mission be a successful one. All your help has been appreciated!

ooo

Deni Dax can be reached at bluetent@cwnet.com or 265-8166.

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